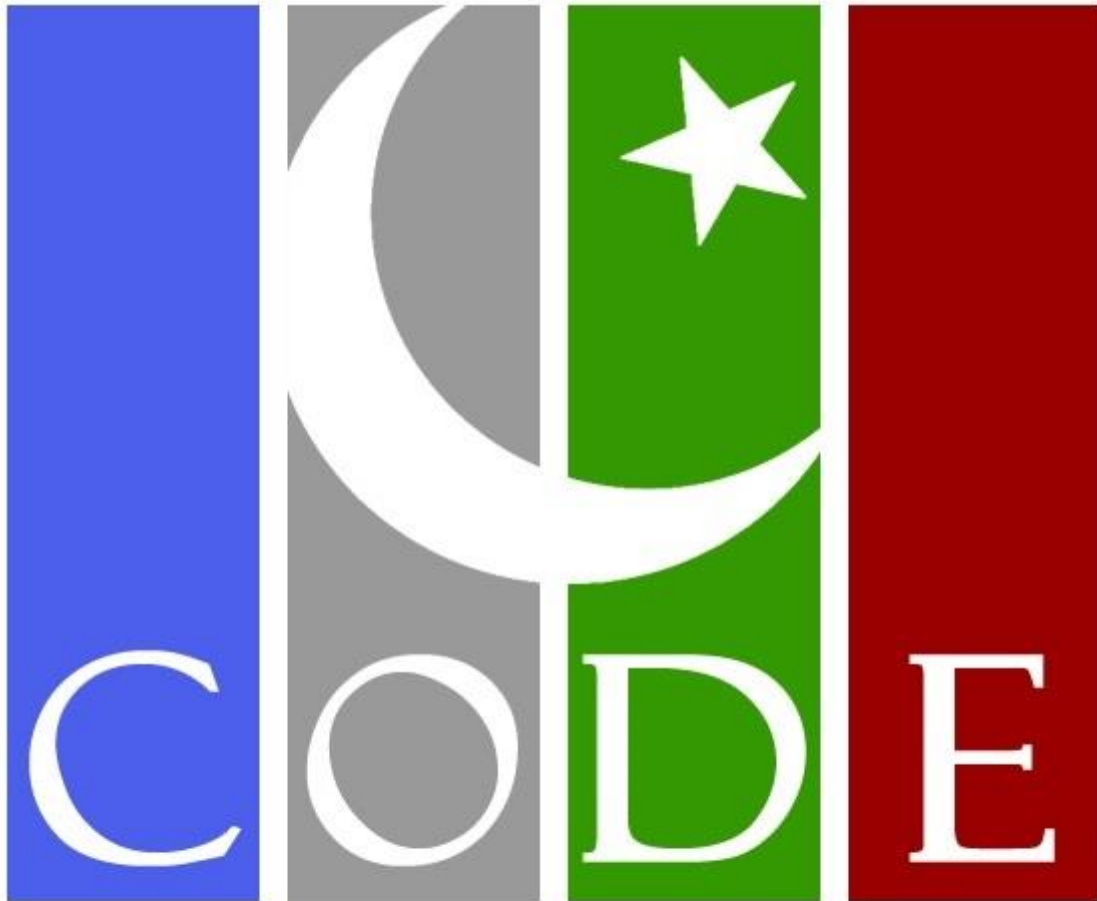


# SAFEGUARDING POLICY



CURSOR OF DEVELOPMENT  
AND EDUCATION PAKISTAN

**CODE PAKISTAN**

2023

## ***1.0. INTRODUCTION***

Our policy prioritizes the safety and protection of all individuals who interact with us. This includes not only those we aim to assist but also anyone who has contact with us, including through our partners, regardless of the circumstances. Furthermore, we also prioritize the well-being of our own staff and address this through our health and safety policies.

At CODE Pakistan, safeguarding is a fundamental aspect of our work. This policy is essential in fulfilling our pledge to create a safe and secure environment, and to ensure that we take appropriate action when concerns are brought to our attention.

### ***1.1. PURPOSE***

The purpose of this policy is to protect people, particularly children, at risk adults and beneficiaries of assistance, from any harm that may be caused due to their coming into contact with **CODE PAKISTAN**. This includes harm arising from;

1. The conduct of staff or personnel associated with **CODE PAKISTAN**.
2. The design and implementation of **CODE PAKISTAN** programmes and activities

The policy lays out the commitments made by **CODE PAKISTAN**, and informs staff and associated personnel of their responsibilities in relation to safeguarding.

### ***1.2. AIM***

This policy is essential to our commitment to safeguard and protect anyone who interacts with us or our partners. It clarifies the high standards of behavior that we expect from our people and ensures that we meet both internal and external standards.

### ***1.3. WHAT IS SAFEGUARDING?***

Safeguarding means protecting peoples' health, wellbeing and human rights, and enabling them to live free from harm, abuse and neglect. People, including children and at risk adults, from harm that arises from coming into contact with our staff or programmes.

### ***1.4. SCOPE***

This policy is applicable

- All staff contracted by **CODE PAKISTAN**
- to all individuals associated with us, including consultants, staff, volunteers, contractors, programme visitors, delegates, and other colleagues working on our behalf, regardless of their location.

### ***1.5. POLICY STATEMENT***

**CODE PAKISTAN** believes that everyone we come into contact with, regardless of age, gender identity, disability, sexual orientation or ethnic origin has the right to be protected from all forms of harm, abuse, neglect and exploitation. **CODE PAKISTAN** will not tolerate abuse and exploitation by staff or associated personnel.

## ***1.6. CODE PAKISTAN OBJECTIVE***

- 1.6.1. CODE PAKISTAN** objective is to ensure the safety of anyone who interacts with us. This policy emphasizes our commitment to safeguarding the individuals we aim to assist in CODE Pakistan, and as well as our partners, clients, and members of the public. The welfare of our staff and volunteers is addressed in separate health and safety policies and procedures.
- 1.6.2. CODE PAKISTAN** maintain that all children and adults have the right to be protected and safeguarded against abuse, harm, violence, exploitation, harassment, and discrimination.
- 1.6.3. CODE PAKISTAN** commitment is to be open and transparent about our safeguarding work and maintain the highest possible safeguarding standards.
- 1.6.4. CODE PAKISTAN** anticipate that our personnel and partners comprehend their obligations and know how to respond when a safeguarding concern arises or is brought to their attention.
- 1.6.5. CODE PAKISTAN** seek to continuously learn from incidents that are reported to us, as part of our effort to enhance and strengthen our safeguarding culture.

## ***1.7. APPROACH***

- 1.7.1. CODE PAKISTAN** adopt a person-centered approach to safeguarding, focusing on the safety and rights of both children and adults who are at risk of harm or abuse. Our response is centered around ensuring their protection and well-being.
- 1.7.2. CODE PAKISTAN** aim to take a preventative approach and have strong protocols to effectively address safeguarding concerns. Our goal is to promote the rights, dignity, and well-being of children and adults at risk, and whenever possible, involve and inform individuals about safeguarding decisions that affect them.

## ***1.8. PREVENTION***

### **1.8.1. CODE PAKISTAN responsibilities**

**CODE PAKISTAN** will:

- Ensure all staff have access to, are familiar with, and know their responsibilities within this policy
- Design and undertake all its programmes and activities in a way that protects people from any risk of harm that may arise from their coming into contact with CODE. This includes the way in which information about individuals in our programmes is gathered and communicated
- Implement stringent safeguarding procedures when recruiting, managing and deploying staff and associated personnel
- Ensure staff receive training on safeguarding at a level commensurate with their role in the organization
- Follow up on reports of safeguarding concerns promptly and according to due process

### **1.8.2. Staff responsibilities**

#### **Child safeguarding**

**CODE PAKISTAN** staff and associated personnel must not:

- Engage in sexual activity with anyone under the age of 18

- Sexually abuse or exploit children
- Subject a child to physical, emotional or psychological abuse, or neglect
- Engage in any commercially exploitative activities with children including child labour or trafficking

### 1.8.3. Adult safeguarding

**CODE PAKISTAN** staff and associated personnel must not:

- Sexually abuse or exploit at risk adults
- Subject an at risk adult to physical, emotional or psychological abuse, or neglect

### 1.8.4. Protection from sexual exploitation and abuse

**CODE PAKISTAN** staff and associated personnel must not:

- Exchange money, employment, goods or services for sexual activity. This includes any exchange of assistance that is due to beneficiaries of assistance
- Engage in any sexual relationships with beneficiaries of assistance, since they are based on inherently unequal power dynamics

### 1.8.5. Additionally, **CODE PAKISTAN** staff and associated personnel are obliged to:

- Contribute to creating and maintaining an environment that prevents safeguarding violations and promotes the implementation of the Safeguarding Policy
- Report any concerns or suspicions regarding safeguarding violations by **CODE PAKISTAN** staff member or associated personnel to the appropriate staff member

## 1.9. *ENABLING REPORTS*

**CODE PAKISTAN** will ensure that safe, appropriate, accessible means of reporting safeguarding concerns are made available to staff and the communities we work with.

Any staff reporting concerns or complaints through formal whistleblowing channels (or if they request it) will be protected by CODE's Disclosure of Malpractice in the Workplace (Whistleblowing) Policy.

**CODE PAKISTAN** will also accept complaints from external sources such as members of the public, partners and official bodies.

## 1.10. *HOW TO REPORT A SAFEGUARDING CONCERN*

Staff members who have a complaint or concern relating to safeguarding should report it immediately to their Safeguarding Focal Point or line manager. If the staff member does not feel comfortable reporting to their Safeguarding Focal Point or line manager (for example if they feel that the report will not be taken seriously, or if that person is implicated in the concern) they may report to any other appropriate staff member. For example, this could be a Director, senior manager or a member of the HR Team.

### **CODE Safeguarding Focal Point**

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✉ faisal@codepak.org

## ***1.11. RESPONSE***

CODE will follow up safeguarding reports and concerns according to policy and procedure, and legal and statutory obligations CODE will apply appropriate disciplinary measures to staff found in breach of policy.

CODE will offer support to survivors of harm caused by staff or associated personnel, regardless of whether a formal internal response is carried out (such as an internal investigation). Decisions regarding support will be led by the survivor.

## ***1.12. CONFIDENTIALITY***

It is essential that confidentiality is maintained at all stages of the process when dealing with safeguarding concerns. Information relating to the concern and subsequent case management should be shared on a need to know basis only, and should be kept secure at all times.

## ***1.13. DEFINITIONS (Children and Young people)***

**1.13.1.** In our perspective, individuals who are under the age of 18 are regarded as children and young people.

**1.13.2.** Child abuse is described as any type of mistreatment towards a child. This could include harming a child or neglecting to prevent harm. Abuse can occur within a family, institutional or community setting, and can be inflicted by individuals known to the child or, less frequently, by strangers. Technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse, or abuse can take place entirely online. The perpetrator(s) of abuse may be adults or other children.

## ***1.14. OUT COMMITMENT TO CHILDREN***

**1.14.1** We firmly believe that it is the responsibility of anyone who interacts with a child to safeguard and promote their welfare, and protect them from any form of harm or abuse. We will not tolerate any kind of child abuse. We acknowledge our duty to ensure the safety of all children who come into contact with us.

**1.14.2** We engage with children in various settings, and we strongly believe that all children, regardless of their gender, disability, ethnicity, sexuality, religion, or age, have the right to equal protection. This policy and its accompanying procedures will be applied to all children without bias or discrimination.

**1.14.3** Our work with children will be guided by relevant international guidelines, including the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. We are committed to safeguarding the children we come into contact with, and we will uphold and promote their rights in our services.

**1.14.4** We strongly believe that every child has the fundamental right to grow up free from harm, without jeopardizing their health, safety, and welfare. They should have equal opportunities to reach their full potential. Our work brings us into contact with children of all backgrounds, and we value and respect their rights. We strive to listen to their voices, promote their right to be heard, and involve them in the decision-making process, but we may need to take action to safeguard a child or young person, even if it goes against their wishes, to protect them from harm.

**1.14.5** By endorsing this policy, we pledge to prioritize the protection of children who have suffered or may be at risk of harm due to mistreatment. We also promise to ensure that all our staff are trained and equipped to appropriately respond to any concerns regarding the welfare of children with whom we engage. This is accomplished through our safer recruitment procedures, continual training, awareness-raising, and supervision.

## ***1.15. DEFINITIONS (ADULT)***

- 1.15.1** Adult abuse is when an individual's human and civil rights are violated by others. Safeguarding adults involves ensuring that adults are able to live in a secure environment, without experiencing any form of abuse or neglect. To accomplish this, we may take steps to reduce risks, prevent abuse and neglect, and intervene to stop ongoing abuse.
- 1.15.2** CODE Pakistan, safeguarding measures promote the well-being of adults. While safety is a crucial component, individuals have various other desires and needs, and it can be difficult to strike a balance between safety and personal freedom while upholding human rights. It is vital to work collaboratively with each adult to determine what safety means to them and how it can be accomplished most effectively.
- 1.15.3** The term "safeguarding adults" refers to all of the efforts we (and others) make to assist vulnerable adults in making informed safeguarding decisions and to intervene or take action to safeguard adults who are unable to safeguard themselves. Both definitions also encompass safeguarding against sexual exploitation and abuse of children and adults by our personnel.

## ***1.16. OUR COMMITMENT TO ADULTS***

- 1.16.1** We come into contact with adults in various contexts, and we believe that all of them have an equal right to protection regardless of their gender, disability, ethnicity, sexuality, religion, or age. This policy will be applied without discrimination to all adults.
- 1.16.2** We will support adults to make their own informed safeguarding decisions in line with the applicable international legislation and protection guidelines.
- 1.16.3** We work in a preventive manner in partnership with the adult and other safeguarding partners to respond in a way that is empowering and proportionate, taking prompt action to protect individuals who are unable to protect themselves. We take responsibility for our safeguarding decisions and actions.

## ***1.17. CODE PAKISTAN SAFEGUARDING STANDARDS***

- 1.17.1** We are dedicated to fulfilling our safeguarding duties and have a uniform method of determining and describing how we fulfill those responsibilities.
- 1.17.2** We are committed to collaborating with partners to enhance the safeguarding outcomes of the individuals we support.
- 1.17.3** We will take effective action when our staff or volunteers have concerns regarding the safeguarding of a child, young person, or adult. We will prioritize prevention and strive to promote resilience.
- 1.17.4** The **CODE Pakistan** guidelines for appointing adult workers consists of:
- Providing relevant job descriptions and
  - ensuring clear roles
  - Conducting interviews with potential adult workers before making an appointment
  - Requesting and following up two references before making an appointment
  - Requesting a criminal record background check as necessary
  - An appropriate induction, including attending *Safeguarding Adults Information and Awareness* training
- 1.17.5** Based on safer recruitment guidance, we aim to recruit, support, and manage staff and volunteers who are

committed to safeguarding children and adults. They will promote and uphold the rights, dignity, and wellbeing of all individuals we engage with.

1.17.6 **CODE PAKISTAN** will provide support and monitoring for all safeguarding concerns that are reported to us, and we will actively seek to learn from how we have handled these concerns and incidents. This is part of our commitment to continuous improvement.

1.17.7 CODE use the following approach to support this commitment:

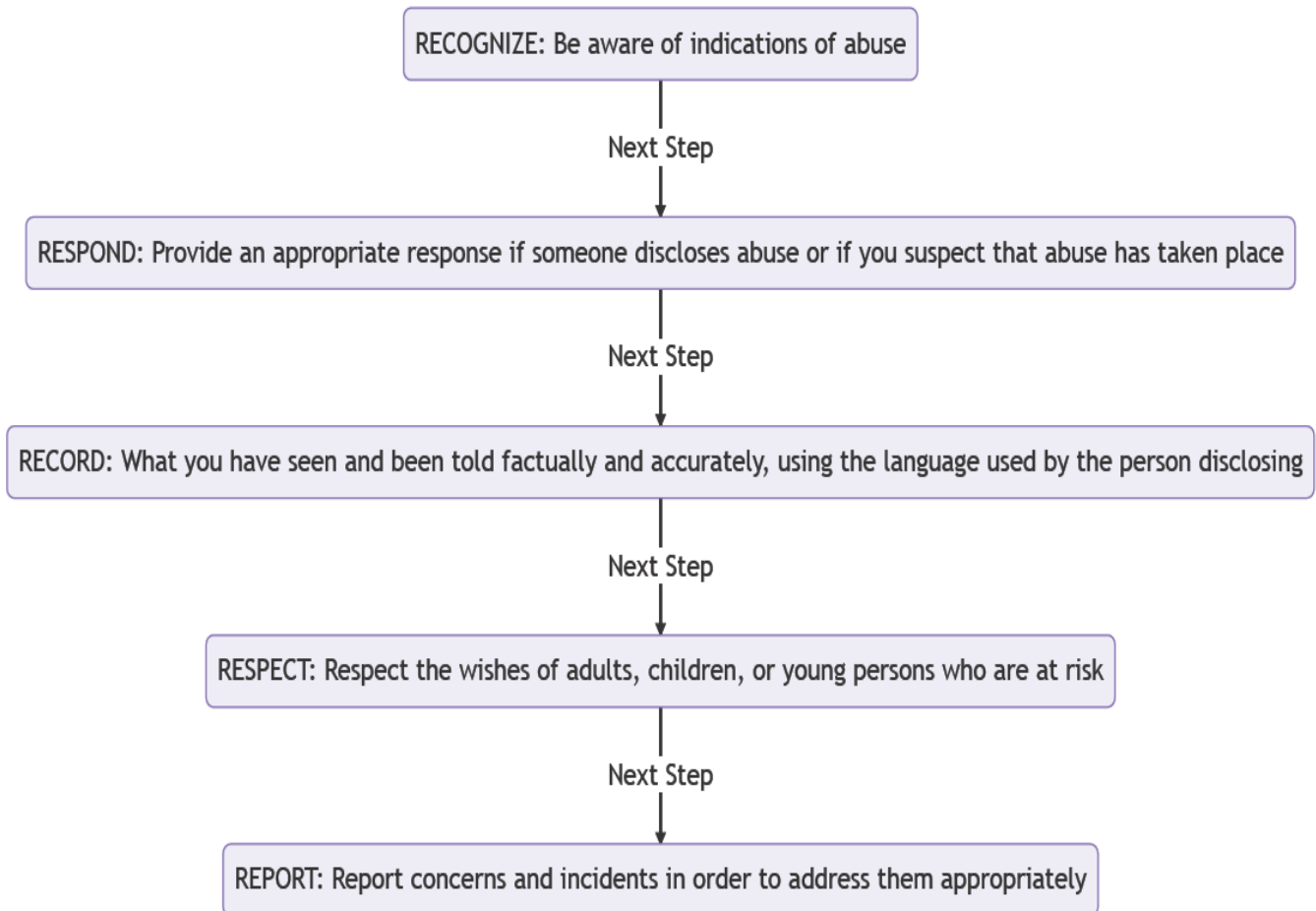
**RECOGNIZE:** Be aware of indications of abuse.

**RESPOND:** Provide an appropriate response if someone discloses abuse or if you suspect that abuse has taken place.

**RECORD:** What you seen told factually and accurately using the language use by the person disclosing;

**RESPECT:** Respect the wishes of adults, children, or young persons who are at risk;

**REPORT:** Report concerns and incidents in order to address them appropriately.



## ***1.18. CODE PAKISTAN KEY SAFEGUARDING STANDARDS***

- 1.18.1** If it is known that a person has been convicted of an offence relating to safeguarding, they will not be permitted to participate in a programme unless a risk assessment has been completed.
- 1.18.2** **CODE PAKISTAN** staff, working in partnership with the Executive Leadership Team, are fully committed to creating a safe and secure environment for everyone who engages with us, including our people. They are responsible for ensuring that our organization has appropriate policies and arrangements in place. We ensure that the people we help are at the center of everything we do.
- 1.18.3** At a senior management level, the Director Programs is responsible for promoting strong safeguarding practices within our organization. Director Programs works in collaboration with sector colleagues to encourage continuous improvement in safeguarding standards and practices.
- 1.18.4** The Internal Program Control Manager is accountable for notifying the Senior Management about operational safeguarding risks and ensuring that risks and reported concerns are being managed in compliance with the incident reporting policy. The Internal Program Control Manager provides assurance to the Senior Management regarding the management of risks and reported concerns.

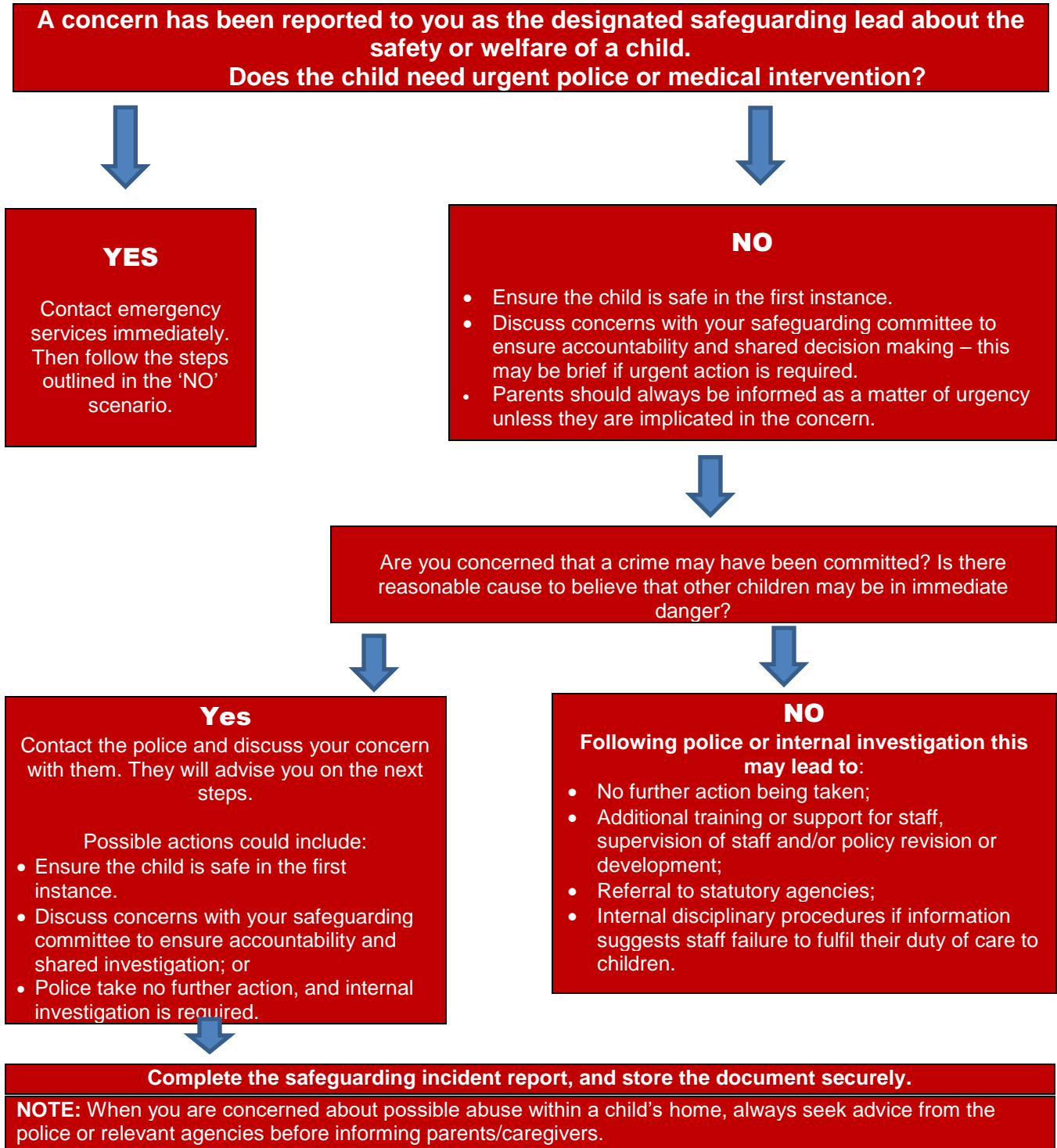
## ***1.19. BEHAVIOR***

- 1.19.1** We require all our staff to act with integrity as they represent our organization professionally. Furthermore, we expect our staff to recognize how their personal conduct can affect those who use our services, especially when working with vulnerable children and adults. They must prioritize their own safety and security, as well as that of their colleagues, and partners.
- 1.19.2** Staff and volunteers are required to follow the Fundamental Principles of the **CODE PAKISTAN**, Codes of Conduct. The Codes of Conduct make it clear that we do not accept harassment, bullying, abuse, discrimination, exploitation or violence, and we have a zero-tolerance policy regarding sexual exploitation, sexual abuse and sexual harassment.
- 1.19.3** We take breaches of our Code, especially those related to safeguarding, very seriously and will take appropriate disciplinary action. Our disciplinary procedure considers safeguarding failures as gross misconduct, which can lead to informing relevant authorities, including law enforcement, if necessary. We expect our staff and volunteers to report any concerns about our work or the behavior of our people and partners.
- 1.19.4** All of our employees, regardless of their role or team, share the responsibility of safeguarding. We expect them to treat any safeguarding concerns they become aware of seriously and take appropriate action. This includes reporting the concern to the Safeguarding Assurance Team for advice as soon as possible. Our goal is to create an environment where individuals feel empowered and supported to come forward with any reports, concerns or allegations.
- 1.19.5** If our staff or volunteers witness or experience any abusive or harmful behavior that goes against our high standards, we require them to report it immediately so that we can take appropriate action. Any violations of our Code of Conduct may result in disciplinary action in accordance with our policies and procedures, including our staff disciplinary policy and procedure.



## 1.19. LAWS AND REGULATIONS

1.19.1 CODE PAKISTAN understand our responsibility to report concerns to relevant statutory agencies when it comes to safeguarding children and adults. In instances where we suspect a crime involving a child has occurred, we notify the law enforcement authorities. For concerns relating to adult safeguarding, we consider informing law enforcement authorities if it is in the best interests of the adult at risk.



## ***1.20. TRAINING AND SUPPORT***

- 1.20.1** The objective of our training is to equip our people with a comprehensive understanding of how to recognize the indications of abuse and to comprehend the necessary steps to take if they have any concerns about the well-being of a child, young person, or adult.
- 1.20.2** Safeguarding awareness training is mandatory for all staff, and volunteers. Safeguarding core training will be part of agreed learning pathway