



ADULT SAFEGUARDING POLICY

1. Introduction

The Federation of Women's Institutes of Northern Ireland (WINI) encourages women to participate fully in community life through its network of Institutes across Northern Ireland. The Federation organises meetings, educational activities, and events designed to provide a welcoming and inclusive environment where women can meet socially, develop skills, and contribute positively to their communities.

The WINI is committed to safeguarding the wellbeing, rights, and dignity of all adults who engage with its activities, including adults who may be more vulnerable due to age, disability, illness, mental health needs, or other circumstances. Vulnerability may be permanent or temporary, and the WINI recognises that adults' needs and capacities may fluctuate over time.

2. Purpose and Scope

This policy sets out the Federation's commitment to:

- Promote the safety and welfare of all adults
- Ensure that anyone attending Federation or Institute meetings, activities, or events is treated with respect, dignity, and without discrimination.
- Provide clear guidance to Federation officers, Institutes, volunteers, event organisers, and members on recognising, responding to, and reporting safeguarding concerns.

This policy applies to:

- Federation and Institute Executive Members
 - Institute Presidents, Secretaries, Treasurers
 - Volunteers, activity organisers, and event facilitators
 - All Women's Institute members
 - Contractors or visitors engaged in Federation events
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3. Policy Aims

1. To ensure that all adults participating in Federation or Institute activities are safeguarded from harm, exploitation, and abuse.
2. To create safe, inclusive, and accessible environments for all members and visitors.

3. To ensure that concerns about an adult's safety or wellbeing are recognised and responded to promptly and appropriately.
 4. To promote awareness of safeguarding responsibilities across the organisation.
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4. Objectives

1. Identify and assess potential risks at Federation and Institute activities and take reasonable steps to reduce them.
 2. Ensure venues have appropriate accessibility features (e.g., wheelchair access, accessible toilets).
 3. Ensure emergency exits and evacuation procedures are suitable for adults with mobility or sensory needs.
 4. Promote an environment where all adults are treated with respect, dignity, and without discrimination.
 5. Encourage the participation of adults with additional needs without exclusion or prejudice.
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5. Creating a Safe and Inclusive Environment

Meeting and activity organisers will:

- Refer to the FWINI Handbook for guidance.
- Conduct venue risk assessments, noting accessibility, hazards, and points of concern.
- Foster a culture that respects the rights and autonomy of all adults.
- Be alert to any member or visitor who may require support and ensure reasonable assistance is provided.
- Be attentive to any behaviour or atmosphere that could be harmful, excluding, or prejudicial.

If concerns arise at:

- **A Federation event** — report to the appropriate Executive Member.
- **An Institute event** — report to the Institute President.

Where concerns remain unresolved or are of a safeguarding nature, they must be escalated to the **Executive Manager**, who will assess and, if necessary, consult statutory safeguarding authorities in accordance with NI procedures.

6. Reporting Safeguarding Concerns

All safeguarding concerns must be:

1. **Taken seriously**
2. **Recorded factually and promptly**
3. **Reported to the appropriate person** (Institute President, Event Lead, Executive Member, or Executive Manager)

If there is **immediate danger or risk of harm**, emergency services should be contacted.

7. Confidentiality

Information regarding safeguarding concerns will be handled:

- sensitively
- on a need-to-know basis
- in line with data protection legislation

No promise of absolute confidentiality can be given where a safeguarding concern exists.

8. Training

- The Federation will source and provide relevant safeguarding awareness training for Executive Members, Institute Officers, and event organisers where needed.
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9. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed every **three years**, or earlier if:

- legislation or NI safeguarding procedures change,
- significant safeguarding issues arise, or
- improvements are identified.