



Safeguarding

Information about abuse, neglect
and how to report concerns



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Your Safety Matters

Everyone deserves to feel safe and free from abuse, neglect, violence or exploitation.

Bernicia takes concerns about the safety and wellbeing of adults and children seriously and has trained staff who respond to concerns about abuse or significant harm involving customers, visitors or members of the public.

This leaflet explains;

- What abuse and neglect can look like
- How to report concerns
- How Bernicia may respond
- Where to find specialist support





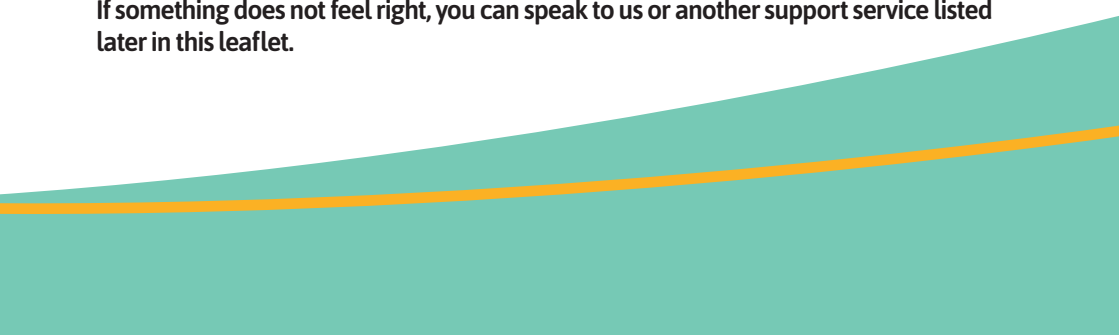
What is Abuse?

Abuse can happen to anyone and may happen once or over a long period of time.

Abuse can include;

- Domestic Abuse – e.g controlling, threatening or violent behaviour from a partner, ex-partner or family member
- Emotional Abuse – e.g being intimidated, humiliated, isolated or constantly criticised
- Physical Abuse – e.g hitting, pushing, restraining or causing physical harm
- Sexual Abuse – e.g any sexual activity that you do not consent to or feel pressured into
- Financial Abuse – e.g controlling someone's money, benefits or access to financial resources
- Neglect – e.g not receiving the care, support or basic needs needed to stay safe and well
- Discriminatory Abuse – e.g being targeted because of disability, race, religion, sexuality, gender identity or another protected characteristic
- Exploitation or Modern Slavery – e.g being controlled, forced or exploited for work, money or criminal activity

Sometimes people are unsure whether what they are experiencing is abuse. If something does not feel right, you can speak to us or another support service listed later in this leaflet.



How Bernicia Can Help

Bernicia has a specialist team of staff trained to respond to concerns about abuse, neglect or significant harm involving adults or children connected to our services or communities.

Our role is to;

- Listen to concerns
 - Identify potential safeguarding risks
 - Take appropriate action where abuse or neglect may be occurring
 - Work with relevant agencies where required
 - Support access to specialist services where appropriate
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Safeguarding concerns can be raised by;

- Customers
 - Family Members
 - Carers
 - Neighbours
 - Bernicia Colleagues
 - Partner Agencies
 - Members of the Public
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We will treat concerns sensitively and respectfully.

However, if we believe an adult or child may be at risk of serious harm, we may need to share that information with relevant agencies to keep people safe.

You do not need proof before reporting a concern.

Not sure whether to report something?

You do not need to be certain abuse or neglect is happening before speaking to us. If something feels unsafe or concerning it is okay to ask for advice.

Getting Help or Support

If you are worried about the safety or wellbeing of an adult or child you can;

- Speak with your Housing Officer
- Visit one of our offices
- Contact our Customer Contact Team on 0344 800 3800
- Speak to a member of staff in person
- Email contact@bernicia.com

You can contact us if;

- You are experiencing abuse or neglect
- You feel unsafe in your home or community
- You are worried about someone else
- You need to report a safeguarding concern

If speaking on the phone feels difficult, you can also contact us online or speak to a member of staff in person.

What happens after a concern is reported?

A trained member of staff will review the concern and decide what action may be needed.

This may include;

- Speaking with the person involved
- Working with other agencies
- Raising concerns with the Local Authority where appropriate
- Taking housing-related action where appropriate

In an emergency

Call 999 if;

- Someone is in immediate danger
- Urgent medical help is needed
- A crime is taking place

Specialist Support

National Domestic
Abuse Helpline



0808 2000 247

Men's Advice Line



0808 201 0327

Childline



0800 1111

Galop LGBT+ Helpline



0800 999 5428

Adult or Children Services



Contact your local council's
safeguarding team.

How to contact us

Online: www.bernicia.com

Email: contact@bernicia.com

Phone: 0344 800 3800

Letter: Bernicia Group, Oakwood Way, Ashwood Business Park, Ashington NE63 0XF



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