

Safeguarding Policy

At Hope Therapy & Counselling Services, your safety and wellbeing are our top priorities. We are committed to creating a safe and supportive environment for all clients, ensuring that anyone at risk of harm is appropriately protected. Safeguarding is a fundamental part of the ethical, legal, and professional responsibilities of both Hope Therapy & Counselling Services and the affiliate counsellors we work with.

1. How Safeguarding Works in Our Service

Hope Therapy & Counselling Services works with a team of independent affiliate counsellors, each of whom is responsible for making safeguarding decisions in their work with clients. While we may provide overall support and guidance, the day-to-day implementation of safeguarding procedures is the responsibility of the counsellor you work with.

2. The Role of Your Counsellor in Safeguarding

Your counsellor is responsible for identifying and responding to safeguarding concerns in accordance with:

- Statutory Requirements – UK laws and regulations related to safeguarding children, vulnerable adults, and individuals at risk.
- Regulatory and Ethical Guidelines – The standards set by professional bodies such as the BACP, UKCP, or equivalent.
- Best Practice Approaches – Ethical and effective responses based on current safeguarding frameworks and professional training.

Since safeguarding concerns can be time-sensitive, your counsellor may need to act immediately in cases where they believe there is a serious risk of harm. Their actions may include:

- Discussing concerns with you directly.
- Seeking guidance from safeguarding professionals or their clinical supervisor.
- Reporting concerns to appropriate services such as social care, emergency services, or safeguarding teams.
- Taking other necessary steps to ensure the safety of those at risk.
- Notifying Hope Therapy & Counselling Services for awareness and support.

3. The Role of Hope Therapy & Counselling Services in Safeguarding

Hope Therapy & Counselling Services provides policy guidance and support to our affiliate counsellors. However, in most safeguarding cases, the initial decisions and actions will be made independently by the counsellor, especially when immediate intervention is required.

We act in an advisory and supportive capacity and may become more involved in safeguarding matters when:

- A counsellor requests additional guidance or support.
- A safeguarding concern has wider implications that require coordination beyond an individual counsellor's remit.
- There is a need for procedural oversight to ensure best practice is followed.

4. Limits to Confidentiality in Safeguarding Situations

While we respect your right to confidentiality, there are circumstances where confidentiality may need to be breached to protect you or others. These include:

- Risk to yourself – If there is a serious concern that you may harm yourself.
- Risk to others – If there is a concern that someone else is at risk, including children or vulnerable adults.
- Legal obligations – If a counsellor becomes aware of serious criminal activities (such as child abuse, terrorism, or significant harm to others), they are legally required to report this.
- Where possible, your counsellor will discuss any safeguarding concerns with you before taking action. However, in situations where discussing the concern could increase the level of risk, they may act without prior consultation.

5. What to Do If You Have a Safeguarding Concern

If you have any concerns about your safety or the safety of someone else, we encourage you to:

- Speak directly to your counsellor, who will help assess the situation and take appropriate action.
- If you feel unable to discuss the issue with your counsellor, you can contact Hope Therapy & Counselling Services for guidance and support.
- In an emergency where immediate danger is present, contact 999 or seek help from emergency services.

6. Commitment to Ethical and Professional Standards

All affiliate counsellors working with Hope Therapy & Counselling Services are required to follow safeguarding policies that align with their professional bodies. They undergo training and supervision to ensure they can manage safeguarding concerns effectively.

Hope Therapy & Counselling Services remains committed to ensuring that all safeguarding decisions are made with care, professionalism, and in line with the best interests of our clients.

If you have any questions about our safeguarding policies or processes, please feel free to contact us.

Contact Us

If you have any questions or concerns regarding our Safeguarding Policy, or if you need additional support in accessing our services, please do not hesitate to contact us. We are here to help.

Thank you for choosing Hope Therapy & Counselling Services. We look forward to working with you.