



# standard safeguarding principles

|                        |                       |                      |            |
|------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|------------|
| <b>Document Number</b> | POL-1977              | <b>Approval Date</b> | 19-12-2022 |
| <b>Approved by</b>     | yourHeads             | <b>Review Date</b>   | 19-12-2023 |
| <b>Document owner</b>  | Advocacy and Research |                      |            |
| <b>Applies to</b>      | yourtown              |                      |            |

## purpose

This document sets out the principles that underpin **yourtown's** safeguarding of children, young people, and adults at risk.

## safeguarding principles

**yourtown** safeguarding principles align with the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations, National Catholic Safeguarding Standards, the Commonwealth Child Safe Framework, and relevant state and territory standards.

### PRINCIPLE 1 - Committed leadership, governance, and culture

The safety and wellbeing of children, young people, and adults at risk is embedded in organisational leadership, governance, and culture.

**yourtown** has zero tolerance for abuse or exploitation of children, young people, and adults at risk. **yourtown's** leadership team leads by example, ensuring that the safety and wellbeing of each child, young person or adult at risk are the primary consideration in all decisions and actions concerning them.

**yourtown's** Safeguarding Risk Assessment and Management Framework forms part of **yourtown's** enterprise-wide Risk Management Framework and is integrated into day-to-day functions, operations, business and strategic planning.

Oversight and governance of safeguarding risk management is assigned to Department Heads and CEO at a corporate level, and at Board level to the Finance and Risk Management Committee, who also have a key role in monitoring and responding to risk at **yourtown**.

Core Components:

- yourtown** leaders commit to upholding and promoting a culture that prioritises the safeguarding of children, young people, and adults at risk.
- The safety of children, young people, and adults at risk is a shared responsibility at all levels of the organisation.
- Risk management strategies focus on preventing, identifying, and effectively mitigating risks to children, young people and adults at risk.
- Team members comply with the Code of Conduct and Safeguarding in Practice – Policy and Procedures that sets clear standards for behaviour and practice.
- A safeguarding training regime is provided to all team members, starting at induction, and continuing at regular intervals to ensure ongoing focus and improvement.

|   |            |                     |
|---|------------|---------------------|
| <b>safeguarding principles</b>  | <b>DN:</b> | POL-1977            |
| <b>COMPANY CONFIDENTIAL</b> Correct when printed from the Document Portal.<br>Printed documents are uncontrolled. |            | <b>Page:</b> 1 of 6 |



- f) Governance of safeguarding risk and risk management is embedded in both corporate and Board level oversight and governance structures.
- g) Information sharing and record keeping policies and procedures are documented and communicated to personnel.

## PRINCIPLE 2 - Participation and empowerment

Children, young people, and adults at risk are informed about their rights, meaningfully participate in decisions affecting them, and are taken seriously.

**yourtown** is committed to the continuing development of its Youth Participation Strategy to improve organisational impact through safer and better services, informed by the knowledge and lived experience of young people across Australia.

Core Components:

- a) Children, young people, and adults at risk have opportunities to express their views and, to the greatest extent possible, participate in decisions that affect their lives.
- b) The importance of friendships, and safe and respectful relationships in helping children, young people and adults at risk feel safer and less isolated is recognised, and peer support is encouraged.
- c) **yourtown** actively supports children, young people, and adults at risk to understand and exercise their rights.
- d) All children, young people, and adults at risk have easy access to information, support, and complaints processes in relation to any aspect of **yourtown** services, and **yourtown** maintains multiple pathways for this to be done.
- e) Children, young people, and adults at risk contribute to the development and review of **yourtown** policies and procedures.

## PRINCIPLE 3 - Partnering with families, carers, and communities

Families and communities are informed and involved in promoting the safety and wellbeing of children, young people, and adults at risk, where appropriate.

**yourtown** actively engages families and communities in activities that promote awareness and involvement in safeguarding. **yourtown** uses accessible language to communicate with service users, team members and partners to ensure safeguarding obligations and support processes are clear and easy to understand.

Core Components:

- a) Parents, carers or legal guardians have primary responsibility for decisions affecting their children; **yourtown**'s role is to encourage and promote safe, positive parenting and ultimately serve the best interests of the child.
- b) **yourtown** engages in open, two-way communication with families and communities about its safeguarding approaches, and relevant information is easy to access.
- c) **yourtown** provides resources and information to support the progression of safeguarding across all communities.
- d) **yourtown** informs the public about its approach to safeguarding.

|   |            |                     |
|---|------------|---------------------|
| <b>Safeguarding Principles</b>  | <b>DN:</b> | POL-1977            |
| <b>COMPANY CONFIDENTIAL</b> Correct when printed from the Document Portal.<br>Printed documents are uncontrolled. |            | <b>Page:</b> 2 of 6 |



## PRINCIPLE 4 - Equity is promoted and diversity is respected

Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected, in policy and in practice.

**yourtown** is committed to providing a welcoming, safe, equitable and inclusive environment for people from all backgrounds, languages, and cultures, particularly recognising the significant role that cultural safety plays in the social, emotional, physical, and mental health of First Australian peoples and communities that we engage with.

Core Components:

- a) **yourtown** seeks to understand the diverse circumstances of all those who access programs and services, to respond inclusively and effectively.
- b) **yourtown** ensures policy and practice respond to the diverse needs of children, young people, adults at risk, and families from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Culturally and Linguistically Diverse backgrounds.
- c) **yourtown**'s team members mirror the diversity of its service users to the greatest extent possible.

## PRINCIPLE 5 - Robust human resource management

People working with children, young people, and adults at risk are suitable, and supported to reflect safety and wellbeing values in practice.

**yourtown** does not knowingly engage team members who pose a risk to the safety or wellbeing of children, young people, or adults at risk, and takes immediate action to respond to suspected abuse or exploitation. **yourtown** takes all reasonable steps to ensure that team members do not pose an unacceptable risk to children, young people, or adults at risk.

In the recruitment of team members, **yourtown** undertakes screening processes to determine suitability and ability to comply with relevant **yourtown** policies (e.g. the Code of Conduct and Safeguarding in Practice – Policy and Procedures) including reference checks, criminal history checks, and working with children checks. **yourtown** provides ongoing professional development and training to team members about safeguarding to ensure contemporary knowledge and practice is maintained.

Core Components:

- a) **yourtown** recruitment and selection processes screen for suitability to work within safeguarding standards.
- b) From commencement, all team members receive appropriate induction, and ongoing training inclusive of safeguarding.
- c) **yourtown** maintains and implements a framework for the ongoing professional development of all team members about safeguarding.
- d) Managers and supervisors maintain an explicit focus on safeguarding; expectations are clearly articulated in performance and development conversations and agreements.
- e) **yourtown** provides the means for ongoing practice development and review, and supports all team members working with children, young people, and adults at risk with practice supervision support.

|   |            |                     |
|---|------------|---------------------|
| <b>Safeguarding Principles</b>  | <b>DN:</b> | POL-1977            |
| <b>COMPANY CONFIDENTIAL</b> Correct when printed from the Document Portal.<br>Printed documents are uncontrolled. |            | <b>Page:</b> 3 of 6 |



## PRINCIPLE 6 - Effective complaints management

At **yourtown**, there is a no wrong door approach to complaints and feedback. Processes for raising complaints and concerns are responsive, easy to understand, and accessible to children, young people, adults at risk, families, carers, communities, and team members.

**yourtown** promotes an organisational culture which encourages and welcomes feedback and complaints about any aspect of safeguarding policy and practice. **yourtown** maintains and actively promotes feedback channels that are tailored for easy access by children, young people, and adults at risk. Feedback is incorporated in review and continuous improvement processes. **yourtown**'s Client Complaint Investigation Policy documents how complaints will be investigated and dealt with.

Core Components:

- a) Complaints related to safeguarding and/or practice are prioritised.
- b) Allegations, concerns, and complaints handling policies and procedures clearly outline roles and responsibilities, approaches to dealing with different types of concerns, and obligations to act and report, and comply with all related legislative requirements.
- c) Feedback channels are customised, and information related to complaints and/or feedback is made visible at all **yourtown** sites.

## PRINCIPLE 7 - Ongoing education and training

**yourtown** team members are equipped with the knowledge, skills, and awareness to keep children, young people, and adults at risk safe through information, ongoing education, and training.

**yourtown** provides all team members with a formal induction including training on their responsibilities about safeguarding. Ongoing training and professional development are provided at least every two years.

Core Components:

- a) All team members receive ongoing training on understanding abuse; recognising and responding to abuse and disclosures; and reporting requirements
- b) Team members receive ongoing training as identified within the relevant training plan applicable to their role, and
- c) All team members working with children, young people and adults at risk participate in regular practice supervision.

## PRINCIPLE 8 - Safe physical and online environments

Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing while minimising the opportunity for children, young people and adults at risk to be harmed.

**yourtown** services are provided virtually, in person, and via blended modalities. **yourtown**'s work inevitably entails risk, including risk to the safety and wellbeing of children, young people, and adults at risk. We are committed to identifying and minimising preventable risk, and to mitigating the impacts of incidents when they occur.

|   |            |                     |
|---|------------|---------------------|
| <b>Safeguarding Principles</b>  | <b>DN:</b> | POL-1977            |
| <b>COMPANY CONFIDENTIAL</b> Correct when printed from the Document Portal.<br>Printed documents are uncontrolled. |            | <b>Page:</b> 4 of 6 |



In the interest of preventing risk, we conduct a detailed safeguarding risk assessment before implementing new projects, and all existing programs have and maintain safeguarding risk plans.

On an ongoing basis, **yourtown** ensures risks of harm, abuse and exploitation within programs, operations, activities, and partnership arrangements are identified, assessed, mitigated, monitored, and reviewed.

**yourtown**'s Providers Code of Conduct documents the values, governing principles, and ethical standards and behaviour expected of a third-party provider. All providers must have safeguarding measures in place and are required to be able to provide evidence of safeguarding.

Core Components:

- a) **yourtown** identifies and mitigates risks in online and physical environments without compromising the privacy or healthy development of the child, young person or adult at risk.
- b) **yourtown** sites are developed and maintained to minimise the opportunity for harm.
- c) Online systems and tools are used in accordance with **yourtown**'s Code of Conduct, Safeguarding in Practice – Policy and Procedures and other relevant policies.

### PRINCIPLE 9 - Continuous improvement

**yourtown** regularly reviews and improves implementation of systems to safeguard children, young people, and adults at risk.

**yourtown** commits to continuously improving and strengthening internal safeguarding systems to ensure accountability to the individuals and communities we serve. Specific safeguarding roles and responsibilities are delegated to team members to embed safe organisational practice across all programs, operations and activities.

### PRINCIPLE 10 - Safeguarding policies and procedures

Policies and procedures document how **yourtown** is safe for children, young people, and adults at risk.

**yourtown**'s Safeguarding in Practice - Policy and Procedures documents how **yourtown** keeps children, young people, and adults at risk safe and feeling safe when they encounter us. All team members can access the policy; safeguarding posters; and client friendly versions internally on the safeguarding SharePoint site. Client friendly versions of the policy for children, teens and adults and **yourtown**'s Safeguarding Commitment Statement are published on the **yourtown** website. Team members can download copies of these documents to hand to clients, and should advise children, young people, and adults at risk of their availability.

Core components

- a) Safeguarding policies, procedures and support materials align with and support the Child Safe Standards.
- b) Safeguarding policies, procedures and support materials are accessible and easy to understand.
- c) **yourtown**'s leadership team champions and models compliance with safeguarding policies, procedures and support materials.

|   |            |                     |
|---|------------|---------------------|
| <b>Safeguarding Principles</b>  | <b>DN:</b> | POL-1977            |
| <b>COMPANY CONFIDENTIAL</b> Correct when printed from the Document Portal.<br>Printed documents are uncontrolled. |            | <b>Page:</b> 5 of 6 |



d) Safeguarding policies, procedures and support materials are informed by stakeholder consultation and best practice.

**yourtown** team members and partner organisations understand and implement safeguarding policies, procedures, and support materials.

|   |            |                     |
|---|------------|---------------------|
| <b>Safeguarding Principles</b>  | <b>DN:</b> | POL-1977            |
| <b>COMPANY CONFIDENTIAL</b> Correct when printed from the Document Portal.<br>Printed documents are uncontrolled. |            | <b>Page:</b> 6 of 6 |