National Appropriate Adult Network

NAAN | National Standards 2013

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Introduction

NAAN's National Standards were first adopted by the NAAN Board in 2005 and were approved by the Home Office and the Department of Health in 2011.

The National Standards were reviewed and updated in 2013 taking account of feedback and suggestions from members, the Home Office, the Youth Justice Board and the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) and other stakeholders.

The revised National Standards also take account of the recommendations the joint inspection of Appropriate Adult provision and children in detention after charge *Who's looking out for the children?* (2011).

The National Standards concern all aspects of the delivery of Appropriate Adult services.

They apply whether Appropriate Adults (AAs) are volunteers or paid workers and whether the scheme is located in the statutory, voluntary or private sectors. If and when there are seen to be differences between procedures when AAs are paid rather than volunteers this will be indicated.

Many schemes are part of larger national bodies or are affiliated to such bodies and will therefore be using other quality models or standards. In many cases reference to compliance with these standards will demonstrate achievement of generic standards that are not specific to Appropriate Adult schemes.

Standard 1

Recruitment and selection of Appropriate Adults

1. Diversity

AAs will as far as possible reflect their local community.

Scheme managers will ensure that their advertising/publicity methods are accessible to all members of the community and that introductory meetings, interviews and training sessions are held at accessible times and locations.

Managers will consider how best to recruit AAs from all minority groups, including AAs with disabilities and people with criminal records.

Depending on the ethnic mix of the local area, consideration will be given to methods such as pro-active outreach to community groups or providing initial publicity material in languages other than English to demonstrate that the scheme is inclusive and open to different cultures.

Age, gender, ethnicity, disability and other 'protected characteristics' as set out in the Equalities Act 2010 will be monitored. Ideally standard census definitions of ethnicity will be used.

Guidance note

AA schemes should be compliant with all the requirements of, and the principles behind, the Equalities Act 2010. Schemes will expect fluency in the English language, as an ability to aid understanding and facilitate communication is a key requirement for the role.

2. Interviews

Prospective AAs will be given a role description/task list and person specification and then asked to complete a standard application form.

They will be interviewed by at least two interviewers, using as a base a standard set of questions.

Notes will be kept of the interview and the decision made.

Interviewers will be aware of, or trained in the principles of equal opportunity interviewing.

Guidance note

Small schemes may need to consider using other agencies or experienced volunteers as co-interviewers if necessary. Usually both interviewers will see prospective AAs together, though sometimes serial interviewing may be necessary. NAAN has made some model documents (e.g. role description and person specification) available.

3. Checks

Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks (disclosures) will be completed and two references taken up before a prospective AA is accepted.

These checks are not fool proof. Other robust recruitment measures, such as interview and taking up references are also necessary.

Guidance note

The organisation's policies should make it clear, and recruitment publicity should confirm to prospective AAs, that a criminal record will not necessarily prevent a person becoming an AA. It is good practice to have a written statement covering the scheme's policy with regard to different sorts of offences, which also makes it clear that individuals will be dealt with on a case by case basis unless their offence is on the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)'s autobar list

4. Monitoring

Checks will be renewed regularly in accordance with organisational policies and commissioners' requirements.

5. Shadowing

AAs will not undertake solo visits to police stations until they have successfully completed the minimum training (see separate standard) and have completed at least two shadowing visits (one as an observer and one taking the AA role).

There will be provision for further shadowing visits if the manager or AA feels that this is necessary.

Shadowing visits may be with a manager or with an experienced AA and may take place while the training is going on.

Guidance note

The shadowing visits have a dual purpose, both to support and enable the prospective AA to fulfil the role, and also to identify any problems or difficulties the prospective AA might be having which require further training. The manager or experienced AA undertaking the shadowing visits must be able to confirm by the end that the prospective AA has reached the required standard. The service might want to consider developing a feedback form to be used during the shadowing process.

6. Rejection

The AA's acceptance following successful completion of this process will be confirmed in writing. Prospective AAs rejected at any stage will be notified in writing, with a clear offer to provide reasons and feedback.

7. Volunteers

For organisations using volunteers as AAs, care needs to be taken with the use of language in the recruitment process and in the way expenses are reimbursed to ensure that a contract of employment is not created unintentionally.

Guidance note

Schemes that are considering paying AAs even a token amount for their services need to be aware that they would not then be volunteers. There are many implications of this. A local volunteer centre (bureau) or voluntary action centre (Council for Voluntary Service) should be able to provide advice or see www.volunteering.org.uk. A clear brief and role description should be supplied when recruiting volunteers through local volunteer centres or websites such as www.do-it.org.uk.

8. Exclusion

AA schemes should have an explicit commitment to inclusivity and diversity which avoids the inadvertent exclusion of potential AAs from minority or disadvantaged groups by policies which automatically exclude certain groups without specific justified reasons.

Guidance note

Any specific requirements, such as fluency in English, should be based solely on the requirements of the role.

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Standard 2

Support, supervision, development & retention of Appropriate Adults

1. Support

AAs will be provided with the following minimum levels of support: -

- Regular support meetings with other AAs and scheme manager at least every two/three months.
- Regular individual supervision sessions.
- Access to a manager or equivalent by phone in an emergency

Guidance note

AAs need to be made aware from the outset that supervision and attendance at support meetings are not optional extras. The actual frequency of the regular supervision will depend on the level of callouts and other factors. Some of the contacts (with the manager or an appropriate staff member) may be by telephone instead of face to face. Supervision meetings will be in addition to volunteer or staff team meetings.

2. Training

AAs will have access to on-going training and will be kept up to date with changes to PACE codes of practice, safeguarding requirements for children and vulnerable adults and other relevant legislation.

Guidance note

Individual AA training records should be kept.

3. Welfare

AAs will be able to access counselling in exceptional cases (e.g. when they have been involved in a very serious case or stressful incident).

Guidance note

Organisations running AA schemes have a duty of care to their AAs whether paid staff or volunteers. It should be possible to access such a service by a written agreement either with the local police (whereby AAs are able to access police welfare services), or by a similar agreement with the local youth offending team or local authority social services department. If this is not possible, NAAN recommends that schemes have other local arrangements in place and the budget to pay for it.

4. Involvement

AAs will be able to have an input into the running of the scheme and feedback and suggestions from AAs will be actively sought by scheme managers

Guidance note

This could be done in a number of ways, for example through an AA steering group, questionnaires, a suggestion box or a standing item on AA meeting agendas.

5. Experience

Experienced AAs will be involved in the training and induction of new AAs.

Guidance note

They can also help with shadowing visits.

Standard 3

Training

1. Minimum duration

Each Appropriate Adult scheme will ensure that paid and/or volunteer Appropriate Adults receive a minimum of 20 hours training in order to achieve a level of competency in fulfilling the role as defined by the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 (PACE) Codes of Practice

Guidance note

This training may take place over three full days, or a series of shorter sessions. Training should be reinforced by a number of shadowing visits with an experienced AA (at least two). See National Standard 1 on the Recruitment and Selection of Appropriate Adults.

NAAN's Training Pack and DVD covering all aspects of the Appropriate Adult role can be used as a basis for AA training.

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2. Content

The training should include: -

- A basic introduction to the relevant parts of the Criminal Justice System and the role of the AA in police stations (including PACE Code C as amended in 2012).
- An introduction to mental health and learning disability issues (for both juvenile and vulnerable adult schemes)
- An introduction to issues facing young people and the role of youth offending teams (YOTS) (for juvenile schemes)

Guidance note

Guidance on the actual content of the training can be found in the NAAN Training Pack.

Some paid and volunteer AAs may have covered some of these topics as part of a professional, organisational or generic volunteer training course.

- Information on child protection and safeguarding with regard to both children and vulnerable adults. This should include details of referral procedures to be followed if the AA has any concerns about safeguarding issues
- An introduction to police interviews and procedures and the role of the custody officer
- Information on police and local authority responsibility for accommodation transfers (PACE s.38(6))
- An introduction to issues arising in serious cases (for schemes providing a service in such cases)
- An introduction to basic communication skills with particular reference to supporting detainees with learning difficulties or other communication problems
- An introduction to relevant organisational policies such as confidentiality, information sharing protocols, safeguarding, health and safety etc.
- An introduction to the role of the defence solicitor and the forensic physician/healthcare professional
- Information about disposals such as cautions, bail etc. and their implications for the detainee.

3. Visits

All training should include a visit to a police custody suite and an introduction to relevant custody staff.

Guidance note

This should be additional to the minimum 20 hours specified above.

4. Professional Development

Each scheme should provide both regular updates and refresher training for AAs, either in one-off formal training sessions or through regular AA meetings and/or email briefings.

Guidance note

Schemes will need to ensure that they keep up-to-date with changes to legislation and police procedures to enable them to update their training regularly. They may wish to use the NAAN website www.appropriateadult.org.uk and member emails to help with this. Schemes may use (e) newsletters and email briefings, as well as AA meetings to ensure AAs are kept up-to-date.

5. Accreditation

Each scheme should consider the benefits of obtaining accreditation for its training and should make every effort to ensure that those AAs who wish to follow an accreditation route should be enabled to do so.

Guidance note

There are a number of options for accreditation. NAAN has developed three OCN accredited training units based on the Training Pack. If schemes decide not to offer accredited training to their AAs their reasons for this should be made clear.

6. Budgets

All schemes should ensure that their operational budget allows both for adequate initial training and refresher courses.

Guidance note

Some schemes may wish to consider co-operating with others on a local or sub-regional basis to share training and maximise the use of resources. Experienced AAs as well as schemes

managers or external trainers can play a valuable role in training.

7. Specialists

Scheme managers should involve their local police in their AA training (e.g. to provide an introduction to police procedures or disposals).

They should also make use of other local expertise (e.g. a session on learning disability from the local specialist team and on safeguarding from the Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB)).

Guidance note

Police forces or local authorities may also be able to provide help with venues or other resources for training even when the latter are not directly delivering the AA service. The police and local specialist teams may be more willing to assist in training if the AA scheme can offer some reciprocal training.

8. Development

All schemes should ensure that they have systems in place to receive feedback and evaluate training, to enable points of learning to be identified and made use of.

Guidance note

Feedback from evaluation forms can be uses to plan and adjust training.

Standard 4

Service delivery for Appropriate Adult schemes

1. Rotas

The rota needs to make enough use of AAs so that they remain in practice and also feel involved. At the same time no one AA should be overused. As a guideline it is suggested that AAs should be available at least the equivalent of one session (of 4-6 hours) a week or 4 a month. There is no suggested maximum but managers will be aware of the issue of burnout or over commitment particularly among some volunteers.

It is also recommended that an AA should not normally be expected to be at a police station for longer than 8 hours in total with proper breaks. Overlap and back-up systems will need to be in place to enable a handover should this become necessary.

Guidance note

AAs There will be large variations in practice depending on the needs and the profile of the service, therefore general guidance only has been given here. 'Proper breaks' is taken to mean breaks totalling at least one hour in an eight hour period.

2. Methods for requesting an AA

There are three main models for managing the rota and AAs' phone numbers, each with advantages and disadvantages.

1. A central switchboard, either run directly by the organisation concerned or contracted out. In these cases, the switchboard holds the phone numbers of the AAs on the rota and passes on the requests from the police.
2. The police contact AAs directly. This can be either each station or through a central police contact point.
3. The scheme manager, or delegated staff member, manages the rota and is contacted by the police by phone or pager and in turn contacts the AAs.

In deciding on the most appropriate model, managers will need to take account of size of scheme, costs, reliability of switchboard operator, and confidence in the police to follow the rota and so on.

In all cases, consideration needs to be given to what phone numbers are given to the rota handler – home or mobiles, and if the latter, whether these should be provided by the scheme.

Guidance note

Some members have expressed strong concern about second option, i.e. the police having AAs' home or mobile phone numbers. There are two main reasons for this concern.

Firstly some police officers may not follow the rota but ring AAs 'on spec', perhaps choosing AAs who are seen as being 'compliant' thus risking the actual or perceived independence of the AA. This is made more problematic if the AA concerned responds and/or does not inform his/her manager. Measures to address this concern should be considered if this is the option chosen.

The second concern is that personal phone numbers of the AA could be entered onto the custody record, and the detainee or others could gain access to this information. As above, measures to address this should be considered – for example, an agreement with the police to ensure that only contact details for the scheme are included in the custody record.

3. Back up & on-call arrangements

It has already been stated (in National Standard 2) that AAs should have access to managerial support in an emergency.

In principle, there is also agreement that the police should have access to a scheme manager or other appointed person in an emergency, during the hours the AA service operates.

Managers should not be expected to provide this service single-handedly, so proper cover and rotas for the managers themselves need to be in place.

The provision of a back-up service out of office hours also need to be compensated for, either in the salary level itself, or though on-call payments, or through a time off in lieu (TOIL) arrangement.

Guidance note

Some scheme managers are in effect on call up to 18 (or even 24) hours a day. This is not good practice and is also potentially a health and safety issue for the employing authority.

The real costs of providing a proper back up service need to be built into contracts.

Consideration also needs to be given to arrangements with the YOTs or emergency duty teams concerning out of hours back up.

Guidance note

Issues with late evening/night-time call outs include: requirements of the funder/commissioner; need for detainees to have a rest period; requirement for suspects, particularly children, not to be detained overnight unless strictly necessary; need for the AA to be alert enough to act effectively.

If it becomes clear that an interview is not going to start by midnight the AA should consider whether it is appropriate to withdraw. The police will then need to make an arrangement through the AA scheme for an AA to come in the next morning.

If schemes decide to offer a 24 hour service, full consideration should be given to the costs and other implications of this. Schemes should consider agreeing guidelines for defining an emergency or 'exceptional case' with the police (and if necessary with commissioners) to facilitate decision making in these situations.

4. Hours

As a general rule an AA service should be provided from whatever source from around 8am to midnight 365 days a year.

There should be an understanding that AAs will only be called out after 11pm in exceptional cases and when there is a real prospect of an interview before midnight.

5. Response times

These should be part of any contract. The YJB revised Case Management Guidance (2010) specifies that an AA must be provided within two hours of the initial request if required. This should be the maximum response time for all requests for AAs.

Guidance note

Schemes will need to specify in their contracts exactly what the response time target actually means. There is for example, the initial (telephone) response which confirms that an AA will be available at a given time. Then there is the actual time taken to arrive at the police station. In all cases the whole process should not be more than two hours if the AA is required immediately and all parties are ready to proceed. If though the AA is being 'booked' for a later time (depending for example on the arrival of a legal representative, or a decision by the CPS), there will need to be a local agreement that (for example) the AA will arrive within 30 minutes of the specified time. There may also need to be some flexibility in rural areas to allow for extended travelling times and for poor weather conditions.

6. Serious cases

All Appropriate Adults should be trained and supported sufficiently to deal with all cases. However everyone should be able to make a judgement about their own suitability and have the right to refuse to accept a particular case on any occasion.

Guidance note

Practices vary in this area and commissioners may have specific requirements. However, a two tier system, whereby certain Appropriate Adults deal with serious cases, can be divisive and counter-productive. Scheme managers may wish to ensure that newly trained AAs gain experience on routine cases before undertaking a very serious case There should also be a policy whereby AAs can decline to accept a particular case in certain defined situations, for example if the details of that case would be particularly difficult for the AA to deal with or they do not feel that they have the ability to undertake the role to the best of their ability due to ill health, general feelings of stress etc.

7. Co-defendants

It is recommended that no person should act as an AA for more than one co-accused in any one case to avoid any possible conflict of interest or the perception of such a conflict.

Guidance note

Although there should be no conflict of interest in these cases it is likely to be more satisfactory to have different AAs for different co-defendants. However, while this is good practice, it is recognised that this is not always practical. In order to pre-empt any later problems, it may be possible to have an agreement with the police that allows AAs working with more than one detainee in the same case to have their individual consultations with all detainees prior to any interviews. However this may not always be practicable.

8. Legal consultation attendance

The PACE codes make clear that AAs can be present at the detainee's private consultation with his/her legal representative, if the detainee wishes it.

However the AA is not covered by legal privilege and all parties should be made fully aware of the possible consequences of this before an AA agrees to sit in on these interviews.

An AA can continue in role if s/he witnesses a confession AFTER taking on the role at a police station but again needs to be aware of the implications of the lack of legal privilege.

Guidance note

The position with regard to AAs and the lack of legal privilege is made clear in the 2012 revised PACE Code C, Note 1 E. This should be covered in the AA training module on confidentiality.

9. Postcode coverage

In contract negotiations scheme managers should seek to ensure that AAs services are provided to everyone detained at any custody suite covered by the scheme. The detainee's origin or home address should not be a factor.

YOTs, and organisations delivering the AA service on their behalf, should note that the local YOT is also responsible for providing an AA service for juveniles held in YOIs, STCs and SCHs located in their area.

Guidance note

For juveniles, neighbouring YOTs may come to some cover arrangements in line with the YJB National Standards on Youth Justice.

Similarly, arrangements may need to be made where custody suites are shared with another region or county, each with its own AA provider.

10. Police liaison

There should always be an identified senior police officer at Inspector level or above for liaison with the scheme. There should be regular meetings and an agreed method for raising issues or concerns. Issues and concerns and the resolution of these should be recorded.

Guidance note

Where custody users' panels exist, AA scheme managers should ensure that they are involved in these. Local CDS offices may also be involved in liaison meetings.

11. Liaison & diversion

AA schemes should ensure that they have a close working relationship with local liaison and diversion services where they exist. These are developing across the country and should be available everywhere by 2014.

Each AA scheme should have referral arrangements into these schemes.

Guidance note

There are also opportunities for assistance with training, using for example local mental health or learning disability specialist teams. Details of Liaison and Diversion services in England can be found at www.nlddn.org.uk. In Wales this information can be found on the relevant NHS Trust website.

12. Monitoring & evaluation

AA schemes should have quality assurance systems in place to maintain a high level of service to detainees. This will include shadowing visits for experienced as well as new AAs and the opportunity for two-way feedback. Feedback from the police and other stakeholders such as solicitors should also be sought on a regular basis. Feedback or report forms should be monitored regularly.

Consideration should be given to finding ways of seeking feedback from detainees.

Guidance note

The AA manager/coordinator may wish to carry out un-announced quality assurance 'shadowing' visits periodically.

The nature of the work can make it very difficult to get feedback from detainees but it may, for example, be possible to get feedback from known services users through focus groups or follow up contacts.

13. Transport

In most areas AAs will use their own transport to get to and from police stations. Scheme managers should make sure that AAs understand that it is their responsibility to ensure that their vehicles are road worthy and properly taxed and insured for the purpose.

Mileage rates will be agreed locally and should take account of additional costs such as insurance.

In some areas such as large urban areas, public transport may be suitable particularly during the day and early evening.

On some occasions (e.g. late evening) taxis will be necessary and these should be paid for by the scheme.

Guidance note

There are a number of options for setting mileage rates. Generally these should be linked to a local or national scale such as the NJC scale, local social services or local CVS rates. Rates should be reviewed annually. Scheme managers need to be aware of HM Revenue and Customs rules on mileage allowances. With regard to motor insurance, paid AAs will generally need business use cover.

For schemes using volunteers, managers should consider providing a standard letter for volunteers to give to their motor insurer explaining the voluntary nature of the vehicle use. With most insurers an additional premium should not be payable but insurers must be notified of the situation.

14. Expenses

Expenses (where payable), whether for volunteers or paid AAs, should be paid according to an agreed scale (usually linked to a local or national scale) for meals, phone, transport and other expenses incurred while fulfilling the AA role.

Expenses should be paid on the production of receipts and not as fixed 'allowances' as the latter could have tax implications and in the case of volunteers could also affect their volunteer status.

Guidance note

As with mileage rates, a national (such as NJC) or local scale could be used. Local Authorities or YOTs as well as many larger voluntary organisations will already have a scale in use. For volunteer schemes it is important to ensure that AAs do claim their expenses. Not doing so hides the true costs of the scheme. It is always possible for AAs to donate this money to the scheme and charities may be able to increase this donation through GiftAid.

15. Insurance

Schemes must have a policy that covers paid staff and/or volunteers. For schemes using volunteers, policies should explicitly mention volunteers to ensure coverage. Insurers should also be made aware of the types of work that AAs are doing.

Employer's Liability Insurance: Covers paid employees in the event of accident, disease or injury caused or worsened as a result of work or employer's negligence. This should be explicitly extended to cover volunteers for schemes using volunteers.

Public Liability Insurance: This is also known as third party insurance. It should explicitly mention volunteers for schemes using volunteers. It protects the organisation for claims by members of the public for death, illness, loss, injury, or accident caused by the negligence of the organisation. It generally covers anybody other than employees who come into contact with the organisation. This should include volunteers, covering them against loss or injury caused by negligence of the organisation if they are not covered under the employer's liability insurance. It also protects for loss or damage to property caused through the negligence of someone acting with the authority of the organisation, which would include the actions of volunteers. Public liability cover should clearly cover loss or injury caused by paid or volunteer AAs. In some cases an AA could be sued as an individual for damage caused to a third party, so the public liability insurance should indemnify them against this.

Guidance note

There may be an age limit for employer liability or personal accident in some policies.

Organisations may also wish to consider the need for insurance to cover professional liability, professional indemnity errors and omissions or malpractice insurance. Such insurance covers the organisation for claims arising from loss or injury caused by services provided negligently or without reasonable care. Such loss might arise, for example, from incorrect or inaccurate advice. An organisation can be sued for claims arising from incorrect advice or information even if it is given free or via a telephone helpline.

16. Health & safety

All schemes should have a detailed health and safety policy, either stand alone or part of a wider organisational policy. This should be cross referenced to the training to ensure that all AAs are trained in all H and S issues. This would include issues concerning behaviour and incidents in police stations, health risks and (free) access to appropriate vaccinations etc. There should also be a comprehensive risk assessment of the role undertaken, to which all AAs would have access.

Guidance note

This risk assessment is separate from the one in custody suites which is the responsibility of the custody officer. Schemes are advised not to give specific advice about vaccinations as this is a medical issue. The risk factors and the options should be covered fully as part of the induction process. AAs should be advised to seek medical advice and make their own decisions. Access to a full range of vaccinations should be made as easy as possible. If not available through local GP services, some schemes have negotiated this through local police service medical services

17. Ratio of managers to AAs

The suitable ratio of managers to AAs will depend on a number of issues. For example, the level (if any) of admin or other support the scheme manager has, other work the manager has responsibility for, on-call demands and level of his/her own managerial support and back up.

Guidance note

Depending on these factors the maximum number could be anything from 25-40 AAs per manager or supervising staff member.

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18. Call out type

All AA schemes should cover all PACE interviews in police stations.

Other PACE interviews at locations other than police stations may be covered. For non-statutory organisations this is a matter for agreement with the funder.

As already indicated YOTs also have a responsibility for AA services for juveniles in their local YOI/STC/SCH.

The AA role is to support children and vulnerable adults during their detention not just during the interview. The revised PACE Code C (July 2012) makes it clear that the police should make every effort to ensure that an AA is present for charge or other disposal. It should also be possible for the AA's views to be taken into account when detention is reviewed.

Guidance note

Revisions to PACE Code C (2012) may have both resource and training implications.

Supporting vulnerable witnesses and victims is a different role, which may be provided by other agencies e.g. Victim Support or a 'pre-trial support person' (PACE Code D). Schemes choosing to provide these additional services should be aware of cost and training implications and overlap with other services.

Any schemes choosing to provide AAs for non-PACE interviews need to be aware of cost, resource and training implications.

AAs are not involved in the assessment process when a vulnerable adult has been removed to a Place of Safety under Sections 135 or 136 of the Mental Health Act 1983.

It would not be considered good practice for an Approved Mental Health Professional involved in an assessment to become the AA for that person, (should the police decide to pursue a criminal case but there is nothing in legislation to stop them.

19. Inter-agency working protocol

Schemes should have a detailed inter-agency working protocol outlining expectations of all parties in respect of organisation policies, partnership working, etc. and outlining consequences if the protocol is breached.

Guidance note

This should cover working arrangements with the YOT (for contracted schemes) police, local authority departments (e.g. social services, accommodation team) and other relevant local agencies, such as the local Liaison and Diversion Service

20. Policies

Schemes should have the following organisational policies in place:

- Health and safety
- Policy on using volunteers (if applicable)
- Equal opportunity/diversity/inclusion policy, including policy on people with criminal records.
- Training policy
- Expenses policy
- Confidentiality policy
- Complaints policy for stakeholders and service users e.g. detainees, local authorities and police
- Whistle blowing policy
- Safeguarding and child and vulnerable adult protection policy.

Guidance note

Model policies are available from a wide range of national and local bodies, such as Volunteering England and the local CVS, but should be adapted to suit each particular organisation's situation.

www.volunteering.org.uk

21. Records & information sharing

Schemes will keep records on call outs to enable them to provide an effective service and to satisfy the requirements of funders, and if working with juveniles, the requirements of the Youth Justice Board.

Names of detainees should only be recorded and used to enable more effective working of the scheme and commitments to relevant partner agencies (e.g. YOTs, social services departments).

Guidance note

Schemes should ensure any information sharing protocols are compliant with Data Protection and other relevant legislation. Records should deal with facts not opinions. Arrangements must be in place for the secure transfer of sensitive and confidential information. Schemes should have clear rules concerning when personal information about detainees may be shared without their explicit consent (e.g. when there are safeguarding concerns). In other situations, a system should be in place for requesting permission to share information (for example to make a referral to another service)

Appendix

Summary of changes

Standard 1

The section on equality in recruitment has been strengthened, encompassing; pro-active outreach, cultural openness, people with criminal records and explicit link to Equalities Act 2010. There is now a clear expectation of fluency in English. References to the defunct CRB (Criminal Records Bureau) are updated to the new DBS (Disclosure & Barring Service).

Standard 2

AAs should have on-going access to safeguarding training / updates. Each AA should have a personal training record. Schemes have an organisational duty of care to AAs and should provide access to welfare services.

Standard 3

The minimum training requirement has increased from 18 to 20 hours. Training should include; learning disability issues (juvenile and adult); child protection and safeguarding including procedures; role of custody officer; s.38 transfers to local authority accommodation; Supporting people with learning difficulties or other communication problems; introduction to policies such as confidentiality, information sharing protocols, safeguarding, health and safety etc.; disposals and implications for detainees. Clear reasons to be given if accredited training is not offered. Police and other local training expertise should be used. AA feedback on training should be acted upon.

Standard 4

Schemes should consider security implications if police have AA phone numbers. The 2 hour response time in the YJB Case Management Guidance is the maximum for AA requests (except pre-booking). Schemes need a policy on AAs declining cases. Clear arrangements are required where custody suites are shared between regions. Schemes need strong links with Liaison & Diversion. There must be quality assurance systems to ensure quality service to detainees, including capturing their feedback. AAs should claim all expenses to ensure transparent and accurate scheme costs. AA's view on detention review should be captured and they should be enabled to be present at disposal. Schemes should have a clear safeguarding/ vulnerable adult protection policy. There should be effective information sharing arrangements and secure transfer of sensitive, personal and confidential information.