

Vulnerable Client Policy

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Introduction

Here at RCM Insolvency we are committed to ensuring that all employees are able to welcome, approach, deal and recognise the signs of a client who may be vulnerable and how best to handle situations and in the most respectful and appropriate way maintaining care, respect and understanding to the client during their journey to ensure they have a positive experience.

A vulnerable client; “A vulnerable customer is someone who, due to their personal circumstance, is especially susceptible to detriment, particularly when a firm is not acting with appropriate levels of care”

All employees here at RCM Insolvency Limited regardless of position who have direct contact with clients must read and become familiar with this policy.

All employees will come into contact with those who are vulnerable on a daily basis, including those who may find it difficult to make an informed decision about the choices they have. Examples of some are found below;

- Those who have a diagnosed condition such as dementia
- Those who have suffered with a bereavement
- Those with learning difficulties
- Those who are elderly
- Those who's language differs

Individuals may not realise they are vulnerable or realise they should not be making significant life decisions due to their vulnerability

Identifying Vulnerabilities

We are aware that all clients are somewhat vulnerable by way of their financial hardship however, it is vital that we follow this policy to ensure that all clients are treated fairly and equally regardless of their vulnerability and added risk factors.

Below are some risk factors;

- Learning Difficulties
- Sickness
- Disability
- Mental Health
- Language Barrier
- Other Impairments
- Suicidal
- Bereavement
- Undergoing Medical Treatment

Risk factors are there to help identify a clients vulnerability. It is important to recognise that those clients with more than one risk factor holds a significant increase in the clients vulnerability.

Employees must be aware and alert to any signs which may indicate that the person they are speaking with may not at that time have the capacity to make decisions or understand the implications of the arrangements that they are being asked to make or advise they are being given. Whilst we are not aiming to diagnose our employees should use their skills which including listening, identifying a clients needs and adjusting their approach accordingly for the requirements for each individual.

Employees should be alert for the following;

- They appear to be confused
- They ask for you to speak up or speak slower
- They don't understand a question or information that has been relayed
- Questions unrelated to the current communication
- They answer "yes" to a question when it is clear they haven't listened or understood the information
- They take a long time to respond
- They wonder from the point of discussion and talk about something that doesn't make sense
- They keep repeating themselves

We expect our employees to use some the following;

- Set expectations for the call, information required and how long the call should last
- Be patient, speak clearly and empathise with the client
- Don't rush the client through the call, take time and allow the client time where needed
- Guide the call through and keep the call "on purpose"
- Don't make assumptions about the clients needs
- Clarify understanding with the client answering any questions they may have
- Ask questions to clarify understanding
- Offer alternative to dealing with by phone where appropriate.
- Give the client time to explain in full. Do not interrupt or appear impatient.
- Listen carefully to the client
- Ask if there is a better time to call/ preferred time
- If in doubt or you are struggling to deal with the clients vulnerabilities please approach your line manager.
- Ask the client if there is anyone they wish to speak to before making any decisions

At RCM Insolvency the following steps are taken;

- Client is noted as vulnerable on the system
- Gather as much information as possible regarding vulnerability
- Assess Risk Level
- Ask the client how they manage their vulnerability
- Provide direction for further help (websites/ contact numbers)
- Confirmed preferred contact methods
- Ask if they wish for third party to be added to case
- Encourage client to contact us if struggling

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Some examples of organisations we may refer clients to;

MIND (Mental Health Charity which provides confidential mental health information)

Website: www.mind.org.uk/

Email: info@mind.org.uk

Phone: 0300 123 3393

Samaritans (Confidential emotional support service available 24 hours a day)

Website: www.samaritans.org/how-we-can-help/contact-samaritan/

Email: jo@samaritans.org

Phone: 116 123

Get Connected (UK No1's resource for Dual Diagnosis)

Website: www.getconnected.org.uk/

Email: info@getconnected.org.uk

Phone: 0203 993 5571

CALM – Campaign Against Living Miserably

Website: www.thecalmzone.net/

Webchat: 5pm to Midnight (Direct through website)

Phone: 080 58 58 58

Cruse Bereavement Support

Website: www.cruse.org.uk/

Webchat: 9am – 9pm Monday to Friday (Direct through website)

Phone: 0808 808 1677

Breathing Space UK

Website: www.breathing-space.uk

Phone: 01207 507444

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