

# Help Bristol's Homeless (CIC)

## Street Outreach Guidelines

### Safeguarding & Code of Conduct

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We believe that effective safeguarding also looks beyond traditional notions of harm and abuse, we also take into consideration health and safety, and other ways to ensure the health and wellbeing of volunteers and clients.

#### **Outreach Volunteer Safeguarding:**

- Stay close to your outreach supervisor and within your group.
- Wear suitable clothing. It can be very cold and wet during street outreach.
- Do not wear expensive jewellery, clothes or carry excessive money or valuable items. This is to keep you safe and to avoid offending or embarrassing clients.
- Keep a phone on you but out of view.
- Avoid overloading to reduce straining or injury. If a load is too heavy, please let your team know so that distribution of items can be re-organised.
- If you feel overwhelmed or upset, please speak with your outreach supervisor.

#### **Outreach code of conduct:**

- Do not approach clients in big groups. This can be overwhelming and intimidating to some clients. If you are in a group of three or more your outreach supervisor will advise that no more than two people approach the client or clients.
- Do not give your personal details to clients i.e. phone number or address
- Do not make promises. If you agree to something that you are not able to uphold, you could risk doing considerable damage to the individual, as well as putting other volunteers at risk.
- Do not give money, tobacco items or lighters to clients; HBH aims to be consistent with our support that focuses on the distribution of food, clothing and sleeping bags.
- At all times, be polite, non-judgemental and act in a friendly manner. It's good to chat to clients if they want to, to some we may be the first people they have really spoken to that day and this can be a positive help to them.
- Similarly, a client may not wish to talk, in which case we should respect their needs and give them space.
- Avoid offering advice or opinions to service users unless you are certain that the information is correct.
- If you feel unsafe in approaching a client, ask your outreach supervisor for guidance.
- In the event that you are the focus of any form of aggression from a client or a member of the public, be calm in response and move away from the situation quickly. Inform your outreach supervisor as it may be deemed necessary to contact emergency services.
- In the event that a client is seriously unwell (not just asleep or intoxicated) please inform your outreach supervisor as it may be deemed necessary to contact emergency services.

**Our full Safeguarding and Health and Safety Policy is available on request or available to read on our website: <https://helpbristolshomeless.co.uk>**