



## Safe Home Ireland Client Charter

**Safe Home Ireland** was set up in 2000 to assist older qualifying Irish born emigrants to explore the option of returning to to secure affordable housing back in their native areas. Our work is spread across the 26 counties and we provide supports to our applicants at every stage of their journey from the initial enquiry abroad to actual return home. We also provide a free, confidential information and advice service to anyone who may be considering returning or moving to Ireland, regardless of their age or circumstance.

### **Our Mission**

To act as the link for Irish emigrants both at home and abroad by providing advice, information, guidance and supports for those seeking permanent repatriation as well as those who chose to stay in their adopted country.

***We aim to deliver an exceptional experience and are committed to the following:***

### **Information provision**

We will provide you with high quality, professional, independent and accurate information on all aspects of your application/query/case. We will inform you of your rights, entitlements and responsibilities. We will respond to all queries in a timely, confidential and sensitive manner.

### **Person centred service**

Our qualified and trained staff will be responsive to your particular needs and we will deliver our services sensitively and efficiently at all times.

### **Confidentiality**

We respect your right to privacy and all information you give us will be treated in strictest confidence. However, there are limited circumstances where we made need to breach confidentiality. Details of these circumstances and all aspects relating to confidentiality are attached to this Charter (**Appendix 1**)

### **Monitoring and evaluation**

We will actively seek your feedback to help us develop, deliver and evaluate our services.

### **Collaboration**

We will work closely with other organisations in Ireland and abroad to ensure a holistic and improved response to collective issues and needs of returning emigrants.

## Transparency

We are open and transparent about our processes and all information on Safe Home services is published on our website. We will ensure that materials on our website is up-to-date and accessible.

## Equality

We are committed to the principles of equality and diversity and will treat you with courtesy, respect and dignity

## Comments, suggestions and complaints

We want to provide the best service possible to you and we value your comments, complaints and suggestions. Your feedback will be used as an indicator of our performance and help us to continuously improve our services. Please contact the Safe Home office for our complaints/ feedback form.

## To allow us to help, we expect you will:

- Give us full and accurate information when you contact us. Be fully honest with us.
- Tell us if your circumstances change.
- Provide us with honest, constructive feedback on our service.
- Contact us if you believe we have made an error or acted inappropriately, and wish to make a complaint.
- Treat our staff with courtesy and respect

*For further advice, information or support contact us directly at:*

**Safe Home Ireland**, St. Brendan's Village, Mulranny, Westport, Co. Mayo.

Tel: 00 353 98 36036; Email:- [info@safehomeireland.com](mailto:info@safehomeireland.com); Website:- [www.safehomeireland.com](http://www.safehomeireland.com).

## **Safe Home Ireland Confidentiality Policy**

### **Definition**

Confidentiality is the protection of information held by Safe Home Ireland (Safe Home) regarding its own operation and information given to Safe Home by any person or organisation.

Personal Data is information relating to a living individual who can be identified from that/those data.

Sensitive Personal Data is information about the racial or ethnic origin of the data subject, her/his political and religious beliefs or opinions, her/his physical or mental health condition, her/his sexual life, the commission or alleged commission of an offence by him/her and subsequent legal proceedings and Trade Union membership.

### **Principles**

- Safe Home respects the right of individuals to own information concerning them and the right to choose how such information is used. Safe Home records should contain relevant and necessary information only and be free of any subjective value judgements.
- Confidentiality is between the client/applicant and Safe Home and any third parties where consent is given.
- Individuals have a right of access to information (both manual and computerised) held about them, to have a printed copy of such information and to correct any inaccurate entries. We will need 5 days' notice to process same.
- Safe Home will ensure by regular monitoring and review that this policy meets statutory and legal requirements, including the Data Protection Act, Children's Act, Rehabilitation of Offenders Act and Public Interest Disclosure Act.
- Breaches of this Policy should be reported to the CEO as soon as possible and will be dealt with through the Safe Home Disciplinary Procedure.

### **Disclosure without Consent**

- There may be circumstances where disclosure of confidential information may not be held to be in breach of confidence e.g. information required by a Court Order; disclosure of information to comply with the law (prevention of Terrorism);
- Child abuse – where information is disclosed that indicates a minor (under 18) may be currently at risk
- Where there are grounds for believing a client will cause physical damage or harm to themselves or others.
- Where feasible, Safe Home will endeavour to obtain the clients consent and discuss with a colleague/CEO in advance of any such disclosure. However, in emergencies Safe Home staff shall make their own judgement as to what action is best.

## **Breaches of Confidentiality**

- Where Safe Home receives a complaint regarding a breach of confidentiality, the CEO will thoroughly investigate the circumstance of the breach.
- Unauthorised and inappropriate disclosure of confidential information will be treated as a serious issue and may result in disciplinary action being taken.

## **Client Confidentiality**

- All Safe Home clients will be informed of our confidentiality codes before uptake of Safe Home services. This will be contained in our Client Charter which will be issued to all housing applicants/clients and be available on our website.
- No discussion concerning any Safe Home client will be entered into with any other party (e.g. family, friends or other agencies) without that client's knowledge and consent.
- Client consent will be mutually agreed at the outset with Safe Home housing applicants and clients will be asked to sign Safe Home 'Consent/Authority to Act' form.
- Clients may choose to be contacted by Safe Home through letter, telephone or both. In some circumstances, contact may involve a home or home visit by Safe Home staff. In such situations, visiting staff should ensure provision for confidential space in advance.
- Safe Home staff will have access only to the files of clients with whom they are working. However, staff may exchange information in relation to a mutual client, but only where such exchange is for the benefit of the client.
- Personal data or sensitive personal data will not be given to funding, research or other bodies.
- All Safe Home statistical and monitoring reports are produced in a format that protects individual identifications.
- Personal data concerning Safe Home clients will not be revealed at training courses, conferences, seminars or any forums attended by staff/others. Examples of casework may be given in a generalised way and the identity of individuals will always be protected.
- In the event of media coverage where a Safe Home client's contribution may be required, the client's explicit permission will be sought. Clients will be informed of the likely personal impact of any such agreed media exposure. All media communications require the CEO's consent.
- Information received from third party sources concerning any client can be shared with that client.
- When the office is closed and during periods where client files are not required for working purposes, such files will be retained in filing cabinets in a locked room in Safe Home offices.
- Clients have the right to avail of Safe Home services without any other person knowing they have done so.
- The CEO is available to assist anyone who may require guidance in relation to confidentiality.