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## SP1816

### Vulnerability

Protecting vulnerable people is a priority for the Police Service of Northern Ireland. The Police Service of Northern Ireland defines vulnerability as *'a term used to describe a person who is in need of special care, support or protection because of age, disability or risk of abuse or neglect'*.



## 1. Policy Statement

Whatever the cause, and wherever it occurs, harm caused to vulnerable adults and children by violence, abuse, exploitation or neglect is not acceptable. It is vital that the right support is provided to vulnerable people whenever they come into contact with police officers or police staff, whether a victim, suspect or witness.

The Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) will work in partnership with other safeguarding agencies and the community, to ensure that the correct support is provided to those who are vulnerable; to affect the safe of recovery of vulnerable people who go missing; to investigate criminal offences committed against those who are vulnerable and to gather evidence that may be later used in court.

The aim of this policy is to:

- Recognise, assess and respond appropriately to those who are vulnerable;
- Provide appropriate support, supervision and training to officers and staff in responding to those who are vulnerable;
- Reduce the incidence of harm, abuse, exploitation and neglect;

- Encourage more victims who are vulnerable, or third parties on their behalf, to report;
- Provide access to justice for vulnerable adults and children;
- Maximise the standard of investigations of crimes against those who are vulnerable; and
- Effectively assess and manage risks to vulnerable people through partnership working.

## 2. Policy Links

The Corporate Policy Framework refers.

## 3. Contact

If you have any comment to make on the content of this Service Policy please contact [PublicProtectionSecretariat@psni.pnn.police.uk](mailto:PublicProtectionSecretariat@psni.pnn.police.uk).