

At ABC Leasing Limited, we are dedicated to addressing the specific needs and challenges of vulnerable individuals. We firmly believe in providing exceptional service to all customers, with particular attention given to those who may be vulnerable due to various circumstances. Our goal is to conduct our business in a manner that does not harm or disadvantage vulnerable customers.

We understand that vulnerability can take different forms, whether it be age, disability, mental health conditions, or financial constraints. Our unwavering commitment is to create an inclusive and supportive environment where every customer feels valued, respected, and understood.

Who are Vulnerable Customers?

According to the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA), vulnerable customers are individuals who, due to their personal circumstances, are especially susceptible to harm or disadvantage when dealing with financial services providers.

Vulnerability encompasses a wide range of circumstances and can affect individuals from various backgrounds and demographics. According to the FCA, around 50% of UK adults exhibit one or more characteristics of vulnerability. This statistic highlights the widespread prevalence of vulnerable customers in the UK and the need for financial services providers to adopt inclusive and supportive practices to cater to their unique needs and challenges.

Identifying Vulnerable Customers

To effectively address the needs of vulnerable customers, it is crucial to be able to identify them. Risk factors can influence vulnerability, including negative life events, health conditions, resilience levels, and other impairments. In many cases, it is common for more than one risk factor to be present, which increases the consumer's vulnerability.

Our staff members undergo comprehensive training to identify and support vulnerable customers, ensuring they receive the necessary assistance to achieve a good outcome. However, it can be challenging to recognise these characteristics.

If you believe you meet the criteria for a vulnerable customer, please notify us as soon as possible of your particular needs. You are encouraged to do this when you first make contact with us. If you require extra assistance, please contact us at 0845 430 0234 or email info@abc-leasing.com. You only need to inform us once unless your needs change.

Vulnerable Groups

As we mentioned before, vulnerability encompasses a wide range of circumstances and can affect individuals from various backgrounds and demographics. Type of vulnerable groups may include, but are not limited to:

Age of the individual

Both older and younger individuals can be vulnerable customers. Older individuals may face challenges due to cognitive decline, physical limitations, or social isolation. On the other hand, younger individuals may lack experience in managing their finances and may require additional guidance and support.

Disabled individuals

Customers with physical or mental disabilities may encounter barriers in accessing financial services, understanding complex information, or navigating digital platforms.

Individuals with mental health conditions

Customers with mental health conditions may experience challenges managing their finances, making sound financial decisions, or dealing with financial stressors.

Low-income households

Customers from low-income households often face financial constraints, making them more vulnerable to predatory practices, inadequate access to essential services, or limited financial resources for emergencies.

Individuals experiencing life events

Customers going through significant life events such as bereavement, divorce, unemployment, or illness may require additional support and understanding during these challenging times.

Lack of English language skills

Customers who have a strong command of the English language may need help understanding complex financial information, navigating financial systems, or effectively communicating their needs and concerns.

Customers under duress

Individuals experiencing coercion, pressure, or abuse may find themselves in vulnerable situations when interacting with financial service providers. They may require additional sensitivity and support to ensure their safety and well-being.

It is important to note that not all customers within these groups are automatically considered vulnerable. Many individuals within these groups are capable and empowered to make their own financial decisions, including leasing a vehicle. Therefore, when we identify a potential vulnerability, we consider the customer's individual circumstances to respond and provide appropriate support accordingly. We understand that each customer is unique, and our approach is tailored to address their specific needs and ensure a positive experience.

Assisting Vulnerable Customers

ABC Leasing Ltd is committed to supporting vulnerable customers by providing them with the necessary assistance and addressing their needs appropriately. To achieve this, we have implemented comprehensive training programs for our employees, equipping them with the skills needed to identify and assist vulnerable customers effectively.

We understand that every individual has different needs, and some may require additional assistance. To accommodate this, we offer tailored assistance and support catered to the unique requirements of the vulnerable customer. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Gaining explicit consent to record a customer's support needs and adhere to this policy.
- Continuously seeking confirmation that the customer has understood the information that has been provided.
- Providing additional opportunities for the customer to ask questions about the information we have provided.
- Providing clear and accessible communication materials, ensuring that information is presented in a format that is easy to understand and navigate.
- Offering alternative communication methods, such as email, text messaging, a translator or interpreter, video conferencing, large print documents, or audio CD format for customers who may face challenges with traditional means of communication.
- Providing specialised customer support by team members trained in assisting vulnerable customers.
- Collaborating with external organisations such as Citizen's Advice, Samaritans and Age UK to enhance our support network for vulnerable customers.

In addition to the above, we have established clear escalation procedures that enable our employees to promptly escalate complex or urgent cases to specialised teams or management, ensuring that vulnerable customers receive the necessary attention and care. If, for any reason, we are unable to assist a customer, we are committed to ensuring that they understand the alternative options available to them.

Protecting Vulnerable Customer Data and Privacy

At ABC Leasing Ltd, we place utmost importance on confidentiality and data security when serving vulnerable customers. We fully understand the sensitivity of personal information and the potential risks associated with mishandling or unauthorised access. Therefore, we are committed to complying with all relevant data protection laws and regulations, including the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), to safeguard your information.

Please be aware that we may need to collect limited information about your vulnerability to provide you with the necessary support. If you do not give consent for this information to be recorded, you will need to inform us

each time you contact us regarding any support you require. Any personal information we record is in line with our Privacy Policy, ensuring your privacy and confidentiality.

For further details on how we protect the personal information of vulnerable customers and maintain their privacy, please refer to our Privacy Policy. It provides comprehensive information on our data security measures and steps to safeguard personal information.

Feedback, Complaints, and Continuous Improvement

Feedback plays a crucial role in driving continuous improvement of our vulnerable customer policy and related processes. By carefully analysing and evaluating the feedback we receive, we can identify areas where enhancements can be made to support our vulnerable customers better. We provide various channels for vulnerable customers to express their feedback and concerns. This includes dedicated helplines, online feedback forms, and regular communication through surveys. We actively encourage customers to share their experiences, suggestions, and grievances, as their input is invaluable in shaping our services and policies to better meet their needs.

Our commitment extends beyond just receiving feedback – we prioritise prompt and effective responses to any complaints or feedback. To ensure this, we have established robust complaint and feedback systems to ensure that all concerns are acknowledged, thoroughly investigated, and addressed in a timely manner.

Need additional support?

This webpage outlines our Vulnerable Customer policy, highlighting our commitment to fairness, understanding, and inclusivity.

If you require additional support or would like further information or clarification regarding our Vulnerable Customer policy, please contact us by email info@abc-leasing.com or telephone 0845 430 0234. We are here to assist you and provide the necessary guidance and support you may need.