

# Big Brother confirms welfare package for Housemates in 2023

Published Tue 03 Oct 2023



## [Statement](#)

### **Big Brother confirms welfare package for Housemates in 2023**

All Housemates will be supported with an individual support plan that includes sessions with the show's mental health professionals prior to entering the House, throughout their time in the House and beyond. Housemates will be required to adhere to a social media blackout and will undergo respect and inclusion training to set out expectations around use of language and acceptable behaviour in the House.

The welfare protocols in place for Big Brother Housemates have evolved over the show's more than 20-year global history. The protocols in place for the 2023 ITV series have been evaluated and reviewed with ITV's compliance and Duty of Care team, the mental health professionals engaged for this series and Big Brother's welfare team, including Banijay UK's Head of Welfare.

The protocols include a comprehensive package of welfare measures to ensure Housemates are fully supported before, during and after their time in the Big Brother House.

Registered and experienced mental health professionals are engaged throughout the whole series, to assess and support Housemates. An experienced Big Brother welfare team is solely dedicated to the welfare of the Housemates before, during and after the show.

The welfare of everyone involved in the making of the programme is of paramount importance and welfare protocols have been carefully considered to deliver robust assessment of suitability to participate, informed consent and support throughout the casting and filming process and beyond.

### **Welfare measures put in place for all Housemates include:**

#### **Before Filming:**

- All Housemates have undergone psychological and medical assessments including assessments by an independent doctor, mental health professionals and information reports from each Housemate's GP.
- Housemates are required to disclose in confidence any medical history or other information that would be relevant to their participation in Big Brother.
- Housemates and their family and friends will be asked not to post any content on their individual social accounts for the duration of their time in the House. A "Social Media Blackout".
- Housemates receive information about the experience of taking part in Big Brother including the possible positive and negative implications.
- Housemates undergo a series of background checks including checks of their social media by an independent specialised service.
- The dedicated welfare team and other members of the editorial and production team receive training in Mental Health First Aid and Respect and Inclusion.
- Housemates receive Respect and Inclusion training and an extensive briefing from the Big Brother Senior team to prepare them for living in the House and to set out Big Brother's expectation for appropriate behaviour and language.
- Housemates are provided with and talked through the Housemate rules which set out expectations and explain key aspects of life in the Big Brother House.

## **Whilst in the House:**

- Mental health professionals are available to Housemates for ongoing support throughout their time in the House.
- The dedicated Big Brother welfare team support friends and family with regular contact and updates.

Housemates' welfare is monitored 24 hours a day and daily meetings take place to discuss welfare matters and responded appropriately where required.

## **After leaving the Big Brother House:**

- Bespoke training on dealing with social media and press.
- A mandatory session with our mental health professional immediately after a Housemate leaves the House
- As each Housemates' experience is unique, further support sessions will be provided specific to a Housemate's individual needs and support will remain in place until the mental health professional(s) have agreed an end date for each individual Housemate.
- Ongoing contact by the Head of Welfare for a period of 14 months after the series has ended, with additional help provided where needed.

## **Presenters**

Support is also offered to our presenters and narrator. The presenters will undergo relevant training including Respect and Inclusion training and will receive social media guidelines and support.

## **Staff and Crew**

Initial have a framework for ensuring all staff and crew feel safe and comfortable in their work environment. This includes the delivery of in person training as well as providing all staff and crew with a comprehensive HR pack that includes policies setting out expectations around behaviour and how to report any concerns, complaints or grievances.

## **Grievance, Anti-Bullying and Harassment and Whistleblowing Policy:**

Banijay UK has a Code of Conduct and clear Bullying and Harassment, Grievance and Whistleblowing Policies and information about these is shared at an in person

briefing and copies are provided to everyone involved in the making of Big Brother. Reminders about information are regularly shared via internal communication and on notice boards throughout the site.

Head of Welfare for Banijay UK, Kym Langer comments:

“The welfare of everyone involved in the making of Big Brother is of paramount importance to us and the welfare protocols for Housemates delivers robust assessment of suitability to participate, informed consent and support throughout the casting and filming process and beyond. The protocols in place for the 2023 series have been carefully considered bringing together the experience of ITV’s compliance and Duty of Care team together with the independent mental health professionals we have engaged and our own in-house production, editorial, casting and support teams.”

Dr Paul Litchfield, a Chief Medical Officer who independently reviews ITV’s duty of care protocols, said:

“The measures applied to safeguard the mental health of contributors to reality TV shows have evolved considerably over the past five years. ITV has worked with the team at Banijay to share expertise and to ensure that current best practice is applied for the 2023 series of Big Brother.”

Big Brother: The Launch is on ITV1, STV, ITV2 and ITVX on Sunday 8th October from 9pm

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