



CODE OF CONDUCT

I. RATIONALE FOR POLICY

In pursuit of the mission, vision and strategic directions of Children Believe, the behaviours, actions and decisions of staff and volunteers are guided by our organizational values of Results, Respect, Integrity, Teamwork, and Excellence.

Children Believe is strongly committed to attaining the highest standards of conduct. This is an essential part of our accountability to children, community members, donors, governments, and to each other as staff, volunteers, Board members and partner organizations. Together we are working towards a world where every child has a voice and the ability to achieve their full potential.

This Code of Conduct outlines the commitments and behavioural expectations required of those who are part of the organization.

II. POLICY OBJECTIVE

The Code of Conduct aims to protect and enhance the reputation, integrity and credibility of Children Believe with its stakeholders and general public by ensuring that:

- All its activities are conducted in keeping with the organization's mission, vision and values, and
- All staff and volunteers conduct themselves with integrity, commitment and respect in all of their professional interactions as well as in personal interactions that may compromise the reputation, image or integrity of the organization.

The provisions of this Code along with the organizational policies and the terms and conditions of employment or engagement with Children Believe define the acceptable behaviours, promote the highest standards of practice and establish a framework within which Children Believe employees, Board volunteers and partner organizations discharge their duties and regulate their conduct.

III. POLICY SCOPE

This policy applies to all persons working for Children Believe (CB) including but not limited to employees, volunteers, Board members, interns, and consultants ("People").

The policy applies to the business conduct on behalf of the organization as well as to any private conduct that may compromise the reputation, image or integrity of CB.

Children Believe's partner organizations responsible for implementing CB-funded programs in the communities where we operate are also expected to comply with this Code of Conduct.

IV. POLICY DETAILS

To safeguard the organization's reputation, all CB People must conduct themselves and perform their work with uncompromising honesty and integrity and in full compliance with all applicable laws, regulations, professional standards and organizational policies.

All CB People, irrespective of the office/location they are located or the local custom, in accepting their appointment and in fulfilling their role at CB, commit to fulfill their duties and to conduct themselves in accordance with following expectations:

- 1. Safeguard the rights and wellbeing of children and vulnerable adults. Prevent, oppose and combat all sexual exploitation and abuse of children and vulnerable adults in the communities where we operate.**
 - 1.1. I will respect the rights of all children and will contribute to a world where children will grow up safe from harm, has a voice and the ability to achieve their full potential.
 - 1.2. I will adhere to the *Child Safeguarding and Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse Policies*.
 - 1.3. I will not engage in any form of sexual activity or develop physical/sexual relationships with anyone under the age of 18 regardless of the age of consent locally. Mistaken belief in the age of a child is not a defense/excuse based on the unintended harm.
 - 1.4. I will not engage in sexual relationships with CB beneficiaries, regardless of the age of majority or age of consent locally, as these undermine the credibility and integrity of CB's work and are based on inherently unequal power dynamics.
 - 1.5. I will not exchange money, offers of employment, goods or services for sex or sexual favors, nor any forms of humiliating, degrading or exploitative behaviours.
 - 1.6. I will disclose information about any criminal convictions, charges or civil proceedings relating to child abuse, either prior to or during the course of my employment with CB.

- 2. Uphold the integrity and reputation of CB by ensuring that the professional and personal conduct is – and is seen to be - of the highest standard.**
 - 2.1. I will acquaint myself with the organizational mission, vision, values, strategic directions, this Code of Conduct and all applicable organizational policies.
 - 2.2. I will comply with the governing laws and legislation, professional standards and organizational policies applicable to the performance of my responsibilities on behalf of CB.
 - 2.3. While observing the requirements of this Code of Conduct, I will also be sensitive to and respectful of local customs and culture, even if the norms and values in that cultural context differ from the Code. If necessary, I will seek and receive support and advice from relevant department/team.
 - 2.4. I will always act with honesty, integrity and respect.
 - 2.5. I will be patient, respectful and courteous with all persons with whom I deal with in an official capacity.
 - 2.6. I will perform all my duties with care and diligence, always striving for a high standard of performance, meeting all professional and organizational standards.
 - 2.7. I will adhere to the duties and obligations set out in any contractual agreements with CB or that CB has entered into with other organizations, agencies, partners or vendors.
 - 2.8. I will be accountable for my individual actions, behaviours and decisions, I will follow reporting lines to facilitate the effective resolution of problems and I will ensure I do not exceed the authority for my position (as outlined in the *Delegation of Financial and Signing Authority*).
 - 2.9. I will maintain high standards of integrity and stewardship in any fundraising practices and activities I am involved in or responsible for, as outlined in the *Ethical Fundraising and Donor Accountability Policy*.

- 3. Perform work duties and conduct private life in a manner that avoids all possible conflict of interest with the work of Children Believe.**
 - 3.1. I will declare any potential, real or perceived conflict of interest with CB's affairs and I will comply with the provisions of the *Conflict of Interest Policy* regarding the management of such situations.
 - 3.2. I will not exploit my position or relationship with CB for personal or family gain or advantage.
 - 3.3. I will ensure that assistance from CB is not provided in return of any service of favour from others.

3.4. I will act against any form of corruption and not offer, promise, give or accept any bribes or gifts, in compliance with the provisions of the *Anti-Fraud and Corruption and Financial Management Policies*.

4. Contribute to building a harmonious workplace based on team spirit, mutual respect and understanding.

4.1. I will show respect to all colleagues, regardless of status or position, and will allow all colleagues the opportunity to have their opinions heard, and to contribute from their knowledge and expertise to team efforts.

4.2. I will communicate openly and share relevant information (subject to confidentiality) with other colleagues, and will endeavor to respond in a timely manner to queries.

4.3. I will respect my colleagues' privacy and avoid misinformation. I will seek to resolve differences and solve problems as they arise. I will contribute to building constructive dialogue, guided by mutual respect.

4.4. As a manager / supervisor, I will be open to the views of all team members, I will create an environment that invites and facilitates open discussion and allows for issues and concerns to be raised without fear of intimidation or reprisal.

5. Protect the health, safety, security and welfare of all Children Believe People.

5.1. I will comply with all organizational requirements regarding health and safety.

5.2. I will behave in such a way as to avoid any unnecessary risk to the safety, health and welfare of myself and others, including partner organizations, program beneficiaries and their communities (as per *Fitness to Work* and other relevant policies)

5.3. I will comply with the provisions of the *Crisis and Security Management Policy* and with local security management plans and guidelines. I will comply with any evacuation or relocation direction from CB.

5.4. I will not work under the influence of impairment-causing substances, or be in possession of, controlled substances on CB premises (as per *Controlled Substances Policies*).

5.5. I will not be in possession of weapons while conducting business on behalf of CB unless directed and approved by CIPO (as per *Crisis and Security Management Policy*).

6. Safeguard organizational assets and make responsible use of the information and resources to which one has access in the course of their employment or association with CB.

6.1. I will exercise due care in all matters of business and use my discretion when handling sensitive or confidential information.

6.2. I will protect, manage and utilize CB human, financial and material resources efficiently and effectively, bearing in mind these resources were entrusted to CB by generous donors, sponsors and granting organizations for the purpose of advancing our mission.

6.3. I will safeguard the privacy of organizational stakeholders and the confidentiality of their information as outlined in the *Privacy Policy* and any related laws and regulations that govern the collection, use and processing of personal information.

6.4. When gathering competitive information, I will not violate the rights of another organization. I will not ask or accept, use or disclose their confidential or proprietary information, which includes information that provides the other organization with a business advantage and is not publically known.

6.5. I will consistently follow the established IT operating and security procedures in order to protect CB's business and its operations, as outlined in the *Information Technology Policy*.

7. Refrain from any involvement in criminal or unethical activities, activities that contravene human rights or that compromise the image and reputation of Children Believe.

7.1. I will contribute to preventing all forms of criminal or unethical activities.

- 7.2. I will ensure that all CB funds, resources and other assets within my authority are used exclusively for charitable purposes in pursuit of our mission and strategic objectives and are not being used directly or indirectly to support terrorists, terrorist actions, activities that support terrorism or partisan political activities as per our *Anti-Terrorism, Money Laundering and Partisan Political Activity Policy*.
- 7.3. I will not represent or speak on behalf of CB unless authorized to do so. Only designated spokespersons are authorized to issue a statement or make comments regarding CB's position on any given subject.

8. Treat all people with respect and dignity and challenge any form of harassment, discrimination, intimidation, exploitation and abuse.

- 8.1. I will treat every person with whom I come in contact with dignity and respect and without regard to gender, race, colour, creed, place of origin, political belief, religion, marital status, age, disability or sexual orientation, and taking into consideration the culture, customs, habits, and beliefs of people we serve.
- 8.2. I will respect the rights of my colleagues and third parties.
- 8.3. I will not be complicit in any human rights abuses. I will not take part in any form of harassment, discrimination, physical or verbal abuse, intimidation or favouritism in the workplace.

9. Report any actual or suspected concerns or incidents relating to this Code of Conduct

- 9.1. I will report any matter which appears to contravene this Code of Conduct or other organizational policies that I suspect, witness or I am made aware of to the appropriate management, using the appropriate reporting mechanisms and processes and within the defined timelines.
- 9.2. I will participate in any investigation into suspected, alleged or known breaches of this Code or organizational policies, as required.
- 9.3. I will not withhold relevant information.
- 9.4. I will not undertake any action on my own that is not in line with local policies and procedures of without guidance from relevant focal points or managers.

10. Acknowledgement

All CB People – upon their hire and subsequently on an annual basis - are required to review this Code of Conduct and acknowledge in writing that they have reviewed and understood it and agree to abide by its provision as a condition of their employment with CB. This policy will form part of any partnership agreement.

11. Non-compliance with this policy

Any employee, volunteer, partner or Board director who ignores or violates any part of CB's Code Conduct, who penalizes a subordinate for following these standards, who intentionally omits or fails to tell the truth during an investigation into their conduct or the conduct of another, or obstructs an investigation, will be subject to discipline, up to and including termination of employment, volunteer service, partnership or Board membership.

Misconduct will not be excused because it was directed or requested by another member of staff, management or board. You are expected to alert management whenever an illegal, dishonest or unethical act is discovered or suspected.

Any disciplinary action taken under the Code of Conduct, or related policies, does not preclude further administrative, civil or penal action or penalties.

V. POLICY AUTHORITY AND OFFICERS

- a. Authority to approve this policy: **Board of Directors**

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| b. Executive champion of this policy: | Chief People & Culture Officer |
| c. Authority to develop procedures: | Chief People & Culture Officer |
| d. Authority to approve procedures: | Executive Leadership Team |

VI. IMPLEMENTATION, MONITORING, COMPLIANCE AND REPORTING

The Executive Champion is responsible for the implementation of this policy including its publication, communication, training and change management, development and implementation of the related policy procedures, forms and guidelines as well as cascading the policy to Country Offices (where applicable).

The Approval Authority identified in Section V.a. is ultimately responsible for compliance with this policy.

The Executive Champion will report on compliance with this policy to the policy Approval Authority on an annual basis.

VII. POLICY REVIEW

This policy and related procedures must undergo an in-depth review **every 3 years** from the approval date, but may be reviewed at any time as needed.

The Executive Champion will initiate and lead the policy or procedure review process and will provide updates to the Approval Authority on the progress and key dates.

VIII. RELATED DOCUMENTS

The following internal and external documents support the application of this policy:

- a. Procedures, forms, guidelines, and other resources:
 - There are no procedures associated with this policy.
- b. Related organizational policies
 - Anti-fraud and corruption
 - Anti-terrorism, money laundering and partisan political activity
 - Child safeguarding
 - Conflict of interest
 - Controlled substances
 - Delegation of financial and signing authority
 - Dress code
 - Ethical fundraising and donor accountability
 - Fitness to work
 - Privacy
 - Prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse
 - Disclosure protection (Whistleblower)
 - Information Technology
 - Occupational Health and Safety
 - Workplace anti-violence, harassment and sexual harassment
 - HR manuals as applicable in various offices

DEFINITIONS

Executive Leadership Team (ELT): The most senior level of staff leadership within CB comprised of the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Chief Financial Officer (CFO), Chief Marketing and Development Officer (CMDO), Chief International Programs Officer (CIPO) and Chief People & Culture Officer (CPCO). The CEO may alter the composition of the ELT as required from time to time. One person may hold more than one position. Titles may change at the discretion of the ELT or the Board.

Executive Champion: A member of the ELT with overall responsibility for an assigned policy including: drafting, carrying out appropriate consultations / assessment, evaluating implications of the policy including risks and costs and seeking legal advice where necessary, developing and carrying out the communication, change management and implementation plan, writing any related procedures, standards or guidelines, monitoring compliance through regular reviews of the policy as well providing oversight to cascading the policy to Country Offices.