

2013 – Version 1.0

Policy support document for associates of SOS Children`s Villages Norway



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PUTTING OUR VALUES, POLICIES AND QUALITY STANDARDS INTO PRACTICE

Ensuring respectful and responsible conduct

1.1 I am aware that as an associate of SOS Children's Villages Norway I continually represent SOS Children's Villages. I acknowledge that my attitude and behaviour have a significant impact on the children and co-workers in SOS programmes, and on the reputation of our organisation. I will therefore be mindful of my conduct both within and outside SOS Children's Villages. In particular, I shall adhere to the local laws that apply and I shall act according to the organisation's core values outlined above.

1.2 In my interactions with all children, youth, co-workers and persons affiliated to SOS Children's Villages, I am committed to empathetic and non-violent behaviour in action, language and gestures. I will respect the basic rights of all, regardless of gender, age, ability, health, language, ethnicity, race, colour, religion, caste, sexual orientation and any other aspects of identity or personal characteristics. I will act fairly, honestly and tactfully and will treat all children, youth, co-workers, and affiliated persons with sensitivity, tolerance, dignity and respect. I will respect the national law and local culture, traditions, customs and practices that are in line with UN conventions. Therefore, I will not take part in any form of discrimination, harassment, or abuse (physical, sexual or verbal), intimidation or exploitation, or in any other way infringe the rights of others.

1 PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT IN RELATION TO CHILDREN

Promoting the welfare and development of children

2.1 I am concerned for the situation of children in general and will endeavour to promote their welfare and contribute to the development of each individual child to his / her full potential.

2.2 I will contribute to the creation of a loving and caring atmosphere for children. I will treat children with respect, justice and understanding and extend to them the benefit of moral guidance, self-discipline and appropriate instruction.

2.3 I am aware of being a role model for children and youth and therefore commit to displaying respectful and responsible behaviour. I recognise equal opportunity and will treat all children equally, including the promotion of gender equality.

Child protection – keeping children safe from harm

2.4 I will always uphold the trust and confidence placed in me by SOS Children's Villages Norway to protect children and serve their best interests.

2.5 I will conduct myself in a way that safeguards children and youth from all forms of discrimination, abuse, mistreatment and neglect. I will strongly support our values and our vision that "every child grows in a family, with love respect and security", and I will promote children's development.

2.6 I will not initiate or become involved in sexual relationships with children. I am aware that such a relationship will lead to legal consequences and impact the organization's reputation. Mistaken belief regarding the age of a child is not a defence.

2.7 I will not exchange money, employment, goods, favours or services for sex, including sexual favours or other forms of humiliating, degrading or exploitative behaviour. This includes any exchange of SOS services that are due to participants in the SOS programme.

2.8 This means that I will not enter into sexual relationships with members of the local community that are receiving assistance or services from SOS Children's Villages, since these relationships are likely to undermine the credibility and integrity of the work of SOS Children's Villages.

2.9 I will make sure that my work with children is visible to others and generally will not spend excessive time alone with children and away from others.

2.10 I shall not have children that are SOS participants to stay with me in my home (overnight or for extended periods) especially when there is no other responsible adult around.

CODE OF CONDUCT

2.11 I will report all concerns regarding actual or potential child abuse, mistreatment or any other violation. I shall do this trusting that I shall be protected and supported by the organisation.¹

2.12 I will keep data about the children and youth in SOS Children's Villages' programmes confidential² (e.g. information on their family background, health status, etc. Photographs and other information about participants in the SOS programme must not be published on social media (such as Facebook) without their consent or the consent of the legal guardian.). This principle of confidentiality also extends to former participants in SOS services and their siblings, and applies beyond the point at which co-workers cease their employment with SOS Children's Villages.

2.13 I will reveal all information about any charges against me pertaining to child abuse either at the time of my joining SOS Children's Village or arising during the time of my employment.

2 PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT IN RELATION TO OTHER ASPECTS OF WORK

Responsible use of power and position

3.1 I will use my position for the benefit of the organisation when dealing with government officials, donors, sponsors, suppliers and other people affiliated to SOS Children's Villages. I will avoid any conflict of interest arising from personal interests and/or obligations I might have towards third parties SOS Children's Villages has business relations with.

3.2 I am aware that children, youth and adults look up to me as a person in authority. I must not use that position for my own benefit or for the benefit of my family or friends.

3.3 I understand that I must not ask for or invite any personal payment, service or favour from others, especially participants in SOS services, in return for our help, support, goods or services of any kind. I shall not accept bribes or significant gifts (except small tokens of appreciation)³ from governments, participants in SOS services, donors, suppliers or others which have been offered as a result of my employment.

3.4 I will not be under the influence of intoxicating substances such as alcohol or any other substances when representing SOS Children's Villages or meeting beneficiaries of SOS Children's Villages.

3.5 I will ensure good and constructive working relationships with SOS Children's Villages Norway. I will not allow any personal relationships have a negative impact on my cooperation with SOS Children's Villages Norway.

Responsible use of resources

3.6 I will administer resources⁴ entrusted to me by SOS Children's Villages Norway in a transparent and prudent manner and in compliance with established controls that ensure optimum use of all our material and human resources.

3.7 I shall not behave in a way that creates unnecessary risk to my health, safety and security, or to that of others with whom I work.

¹ It is the responsibility of SOS Children's Villages to ensure that those reporting concerns in good faith do not experience any negative repercussions or adverse effects as a result of carrying out their duty to report, even if the allegation later proves to be false. However, co-workers making knowingly false or malicious allegations may be subject to disciplinary action. See also: 4.3.

² Confidential means "ensuring that information is accessible only to those authorized to have access".

³ You should notify your line manager if you are offered or receive gifts of any kind

⁴ Both financial and non-financial resources

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Responsible use of information

3.8 Given that my relationship with SOS Children's Villages Norway involves trust and confidence, I will exercise prudence in disclosing information. I shall not communicate any sensitive or potentially damaging information to external bodies or individuals, including media representatives, without appropriate authorisation.

3.9 When sharing general information about children and co-workers (for example, data, pictures, etc. for PR purposes) I will do so with full respect and consideration for their privacy and dignity.

3 CONSEQUENCES OF BREACHING THE CODE OF CONDUCT

4.1 Each of my actions matter! I realize that any violation of this Code of Conduct can have serious implications on the lives of children and youth, and for the organisation. Therefore, SOS Children's Villages Norway will respond to violations of the Code of Conduct as deemed appropriate, regardless of position, status or personal relationship, and in accordance with national and local legislation and/or the terms and conditions of service defined within SOS.

4.2 Should I become aware of any breaches of the Code of Conduct, I understand that I am duty bound to report these to SOS Children's Villages Norway.

4.3 I understand that when reporting an actual or potential breach of the Code of Conduct I will do so in good faith and that SOS Children's Villages Norway will ensure that I do not experience any negative repercussions or adverse effects as a result of carrying out my duty to report, even if the allegation later proves to be false. However, if I knowingly make a false or malicious allegation then I also understand that my relationship with SOS Children's Villages may be terminated. The same applies, if it transpires that I knew about misconduct but failed to report it.

4.4 I understand that the Code of Conduct cannot cover all aspects of good conduct. Where I have any concerns about possible misconduct or behaviour that may bring the organisation into disrepute, I undertake to raise the concerns at the earliest possible time either verbally or in writing with SOS Children's Villages Norway.

4 SIGNATURE AND COMMITMENT

5.1 I have carefully read and clearly understood the SOS Children's Villages Code of Conduct. I am aware that SOS Children's Villages expects me to uphold the standards of behaviour described in this Code of Conduct at all times. I fully appreciate its context and contents. By signing this Code of Conduct, I commit myself, in unison with the entire SOS Children's Villages organisation, to aspire for and maintain the required conduct as a precondition of my relation to SOS Children's Villages.

5.2 I have received and hereby sign a copy of this document; a copy of the signed document will be filed with SOS Children's Villages Norway.

Name:

Date:

Signature:

Location: