Rädda Barnen

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VOLUNTEER POLICY

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VOLUNTEER POLICY

This policy has been drawn up for Save the Children's volunteers and is a summarised version of the Code of Conduct for Voluntary Work, the Policy for Safe and Secure Practices for Children, and the Policy Protection against Sexual Abuse and Sexual Exploitation. Anyone who wishes to do so may read these governing documents in full on our website.

Unlike volunteers, elected representatives must sign all three of the above policy documents in full.

Introduction

Working for Save the Children, whether as a paid employee or a volunteer, in Sweden or in another country, entails a special responsibility to safeguard human rights in general and children's rights in particular. Save the Children's core values are based on the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and are founded on the conviction that

- that all human beings are of equal value
- that children have specific rights
- that everyone has a responsibility.

Save the Children shall be a safe and secure organisation for children. We have a zero-tolerance policy towards all forms of discrimination, abuse, violence, sexual abuse and exploitation of children, as well as towards sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of adults. We do not accept any behaviour that contravenes the *Policy for Safe and Secure Practices for Children* or the *Policy Protection against Sexual Abuse and Sexual Exploitation*.

Our fundamental principle is that:

- a child is any person under the age of 18,
- all children are of equal worth and have the same rights,
- all children have the right to be free from all forms of harm, discrimination, abuse, violence, sexual abuse and exploitation,
- Save the Children works to ensure that children are aware of their right to be free from harm, discrimination, abuse, violence, sexual abuse and exploitation, and we shall inform them of that right,
- Save the Children has a duty to ensure that everyone working for, on behalf of or in collaboration with Save the Children Sweden applies the best possible practices regarding behaviour towards children, in accordance with *the Policy for Safe and Secure Practices for Children.*

Guiding principles

Save the Children's Code of Conduct for Voluntary Work consist of seven guiding principles:

1. Taking a clear stand for children's rights

We must be courageous in fighting for the rights of the child and on behalf of the child. The rights of the child must be fully respected in all contexts. Taking a clear stand commits us and can mean exposing ourselves to criticism and resistance.

2. Safeguarding children's and adults' right to privacy, and treating them with respect, kindness and humility

It is important that in our work we contribute to an open, trusting climate characterized by respect for the individual. At Save the Children we do not tolerate discrimination of any kind. We protect everyone's rights, regardless of gender, ethnicity, religion or other beliefs, disability, sexual orientation, transgender identity or expression and age.

We will always protect the child's privacy, and we will be careful when engaging adults in activities where the adult has direct contact with children - whether in voluntary or paid work. We ensure that all activities are carried out in accordance with Save the Children's Policy against Child Abuse and Exploitation - Safer Together and Save the Children's Policy for Protection against Sexual Abuse and Sexual Exploitation.

3. To comply with Save the Children's statutes, mission statement, guidelines and policies

For those who receive an assignment from Save the Children in a local association, a district association or in Save the Children's national association, it is important to know, have access to and follow basic documents.

4. Following Save the Children's values in cooperation with other organizations

All cooperation requires the ability and willingness to compromise, but it is also important to be clear about what can and cannot be compromised. The starting point is that we must safeguard Save the Children's values as expressed in the statutes and governing documents. Every partnership is unique and requires familiarity with your own operations and an awareness of what Save the Children wants to achieve with a partnership with other organizations. We only enter partnerships with organizations whose values and activities are in harmony with our own.

5. Protecting good governance

Save the Children's resources come from donors and public funds. Save the Children's main mission is to give vulnerable children maximum access to their rights. We will use our funds for that work and minimize costs for administration and peripheral costs. Money should be handled in a safe and responsible manner, and it is fundamental to Save the Children that we do not accept any form of corruption, bribery or bias.

Clear rules, administrative procedures and transparent decision-making processes should guide our actions.

6. Contributing to the creation of a good working environment and transparent decision-making processes

Voluntary work is based on a personal commitment. An open, welcoming climate and a democratic way of working both help to strengthen the organization and to encourage more people to get involved in our activities. It is fundamental to Save the Children that we do not use our position for personal gain.

7. Safeguarding the good name and reputation of Save the Children

Save the Children is a democratic grassroots organization with many members, activists and donors who provide good anchoring in Swedish society. Our main asset is our trust capital. It is crucial for the organization that we manage it in the best way. We must ensure that our activities are safe and secure for the children who benefit from them. We must be loyal to Save the Children and if we suspect a crime is taking place in the organization, we must report it to the police.

Safe and secure practices for children

In accordance with *the Policy for Safe and Secure Practices for Children*, every child involved in our activities must be protected against all forms of intentional or unintentional harm, discrimination, abuse, violence, sexual abuse and exploitation. The rights of the child are of paramount importance.

Our commitment and responsibility

Under *the Policy for Safe and Secure Practices for Children*, we must be vigilant, take preventative action, act and report when a child is harmed or at risk of harm within our activities.

To be aware, we must:

- sign this volunteer policy before starting an assignment to show that we have read and understood the policy and that we will act in accordance with it,
- share the fundamental principles and comply with the obligations defined by Save the Children,
- know where to turn if we suspect that a child is being harmed within our organisation, or in the event of any violations of this policy,

Prevention, we must:

- complete Save the Children's training in Child Safeguarding,
- provide extracts from the police criminal records register: for work with children in other activities,
- familiarise ourselves with the risk assessment for the activities in which we participate,
- when in direct contact with children, ensure that contact always takes place in an open manner, so that at least one other adult can see or hear us. We must not work alone with children, either physically or digitally, unless it is necessary and has been approved in advance

by the line manager or chairperson. This also applies when travelling. When working with children in a digital environment, working alone may take place provided that a risk assessment has been carried out and approved by the person responsible for child safeguarding,

- follow the policies, procedures and guidelines that apply to photographing and filming children, such as ensuring that consent has been given by the child and their guardian and that the images are taken with respect,
- ensure that, when working with children on digital platforms, no material or data is shared that could enable a child to be identified, either directly or indirectly. This includes, for example, screenshots, usernames, the content of chat histories, and digital images and files that may contain metadata.

Those of us who are responsible for and/or lead an activity with Save the Children shall:

- carry out a risk assessment to identify, minimise, address and, where possible, avoid situations and behaviours that may put children at risk,
- based on the risk assessment, organise the work and the venue for the activity in such a way as to minimise the risk of children being exposed to harm, discrimination, abuse, violence, sexual abuse, exploitation or any other violation of their rights,
- adjust the existing risk assessment based on measures taken and lessons learnt should a risk or incident occur,
- ensure that all children in our activities and their carers are aware of and understand the meaning of this policy. They must be informed and know how to report any violations of the policy, and that the reporting channels are also available to them,
- empower children and their families/guardians regarding their rights, what is acceptable and unacceptable, and what they can expect from their collaboration with Save the Children,
- promote an environment characterised by openness regarding children's vulnerability to discrimination, abuse, violence, sexual abuse and exploitation, and ensure that issues or concerns can be raised and discussed safely and respectfully.

Take action, we shall:

- protect children from all forms of harm, discrimination, abuse, violence, sexual abuse and exploitation,
- treat all children with respect, as individuals and without discrimination,
- respect every child's integrity and never compromise a child's physical and/or mental health,
- respect children's views and give them the opportunity to express them, in a way appropriate to their age and maturity,
- always act fairly and never favour or disadvantage individual children,
- not to expose children to situations they do not understand or are unable to consent to,
- never to humiliate, blame or otherwise subject children to psychological abuse,

- maintain professional and respectful relationships and avoid inappropriate behaviour or contact,
- maintain a clear boundary between their private life and their role within the organisation,
- never enter relationships or sexual contact with children under the age of 18,
- only assist children with personal needs when they are unable to manage on their own,
- never allow children or adult participants from our activities to stay or sleep at our homes, nor to sleep in the same bed or room as children in our activities,
- not encourage or participate in unlawful behaviour by a child,
- follow procedures if we suspect a child is being harmed and cooperate with any investigations.

Protection against sexual abuse and sexual exploitation by adults

According to the *Policy Protection against Sexual Abuse and Sexual Exploitation*, Save the Children has a zero-tolerance policy towards sexual abuse and sexual exploitation by adults. A safe working environment means that all Save the Children representatives must be mindful of how we work, the potential impact of our presence and how we carry out our activities.

Representatives of Save the Children must never:

- commit sexual abuse or sexually exploit anyone else,
- initiate or engage in sexual relationships with people in vulnerable groups where there is an imbalance of power and a connection to the assignment,
- enter or have sexual relationships with people who receive direct or indirect support from Save the Children (including parents or carers of children involved in our activities),
- purchase sexual services,
- hint at, suggest, request and/or demand sexual services from people we meet through our work,
- support or participate in any form of sexual exploitation or abusive activities, including human trafficking, or sexual or exploitative relationships with people who have been trafficked,
- fail to report suspicions, concerns or allegations of sexual exploitation or abuse.

Reporting

We must report without delay any suspicions that a child has been subjected to any form of intentional or unintentional harm, abuse, violence, sexual assault or exploitation, in accordance with Save the Children's reporting procedures. The same applies to suspicions of sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of adults. All risk and incident reports must be made promptly and within 24 hours.

Incident reports must be made:

- when someone violate this policy,
- when we become aware of or suspect that a child has been harmed in our activities,

- when a child tells us themselves that they have been harmed within our activities,
- when someone reports to us that a child has been harmed or has suffered harm within our activities,
- in the event of an incident or suspicion of sexual abuse or sexual exploitation.

A risk report must be made:

- When risks or shortcomings in our activities are identified, even if no one has been harmed,
- when an incident or situation comes to light that could have resulted in someone being harmed, even if the policy has been followed.

You can report incidents and risks in three different ways:

- by contacting the chair directly
- via the digital reporting channel https://rapportera.rb.se
- via the incident and risk reporting form, emailed torapportera@rb.se

Reporting concerns and making a police report

If we become aware of or suspect that a child is being harmed, we at Save the Children must always report our concerns to the social services in the local authority where the child lives. This is a decision we have taken to ensure that every child we encounter has the right to safety and protection.

Suspected offences involving child abuse must be reported to the police, provided this does not pose a further risk to the child. Suspected cases of sexual abuse and sexual exploitation by adults must be reported to the police. It is important to seek support from the chairperson when making a police report. In the case of suspected offences in the digital environment, the incident must also be reported using the digital platform's own tools. A report of concern and/or a police report must be made if there is concern or suspicion that a child is being harmed, even if the offence was not committed in connection with Save the Children's own activities. If you feel even slightly unsure about how to act, you should contact your regional advisor for safe and secure operations for support. Please feel free to contact your chairperson for guidance.

What happens next?

Save the Children handles all reports in accordance with established procedures. Cases are dealt with professionally and confidentially by a limited number of authorised individuals. All reports made in confidence will be handled with the best interests of the child in mind, regardless of the outcome of the investigation. All information relating to a suspicion of sexual abuse and sexual exploitation by an adult must be treated with strict confidentiality and must not be shared with any party other than those involved in the reporting process.

Violations of the volunteer policy

Volunteers who violate this policy may have their membership revoked. In any cases where a member of the organisation is suspected of a criminal offence, Save the Children will refer the matter to the relevant authorities.

Undertaking to comply with Save the Children's volunteer policy

I hereby confirm that I have read and understood *Save the Children's volunteer policy.*

Save the Children's volunteer policy sets out guiding principles for Save the Children volunteers. Working for Save the Children, whether in Sweden or in another country, entails a special responsibility to safeguard human rights in general and children's rights in particular.

Save the Children's volunteer policy has been drawn up to ensure the safety of the children we work with, our volunteers and the organisation. The policy applies to all Save the Children volunteers and provides guidance on how both the organisation and volunteers should conduct themselves in various situations.

The policy is intended to help strengthen trust in Save the Children as a credible advocate for children's rights.

I undertake to comply with the policy and understand that serious violations of the policy may constitute grounds for Save the Children to exclude me as a member.

I understand that certain actions that violate *Save the Children's volunteer policy* may result in criminal prosecution.

I undertake to provide an extract from my criminal record, insofar as such a request for disclosure is legally permissible, before I commence my voluntary role.

_____on _____

(town) (date)

_____ _____

(signature) (print name)

_____

Name of the local association in which I am involved

Once signed, this undertaking must be presented to the chair of the board responsible for the activities or to the person in charge of the relevant activities. The individual member is responsible for retaining the signed document. This undertaking is available on the website.