

CODE OF CONDUCT

Protection of Children and Adolescents

The team of International Hands in Service (Salud y Paz) and all individuals who have any type of contact with children and/or adolescents (employees, volunteers, collaborators) must govern their conduct and behavior in accordance with this Code of Conduct.

You must

- Always put the care, well-being, and safety needs of a child first.
- Respect the child's right to participate in decisions that directly affect them.
- Respect the child's culture (e.g., faith, religious beliefs, etc.).
- Respect the child's right to privacy and personal space.
- Respond with sensitivity to children who appear hesitant or anxious about participating in certain activities.
- Be aware of the vulnerability of certain groups of children to being isolated or harmed (e.g., children with disabilities and learning difficulties).
- Treat all children with respect regardless of race, color, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic, or social origin, property, disability, birth, or other status.
- Whenever possible, ensure another adult is present when working closely with children.
- Immediately report any concern, allegation of child abuse, exploitation, or policy non-compliance in accordance with the proper procedures.
- Listen carefully to any child who communicates—whether through drawings, behavior, or words—that they are being harmed, and immediately report your findings to your supervisor.
- Comply with all relevant legislation, including labor laws related to child labor.
- Be aware of behaviors and avoid actions that may be perceived by others as child abuse or exploitation.
- Immediately disclose all charges, convictions, and other outcomes of any offense related to child abuse and exploitation, including those under customary law.

When photographing or filming a child, or using images of children for work-related purposes, you must:

- Ensure that local traditions or restrictions regarding the reproduction of personal images are respected before photographing or filming a child.
- Obtain informed consent from the child and their parents or guardians before photographing or filming (see Annex 5). An explanation must be provided on how the photo or film will be used.
- Ensure that photographs, films, videos, and DVDs portray children in a dignified and respectful manner, and not in a vulnerable or submissive way. Children must be appropriately dressed and not posed in ways that may be interpreted as sexually suggestive.
- Ensure that images are honest representations of the context and facts.
- Ensure that file labels, metadata, or text descriptions do not reveal identifying information about a child when images are sent electronically or published in any form.

You must never

- Use inappropriate, harassing, abusive, sexually provocative, demeaning, or culturally inappropriate language or behavior toward children.
- Allow children to use offensive or sexualized language without addressing it.
- Engage in any sexual relationship or activity of any kind with anyone under 18 years of age, including paying for sexual services or acts.
- Allow others, or yourself, to engage in touching a child in a sexually provocative way.
- Engage in rough or inappropriate physical contact, unless permitted within the rules of a game or sport, or consistent with approved physical restraint guidelines.
- Establish inappropriate emotional or physical relationships with children.

- Invite unaccompanied children into private residences unless they are at imminent risk of injury or physical harm.
- Sleep in close proximity to unsupervised children unless absolutely necessary. In such cases, permission must be obtained from the supervisor, and if possible, another adult should be present. (Note: this guideline does not apply to one's own children.)
- Use computers, mobile phones, video cameras, cameras, or social media to exploit or harass children, or to access child exploitation material of any kind.
- Use physical punishment against children.
- Harass or intimidate a child or worker based on race, age, gender, sexual orientation, religious belief, economic class, or disability.
- Employ children for domestic tasks or any other type of work: inappropriate for their age or stage of development, interfering with their education or recreational time, or placing them at significant risk of injury.
- Dismiss what a child tells you as lies or exaggeration.
- Minimize or trivialize another worker's concern about a child, or ignore an allegation or suspicion of abuse in the hope it will go away or that someone else will handle it.
- Allow a child, youth, or adult to be bullied or harmed by anyone within the organization.
- Discuss personal matters concerning a child or family with others, except with your supervisor or the project's executive director when concerned about the child's well-being.

These conduct guidelines are not intended to interfere with normal family interactions.