

## **ADRA AUSTRALIA SAFEGUARDING CODE OF CONDUCT**

### **FOR CHILD SAFEGUARDING AND PREVENTING SEXUAL EXPLOITATION, ABUSE AND HARASSMENT (PSEAH)**

#### **Introduction**

Consistent with ADRA Australia's values and principles, we seek to create an Agency that demonstrates God's love and compassion. The ability to achieve this is inherently linked to the people who represent the Agency. Therefore, it is essential that all ADRA Australia Personnel maintain and promote the highest degree of ethical conduct by acting with integrity and respecting others without discrimination.

The Code reflects ADRA's fundamental values and principles. It seeks to ensure that those representing the work of ADRA avoid using unequal power relationships for their own benefit. The Code is intended to serve as a guide for ADRA Australia Personnel to make ethical decisions in the course of their association with ADRA Australia. It is designed to assist Personnel to understand and acknowledge the obligations placed upon their conduct. The Code of Conduct principles apply relationships among ADRA Australia Personnel and the communities they serve.

#### **Scope**

This Code of Conduct applies to all 'ADRA Australia Personnel', which includes all ADRA Australia employees (including OHI staff and Conference ADRA Directors), interns, volunteers, contractors and Company Board Directors engaged by or representing ADRA Australia in a short or long-term capacity. The Code of Conduct applies while in and outside of the workplace, during working and non-working hours, and when on assignment with or otherwise representing ADRA. Engaging in the delivery of ADRA Australia's work means that one must comply with ADRA Australia's standards of preventing SEAH occurring to children and adults, even if the standards are higher than one's local context or governing laws. Signed commitment to this code of conduct by all representatives is a requirement of ADRA Australia.

This Code of Conduct applies to 'ADRA Australia Partners', which in the context of this Code of Conduct specifically refers to external entities, often, but not exclusively, other ADRA offices, with which ADRA Australia has documented partnership agreements for the implementation of development or relief activities and who ADRA Australia supports through programming resources. This includes their staff, volunteers and contractors who work with them.

If ADRA Australia does not have a signed copy of this document, ADRA Australia Personnel are not eligible to travel to or work in project implementation sites. This Code of Conduct is based on the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade's (DFAT) Child Protection Professional Behaviours and the Secretary-General's Bulletin on Special Measures for Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse ([ST/SGB/2003/13](#)).

#### **Code of Conduct**

I \_\_\_\_\_, agree that while engaged by ADRA Australia I will:

#### **Protection and Safeguarding of Children**

- a. disclose to the ADRA Australia CEO or HR Coordinator any criminal charges, convictions or accusations, and other outcomes of an offence that relates to child exploitation and abuse, including those under traditional law, which occurred before or occur during my association with ADRA Australia;
- b. follow the reporting obligations as outlined in the ADRA Child Safeguarding Policy;
- c. treat children with respect regardless of race, colour, age, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, disability, or other relevant status;
- d. not use language or behaviour towards children that is inappropriate, harassing, abusive, sexually provocative, demeaning or culturally inappropriate;

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- e. not engage children under the age of 18 in any form of sexual intercourse or sexual activity, including paying for sexual services or acts;
- f. not develop special relationships with a specific child or children, show favouritism or give gifts or particular attention to a child with the exception that as part of the recovery process for children who have undergone surgery within Open Heart International's programs, it is recognised that the giving of a simple toy/gift may be appropriate and such be left to the discretion of the doctors and nurses caring for the child;
- g. wherever possible, ensure that another adult is present when working with or near children;
- h. avoid involvement in unsupervised one-on-one counselling with minors and children;
- i. not invite unaccompanied children into my home or hotel, or into a closed room unless they are at immediate risk of injury or in physical danger;
- j. not sleep close to unsupervised children unless absolutely necessary, in which case I must obtain my supervisor's permission, and ensure that another adult is present;
- k. under no circumstances give illicit drugs or any beverage containing alcohol to a minor;
- l. use any computers, mobile phones, video cameras, cameras or social media appropriately, and never to exploit or harass children or access child exploitation material through any medium (see 'Use of children's images for work related purposes' below);
- m. not use physical punishment on children;
- n. refrain from hiring children for domestic or other labour which is inappropriate given their age or developmental stage, which interferes with their time available for education and recreational activities, or which places them at significant risk of injury;
- o. comply with all relevant Australian and local legislation, including labour laws in relation to child labour;
- p. immediately report concerns, suspicions or allegations (including any allegation by a child) of child exploitation and abuse and breach or non-compliance with the Child Protection Safeguarding Policy in accordance with appropriate procedures;
- q. be aware of behaviour and avoid actions or behaviours that could be perceived by others as child exploitation and abuse.
- r. not communicate with a child outside of the usual channels of communication such as sending letters home or talking with the parents. Personal correspondence using emails, social media and web forums which is unknown to the parents is inappropriate;
- s. not initiate opportunities for unsupervised contact with a child or group of children;
- t. not show special favours to one child over others or allow a child to overstep the rules;
- u. not ask a child not to tell anyone else about their conversations, activities or interactions;
- v. not discuss sexually explicit activities or sexually intimate relationships with a child or show sexually explicit images to a child;
- w. not inappropriately touch a child where that touch would not be a part of your role.

### **When photographing or filming a child for work related purposes, I must:**

- a. assess and endeavour to comply with local traditions or restrictions for reproducing personal images before photographing or filming a child;
- b. obtain informed consent from the child and parent or guardian of the child before photographing or filming a child. As part of this I must explain how the photograph or film will be used. Such consent must be written or, if this is not possible and verbal consent is given, consent must be witnessed and documented;
- c. ensure photographs, films, videos and other media present children in a dignified and respectful manner and not in a vulnerable or submissive manner. Children should be adequately clothed and not in poses that could be seen as sexually suggestive;
- d. ensure images are honest representations of the context and the facts;
- e. protect the privacy of children and ensure file labels, meta data or text descriptions do not reveal identifying information about a child when sending images electronically or publishing images in any form.

### Prevention of Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment (PSEAH)

I commit to uphold the highest standards of professional and personal conduct and understand that I have a duty of care to ADRA Australia Personnel and affected populations, and a responsibility that all are treated with dignity and respect.

I understand that I must disclose any substantiated claims and/or criminal convictions that are related to sexual misconduct. I understand that sexual exploitation and abuse are a human rights violation, unacceptable behaviour to ADRA Australia, and jeopardize the credibility and reputation of all development and humanitarian organisations. In order to prevent sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment, I commit to respect the six core principles outlined in the Secretary-General's Bulletin and ADRA Australia's PSEAH Policy which are:

- I. Sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment is **serious misconduct** and grounds for **disciplinary measures**, including dismissal;
- II. Sexual activity with **children** (persons under the age of 18) is strictly **prohibited**, regardless of the age of majority or local age of consent. Mistaken belief in the age of the child is not a defence;
- III. Exchange of **money, employment, goods or services for sex**, including any humiliating, degrading, or exploitive behaviour is strictly **prohibited**;
- IV. Any **sexual relationships between ADRA Australia Personnel who are providing assistance** and protection and a **person benefitting** from such humanitarian assistance and protection, are prohibited. Such relationships undermine the credibility and integrity of humanitarian aid work;
- V. ADRA Australia Personnel providing assistance to beneficiaries are obliged to create and maintain an environment that prevents sexual exploitation and abuse. Managers at all levels have an additional responsibility to do so;
- VI. ~~Where~~ Where an aid worker or staff member has **concerns or suspicions** regarding sexual exploitation or abuse by any ADRA Australia Personnel, he/she **must report** such concerns immediately. A confidential complaint can be made by or on behalf of a survivor by contacting:
  - a. The **Safeguarding Focal Point**: [safeguarding@adra.org.au](mailto:safeguarding@adra.org.au)

The Code of Conduct for PSEAH strictly prohibits all ADRA Australia Personnel from engaging in any of the following:

- Offering special benefits (including money, employment, goods or services) to program participants in exchange for expressed, implied or demanded sexual favours;
- Threats or insinuations that an individual's refusal or unwillingness to submit to sexual advances or demands will affect the person's entitlement to project assistance and support;
- Verbal conduct such as sexually derogatory remarks, graphic verbal commentaries about an individual's body or dress, sexually degrading words used to describe an individual, sexually suggestive or obscene letters, notes, emails or invitations, demeaning or inappropriate comments, name-calling, innuendos, slurs, jokes, sexual advances or propositions;
- Visual conduct such as leering, sexual gestures, displaying or distributing sexually suggestive objects or pictures, cartoons, graffiti posters or magazines including the electronic forms of these objects or pictures;
- Actual or threatened physical contact or conduct, such as patting, pinching, blocking movements, or any other offensive touching;
- Expressing sexual interest or engaging in any sexual activities with children (any person below the age of 18). Mistaken belief in the age of a person is not a defence;
- Use of children or adults to procure sexual services for others;
- Use of ADRA's computer equipment or other technology or office space to view, download, create, distribute, or save in any format inappropriate material, including but not limited to adult or child pornography or anything sexual in nature;
- Condone or be a party to trafficking of persons.
- Any other act that may constitute sexual harassment, sexual exploitation or sexual abuse, or that does not adhere to the principles mentioned in this Code of Conduct.

<b>Statement of Responsibility</b>
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I understand that the responsibility is on me, as a person engaged by ADRA Australia, to use common sense and avoid actions or behaviours that could be construed as sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment of children, vulnerable adults and ADRA Australia Personnel when implementing or participating in ADRA Australia activities. I will refrain from any involvement in criminal or unethical activities, activities that contravene human rights, or activities that compromise the image and interests of ADRA. Conduct that goes against any of the above points or that does not comply with the ADRA Australia PSEAH and Child Safeguarding Policies will not be tolerated and will constitute grounds for disciplinary action including termination of employment or engagement contract, or volunteer assignment. I understand my obligation to immediately report any allegations, concerns or suspicions of abuse or exploitation or breach of or non-compliance with PSEAH and Child Safeguarding Policies, or of this code of conduct, to the Safeguarding Focal Point: [safeguarding@adra.org.au](mailto:safeguarding@adra.org.au).

<b>Personal Declaration</b>
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I confirm that I have read, understood and shall abide by the **ADRA Australia Safeguarding Code of Conduct** for the entire period I am working or associated with, and/or represent, ADRA Australia. I understand that violation of any of the above code of conduct and **ADRA Australia PSEAH and CHILD PROTECTION Policies** can, depending on the degree of severity, result in immediate disciplinary action which can include termination.

I understand that during the application process and at regular intervals ADRA Australia will screen my name through appropriate routine screening mechanisms, including Adsafes. (See PSEAH and Child Safeguarding Policies for more information.)

I will raise through appropriate channels any matter which appears to break the standards contained within this Code of Conduct.

Organisation	Project Title
Position	
Name	
Signature	Date