

Code of Conduct

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1. Introduction

Purpose of the Code of Conduct

Diakonia is a Swedish international development cooperation organization. Diakonia is a faith based organization and our vision is a just, equal and sustainable world. Diakonia works for the most vulnerable people through local partners and other strategic actors for the fulfillment of the right of all people to live a life in dignity – irrespective of age, class, disability, ethnicity, gender, nationality, political conviction, religion, or sexual orientation and identity.¹

Diakonia is committed to uphold a high level of ethical standards throughout all operations. The main purpose of the Diakonia Code of Conduct is to outline the key responsibilities of employees and representatives in relation to the protection and respect of the welfare and rights of the people with whom we work. The Code of Conduct applies to all work carried out by Diakonia.

The standards mentioned in this document direct the steering documents of Diakonia. When you need detailed information regarding any issue, consult the policy or guidelines for that particular issue.

Who are the rules for?

The rules apply for all permanent and temporary employees, interns, consultants, activists, volunteers, journalists, photographers, people participating in Diakonia organized travels and all elected Diakonia representatives. They all have an obligation to behave according to Diakonia's Code of Conduct and have an obligation to prevent and report misconduct, and are required to sign the Code of Conduct.

When signing the Code of Conduct, you accept to follow the standards and rules Diakonia has for its employees and people representing the organization, and you have accepted to perform your work duties to the best of your abilities and always keep Diakonia's best interest in mind.

When do rules apply?

As an employee or representative of Diakonia, you commit to act and behave in such a way that people will respect Diakonia and the work we do. This means to show good judgement and ethics in the different situations that we face in our work. The rules in the Code of Conduct serve as a compass to guide in moral dilemmas though they don't give detailed instructions on how to behave in every situation. If uncertain, always consult your director.

Always consider if a certain behavior or action reflects negatively on your work performance and/or Diakonia's image negatively, even when you are off duty. Such issues are e.g. the use of social media, security concerns, behavior related to child safeguarding and prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse, corruption and fraud.

Awareness and overall responsibility

Directors at Diakonia have the overall responsibility to ensure that all employees are familiar with the Code of Conduct, are updated on its content and understand how it applies in their specific context. Directors are also responsible for making sure that all employees know how reporting of violations are done and followed up.

Each individual employee has an obligation to make sure that they understand the purpose and

¹ Diakonia, *Global Strategy 2015 – 2020*; page 7. Can also be found on Diakonia's web site.

content of the Code of Conduct and knows what is expected of them as representatives of Diakonia.

The Code of Conduct is a mandatory element during the onboarding process of new employees but shall also be followed up in other trainings, briefings and in the individual annual appraisal meetings.

An e-learning course called *Diakonia – Code of Conduct and expected staff behavior* is available on the ACT Learn portal. This course shall be a mandatory part of all employees' onboarding processes.

How to read the Code of Conduct

The Code of Conduct consists of three sections in one comprehensive document. The sections shall be read all together.

A) The Code of Conduct

B) Key terms and definitions (Annex 1)

C) The form to sign and declare that you have understood the content of the Code of Conduct

2. Expected behavior

General

Everyone has to follow the fundamental values that constitute the organization's base as expressed in the Diakonia Global Policy². We shall always treat people with respect and remember that we all are responsible for creating an environment that promotes fundamental human rights without discrimination.

Information and pictures showing persons shall be handled with integrity and stored safely to avoid putting anyone at risk. For instance, you are encouraged to use social media to share about Diakonia's work, however make sure it is done respectfully and in line with Diakonia's Social Media policy.

3. Unacceptable behavior

Harassment

It is not permitted to use any kind of discriminatory behavior, harassing or violence towards a colleague or any other person.

Sexual exploitation and abuse

Sexual exploitation and sexual abuse violate universally recognized international legal norms and standards and is unacceptable behavior and prohibited conduct³. Since it is Diakonia's mission to

² Diakonia Global Policy, found on the Diakonia intranet VoicelT/Steering documents, or on the web site.

³ United Nations Secretary General's Bulletin 2003/13, 9 October 2003; Special Measures for Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse

protect the people we work with, rules regarding sexual exploitation and abuse are strict. As a Diakonia employee or representative you accept the following:

- Never sexually exploit or sexually abuse any individual
- Never consume, purchase, sell, possess and distribute any form of pornography
- Never exchange money, employment, goods or services for sex, including sexual favors or other forms of humiliating, degrading or exploitative behavior. This includes the buying of, or profiting from, sexual services from adults and/or children.
- Never exploit the vulnerability of any target group in any context of development, humanitarian or advocacy work
- Never use your position to withhold development or humanitarian assistance, or give preferential treatment in order to solicit sexual favors, gifts, payments or any other form of personal advantages

When working with crisis-affected populations, given their increased vulnerability, Diakonia employees and representatives are not allowed to engage in any unprofessional relationships. In case there are doubts whether or not a country is in a crisis situation the regional director, or senior management at HO, will determine the status.

Should you engage in a relationship with another Diakonia employee, someone in a partner organization or a member in a community where Diakonia is supporting long-term development or advocacy work, you need to inform your director. This is to prevent potential conflict of interests.

Child Safeguarding and protection violations

Children and youth are often one of the target groups in Diakonia projects. When children become part of a displaced or traumatized population, there is also an increased likelihood of abuse or neglect. Keeping children and youth safe are central and fundamental aspects in all Diakonia's operations, and as employees or representatives we have to make sure all activities are in line with the Child Safeguarding Policy.⁴ Always bear this in mind:

- Never expose children to risks or abuse, sexually or otherwise
- Always get consent from the child and the legal guardian before taking pictures/filming children in group or individually, or before an extensive article on a child is written
- Avoid taking images with information that could identify or put children in danger, and avoid compromising situations e.g. sexually suggestive photos and/or where children are not fully dressed
- Always ensure that images do not reveal identifying information about a child when sending images electronically
- Always act with sensitivity around conversations or questions to avoid upsetting a child emotionally
- Always make sure that there are a minimum of two adults present when working in the proximity of children
- Always protect personal information regarding people, particularly children
- Always use social media respectfully

Any bullying, physical or verbal harassment, inappropriate touching, physical punishment, exposure to pornography e.g. on-line grooming and trafficking, particularly when being with children, is prohibited.

As an employee or representative of Diakonia, it is prohibited to engage in any sexual activity with children under the age of 18 years, regardless of consent or the age of majority. Mistaken belief in the age of a child is never a defense for such actions.

⁴ The Child Safeguarding policy was approved by the Board of Directors in December 2017 and is found in Steering documents on Diakonia's intranet VoiceIT. Or on Diakonia's web site.

Alcohol and narcotic substances

The view on alcohol and drug use may vary from country to country. Diakonia has taken a clear position and as a consequence, alcohol is not permitted when Diakonia is entertaining. Consumption of alcohol affects your work performance and puts you, your colleagues and other people at risk and is therefore prohibited during office hours.

It is prohibited to purchase, consume, sell or distribute narcotic substances at all times.

Driving under the influence of alcohol or narcotic substances during working hours is not permitted since it is a security and insurance issue, and can be illegal.

When prescribed by a physician you may purchase and consume narcotic substances for medical reasons. In such a case you shall report to your director.

Fraud, corruption and unethical business practices

Diakonia has policies and guidelines to support the understanding of what is expected regarding transparent, honest management of resources and business practices. The different documents can be found on Diakonia's intranet⁵. You are required to keep yourself updated on the content of the guidelines. Always have this in mind:

- Never steal or misuse funds, property or any kind of resources
- Never engage in criminal transactions, falsifying documents, money laundering, taking commissions or influencing tender processes for benefit or illegal activities
- Never take part in activities that generate personal, organizational or collective profit such as buying and selling when such activities may affect or appear to affect Diakonia's credibility or integrity
- Never use or accept bribes, receive or share profits such as cuts or discounts for personal or improper group gain
- Never use or distribute known unsafe products or supplies in any development or humanitarian setting
- Never accept gifts of a bigger value e.g. services, travels, tickets for entertainment, material goods from any provider
- You may accept minor tokens or gifts to show respect of local traditions. Gifts shall always be declared to your director who decides if it can be kept privately or should be handed over to Diakonia.

Spare-time job or other assignments outside Diakonia

Always consult with your director before undertaking any kind of spare-time job or assignment. This includes voluntary and paid jobs and assignments. The director decides if the spare-time job is compatible with the Diakonia employment.

Assessment questions before decision:

- Is the spare-time job or assignment competing with the Diakonia employment?
- Does the scope of the spare-time job/assignment affect work performance in Diakonia?

⁵ The following documents can be found on Diakonia's intranet. If you don't have access to the intranet they can be provided by e.g. a director:

- PME-Handbook
- Administrative Handbook
- Anti-Corruption Guidelines
- Procurement Guidelines

- Does the spare-time job/assignment affect Diakonia's brand and reputation?

Safety and security violations

Diakonia works in challenging contexts. As an employee or representative you have to follow safety and security plans for the country you are visiting or working in. The safety plans are there to protect you, your colleagues and Diakonia. Always ask the office you are going to visit for the latest security plan and information. It is not permitted to carry weapons or ammunition during office hours in the office or in your luggage. Employees working as armed guards are an exception.

4. Complaints, incident and disciplinary procedures

Complaints and incidents

As an employee you may encounter situations that contradict Diakonia's values or guidelines. It may e.g. concern partners not meeting requirements or it may concern Diakonia's programs or an employee who is not living up to the standards in the Code of Conduct. Always report such situations. Diakonia must make sure that rights holders, partners, other stakeholders and employees are safe, and that we can be held accountable to our commitments. The Complaints and Response Mechanism (CRM) has been set up for this purpose.

Always report directly to your director any complaints and incidents regarding suspected violations of the Code of Conduct. Should the complaint relate to your supervising director you can report to the Senior Management Team at head office directly, or via the whistleblowing system. Complaints regarding the Secretary General shall be sent to the Board of Directors, or via the whistleblowing system.

If requested, you are expected to cooperate in investigations of complaints or incidents.

Other methods of reporting complaints and incidents:

- Concerning employees: Use the form Staff incident on Diakonia's intranet VoicelT and send it to your director with a copy to the Human Resource Department at head office
- Concerning partners: Use the form Incident Partner also found on VoicelT and send it to your director with a copy to the CRM Focal Person at head office
- Whistleblowing system: Use the link on VoicelT or on Diakonia's website to report directly to the head office. You can choose to report anonymously when using the whistleblowing system.

Non retaliation and confidentiality

When you are reporting an incident it is Diakonia's commitment to handle the matter with confidentiality, as described in Diakonia's Complaints Policy.⁶

Confidentiality is crucial and documentation of the investigation is to remain confidential and is only shared on a strictly need-to-know-basis.

⁶ Diakonia, Complaints Policy: CRM Policy Diakonia can be found on Diakonia's intranet VoicelT/Steering Documents, or on Diakonia's web site.

It is not allowed to purposely make false or misleading allegations in order to harm someone. This is considered harassment and will lead to disciplinary actions.

Disciplinary measures

Violation of the Code of Conduct will not be tolerated and may lead to internal disciplinary actions or even dismissal. If the violation is considered to be a crime, the case will be handed over to law enforcement authorities in accordance with relevant legislation.

5. Ownership and revisions

The Human Resource Director at Diakonia's head office is the owner of the Code of Conduct. The document will be subject to a review one year after the adoption by Diakonia's Board of Directors. Thereafter, a review will take place every three years.

6. Annex 1: Key terms and definitions

In this annex, you will find explanations and definitions regarding concepts that the Code of Conduct is based on. It is important that you read these through and that you make sure you understand what the different concepts mean. Should you have doubts or questions please ask your director for guidance. It is essential that you understand the Code of Conduct since it expresses what is expected of you as a Diakonia employee or representative.

Child or Minor: A person under the age of 18 (as defined by the Convention of the Rights of the Child).

Child safeguarding: The set of internal, business critical policies, procedures and practice that Diakonia employs to ensure that the organization is child-safe.

This includes ensuring that:

- All behave appropriately towards children and do not abuse the position of trust that comes with their employment
- All are aware of and respond appropriately to issues of child abuse and the sexual exploitation of children
- Diakonia creates a child-safe environment in all activities by always assessing and reducing potential risks to children

Complainant: The person making the complaint, including the alleged victim of the misconduct or another person who becomes aware of possible misconduct. You have an obligation to report any knowledge, suspicions, or concerns of breaches of this Code of Conduct through appropriate channels within Diakonia. This includes any suspicion of sexual exploitation and abuse.

Corruption: Corruption is the abuse of power for illegitimate individual or group benefit. (Definition from the Diakonia Anti-Corruption guidelines)

Discrimination: Exclusion of, treatment of, or action against an individual based on social status, race, ethnicity, caste, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, marital status, national origin, political affiliation or disability.

Employee: Refers to, but not limited to, all permanent and temporary employees, interns, consultants, activists, volunteers, journalist, photographers, people participating in Diakonia organized travels and all elected Diakonia representatives.

Exploitation: Using one's position of authority, influence or control over resources, to pressure, force or manipulate someone by threatening or coercing them with negative repercussions as for instance withholding project assistance.

Fraud: An intentional distortion, deceit, trickery, and perversion of truth or violation of confidence, relating to Diakonia's financial, material, or human resources, assets, services and/or transactions, generally for the purpose of personal gain or benefit. Fraud is a criminal deception or the use of false representations to gain an unjust advantage.

Harassment: Harassment means any unwelcome comment or conduct that is offensive, demeaning, humiliating, derogatory, or any other inappropriate behavior that fails to respect the dignity of an individual. It is the perception of the individual that determines if an action shall be investigated to determine if it constitutes harassment. Harassment can be committed by or against any member or the community with whom Diakonia work, partners, employee, supplier, consultant or any other individual visiting or doing business with Diakonia (see also definition of sexual harassment further below).

Informed consent: Permission given with reasonable knowledge of the risks involved and the potential consequences and the available alternatives.

Misconduct: Any breach by an employee of applicable national or international law as well as violations of Diakonia's internal rules or policies including this Code of Conduct, regulations or other instructions issued by the relevant director or authority including contextualized security provisions and sexual harassment policies.

Protection: Ensuring that individual basic human rights, welfare and physical security are recognized, safeguarded and protected in accordance with international standards.

Sexual abuse: The actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, including inappropriate touching, by force or under unequal or coercive conditions (United Nations Secretary General's Bulletin 2003/13, 9 October 2003; Special Measures for Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse).

Sexual exploitation: Any actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power or trust, for sexual purposes, including, but not limited to, profiting monetarily, sexually or politically from the sexual exploitation of another (United Nations Secretary General's Bulletin 2003/13, 9 October 2003; Special Measures for Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse).

Sexual harassment: Sexual harassment means any unwelcome sexual advance, comment, expressed or implied sexual demand, touch, joke, gesture, or any other communication or conduct of a sexual nature, whether verbal, written or visual, by any person to another individual. Sexual harassment may be directed at members of the same or opposite sex and includes harassment based on sexual orientation. It is the perception of the harassed individual that determines if an action shall be investigated to determine if it sexual harassment or abuse. Sexual harassment can occur between any one or more individuals, employee or beneficiary, regardless of their work relationship.

Spare-time job: A spare-time job means that you have an extra employment, a business beside your regular employment or an assignment that can be voluntary or paid.

Photo: Martina Holmberg. Country: Bangladesh

