

Introduction

TEAR Australia's Code of Conduct (Code) describes our shared understanding and commitment to the highest level of ethical conduct for all TEAR people, in keeping with TEAR's mission and values which seek to embody biblical values. TEAR seeks to provide a safe and trusted environment that safeguards everyone with whom the organisation has contact, including project partners, staff, volunteers, beneficiaries, supporters' and associated persons. TEAR expects all of its staff, volunteers, and other representatives to contribute to that environment and to demonstrate the highest levels of conduct both at work and outside of work. Further details on TEAR processes can be found in TEAR Policies and Guidelines.

Scope

TEAR people (including all staff, specified TEAR contractors and consultants, volunteers, fieldworkers and any associated personnel when representing TEAR directly or indirectly, in Australia or internationally) must demonstrate the following standards of behaviour.

The Code is applicable at all times. Whilst recognising that local laws and cultures differ considerably from one country to another, TEAR is an International Non-Governmental Organisation, and therefore the Code is developed from international standards. TEAR people are expected to uphold local law wherever they operate, except where the Code of Conduct is more stringent, in which case the Code applies.

Implementation

Each staff member is required to read and sign the Code and related TEAR references, on joining TEAR as part of their contract annually. Volunteers will be asked to sign the Code on commencing their work. Leaders, Managers and Supervisors have a particular responsibility to ensure staff and volunteers are informed, receive, sign and understand the Code when commencing their role, and receive training on the Code during induction and annual performance appraisals as appropriate.

The Code has 8 main values and associated Standards of Behaviour which TEAR people commit to uphold

As a TEAR representative I will:

1. Uphold TEAR's Mission, Values and Basis of Belief

- TEAR is a Christian development, relief and advocacy organisation responding to global poverty and injustice. Our vision is for a just and compassionate world in which all people have the opportunity to achieve their God-given potential. I will take care that my conduct and communication does not damage TEAR's reputation. See <http://www.tear.org.au/about> to review TEAR's Mission, Values and Basis of Belief.

2. Treat all people with respect and integrity

- I will treat all people with respect and dignity, regardless of gender, race, religion, colour, national or ethnic origin, language, marital status, family status, birth, sexual orientation, age, disability, status, socio-economic background, caste, political or other opinion, HIV and AIDS status, physical appearance or lifestyle.

3. Work to develop relationships of integrity and respect with all of our partners, those implementing projects and those supporting TEAR's work

- I will ensure that my interactions with implementing partners are conducted in a way that upholds respectful, open and trusting relationships between TEAR, our partners, and the communities in which they work.
- I will participate in prayer for TEAR's work and its partners.

- I will uphold TEAR's expectation which is that TEAR people must not engage in sexual relationships, or fraternisation, with program participants or other persons where these relationships are based on inherently unequal power dynamics and there is the potential for abuse of power. Such relationships undermine the credibility and integrity of TEAR, its Partners and its programs.
- TEAR people must immediately inform their direct Supervisor if they become engaged in a personal relationship which may be perceived as inappropriate or exploitative, or where real or perceived unequal power dynamics exist. TEAR people who are unsure if their relationships falls into this category should discuss the situation with their Supervisor and/or the People & Culture Director.
- I will not engage in transactional sex in relation to adults in a vulnerable context.

4. Value TEAR's reputation, interests and resources, operating with integrity, accountability and dealing responsibly with information, assets and resources to which I have access by reason of my association with TEAR

- I will ensure that assets, funds and resources entrusted to me are safeguarded and used as requested and in accordance with TEAR's strategy and policies, and will account for all money and property.
- I will adhere to TEAR's zero tolerance stance in relation to corruption, bribery, fraudulent or dishonest activity and other financial impropriety or wrongdoing.
- I will not use TEAR equipment, software or e-mail and social media platforms to engage in activity that is illegal under local or international law or that encourages conduct that would constitute a criminal offence. This includes viewing, downloading, creating, distributing or saving in any format, any material that victimises, exploits, intimidates or harasses any individual or group or encourages extremism. This includes but is not limited to adult or child pornography.

5. Perform my duties and conduct myself in a manner that avoids or appropriately discloses and manages conflicts of interest

- I will act fairly and honestly and declare any financial, personal, family or other related interest in matters of official business which may impact on the work of TEAR and will abide by TEAR's Conflict of Interest Policy in regard to disclosing and managing any conflict of interest.

6. Support the safety, health and welfare of all TEAR people (e.g. volunteers, partners, fieldworkers, suppliers and contractors)

- I will behave in a manner such as to avoid any unnecessary risk to the safety, health and welfare of myself and others, including partner organisations and communities with whom we work. I will adhere to all legal and organisational health and safety requirements at my location and follow any reasonable, lawful instruction by TEAR or its partners or representatives relating to safety, health, welfare or security.
- I will contribute to a safe work environment that is fair and free of all forms of harassment (including sexual harassment) and bullying, discrimination, abuse, intimidation or exploitation.
- I will comply with Australian laws.
- I will observe local laws and be sensitive to local customs when working or travelling in an international context on behalf of TEAR.
- TEAR recognises that there may be instances of civil disobedience that can be discussed and are at TEAR's discretion.
- I will demonstrate respect for myself and others in my responsible use of alcohol, and will not use illegal substances.
- I will not intentionally do anything that could reasonably result in harm being caused to TEAR staff, volunteers, project participants and community members, vulnerable adults or others who come into contact with TEAR.

7. Uphold TEAR's commitment to value, protect and prevent the exploitation or abuse of children

TEAR has a zero tolerance approach to illegal, exploitive, or abusive behaviour which risks the safety or well-being of children.

While representing and/or participating in TEAR's programs, TEAR people must keep to the following standards of behaviour, and are encouraged to be conscious of their behaviour, and how these behaviours may be perceived by others. For the purposes of this document, a child is defined as someone under the age of 18 years. It is acknowledged that where a person is the responsible caregiver for their own child they may be exempted from some parts of this code of conduct (i.e. being alone with their own child).

I will:

- Consider the best interests of children as paramount, and promote a culture that ensures that children are listened to and treated with respect and that empowers children, their families and communities to be knowledgeable of their rights and avenues of redress.
- Inform myself on the Rights of the Child and TEAR's Safeguarding Children Policy or their equivalents as they apply to the setting that I am working in.
- Comply with TEAR's Safeguarding Children Policy and Guidelines, including the immediate and mandatory reporting of concerns or allegations of child abuse, harm, neglect, exploitation and/or policy non-compliance in accordance with this Policy and Guidelines.
- Follow practices which minimise and monitor risks of all forms of child abuse and accidental harm to children. This includes complying with all relevant Australian legislation and regulatory requirements in regard to safeguarding children, the child protection legislation of the region in which we operate, and following host/ partner agency policy regarding the protection of children.
- Self-assess my behaviours, actions, language and relationships with children taking care to avoid actions or behaviours that could be perceived by others as exploitative or abusive, or otherwise contrary to the Safeguarding Children Policy.
- Ensure that another adult is present when working in the proximity of children.
- Ensure that information concerning children is kept confidential, and that I comply with TEAR's Visual Images policy in regard to safeguarding of identity and privacy, with particular regard to children.
- At all times be transparent about my actions and whereabouts.

I will not:

- Attempt to develop relationships with children that lack accountability.
- Act in ways which shame, humiliate, belittle or degrade children.
- Smack, hit or physically assault children.
- Discriminate against or favour particular children, whether because of race, age, gender, disability, religion, sexuality or political persuasion.
- Massage, hold, kiss, cuddle, touch or play with children in an inappropriate and/or culturally insensitive way or make sexually suggestive comments to a child.
- Do things of a personal nature that a child can do for themselves, such as going to the toilet or changing clothes.
- Sleep with a child in the same bed.
- Condone or participate in behaviour involving children which is illegal, unsafe or abusive (including the giving of gifts or provision of alcohol or drugs to children).
- Engage in any commercially exploitative activities with children, including;

- 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.
- Child trafficking.
- Seek to make contact and spend time with any child or young person outside the program times.
- Photograph or video a child without the consent of the child and his/her parent or guardian contrary to TEAR's Visual Images Policy and the Child Protection Code.
- Engage in sexual activity with children. Mistaken belief in the age of a child is not a defence.

8. Uphold TEAR's commitment to value, protect and prevent the exploitation or abuse of vulnerable adults.

While representing and/or participating in TEAR's programs, TEAR people must keep to the following standards of behaviour, and are encouraged to be conscious of their behaviour, and how these behaviours may be perceived by others.

I will:

- Promote a culture that empowers individuals, families and communities to be knowledgeable of their rights and avenues of redress.
- Create and maintain an attitude and culture of transparency that ensures all people can talk about their contacts with staff and others, are listened to and treated with respect. This includes helping people understand expectations of staff and methods of feedback.
- Respect each vulnerable adult's boundaries and empower them to make independent choices and identify what to do if they feel that there is a problem.
- Encourage a culture of mutual accountability so that potential abusive behaviour can be challenged.
- Maintain awareness of and comply with TEAR's Safeguarding of Vulnerable Adults Policy and Guidelines, including the process for immediate reporting of concerns or allegations of exploitation, abuse or policy non-compliance.
- Follow practices which minimise and monitor risks of all forms of exploitation and accidental harm to vulnerable adults. This includes complying with legislation of the region in which we operate, and following host/ partner agency policy regarding the treatment of vulnerable adults.
- Self-assess my behaviours, actions, language and relationships, taking care to avoid actions or behaviours that could be perceived by others as exploitative or abusive, or otherwise contrary to the Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Policy.
- Use technology (computers, mobile phones, video cameras, cameras or social media) in a dignified and respectful manner, and never to exploit or harass vulnerable adults or other project participants, community members, or staff.
- Ensure that personal information is kept confidential, and comply with TEAR's Visual Images policy in regard to consent for any photography or video creation and the safeguarding of identity and privacy of vulnerable adults.

I will not:

- Behave in any way or develop any relationship that could in any way be deemed exploitative or abusive.
- Act in ways that may place a vulnerable adult at risk of abuse, or be construed as potentially abusive. For example, I will not;
 - Use language, make suggestions or offer advice which is inappropriate, demeaning, provocative, offensive or abusive.
 - Do things "of a personal nature" for a vulnerable adult that they can do for themselves.

- Discriminate against, show different treatment, or favour a particular individual to the exclusion of others.
- Engage in any commercially exploitative activities.
- Spend excessive amounts of time with them away from others or outside of program boundaries.
- Request, solicit or accept any payment, gift, service or favour from others, whether for my own personal benefit or for another person, in return for TEAR support, goods or services.
- Exchange money, employment, goods or services for sex or sexual services or personal payments from any person (including but not limited to vulnerable adults, beneficiaries, staff, partners, volunteers) or engage in any other forms of exploitative behaviour.
- Engage in sexual relationships with people who are beneficiaries of TEAR or TEAR partner assistance.
- Physically, emotionally, spiritually or psychologically abuse another adult.

Reporting of Code of Conduct Concerns:

TEAR people recognise a mutual obligation to bring any potential incident, abuse or concern that they witness, are made aware of or suspect, which appears to breach the Standards contained in this Code to the attention of a Supervisor (Volunteer or Staff member) or Leadership Team member. TEAR people reporting concerns are protected by the TEAR Whistleblowing Policy. TEAR people receiving reports or concerns are obliged to action or refer the report in line with TEAR's Safeguarding, Whistleblowing or Complaints Policy and to ensure that all information about potential breaches of this Code are handled with utmost discretion.

Declaration:

I have read TEAR's Code of Conduct and am committed to actively uphold these values and behaviours. I understand breaches of the Code may result in disciplinary processes. I understand that failure to comply with any principles of the TEAR Code of Conduct may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal or conclusion of volunteer arrangement and, where applicable, may result in civil or criminal proceedings against me.

Signed:

Dated:

Related policies:

- Bullying and Harassment policy
- Conflict of Interest policy
- Discipline policy
- Human Rights policy
- Privacy policy
- Safeguarding Children policy and Guidelines
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults policy and Guidelines
- Social Media policy
- Visual Images policy
- Whistleblowing policy
- Work Health and Safety policy