

Code of Conduct

1. INTRODUCTION

This code of conduct sets out the standards and behaviours that are expected of Age International staff, volunteers and consultants and that arise from our values and culture.

We expect everybody working for and with Age International to:

- a) behave in a manner that respects and aims to protect older people
- b) work in a constructive, collaborative manner
- c) have zero tolerance of any forms of harassment
- d) embrace diversity and adopt an inclusive approach
- e) report any unacceptable behaviour or actions
- f) take action to maintain the highest of standards

2. OUR VISION AND VALUES

Age International's vision is of a world where every older person feels included and valued. Across the world, older people are respected and valued, their voices are heard, and their contributions recognised, their basic needs are met, and their human rights realised.

Our values guide how we behave when we work with older people, with each other and with others with whom we work.

Be brilliant partners:

- We enjoy building strong, productive relationships.
- We listen carefully to different voices to hear what matters.
- We can flex and shift position when needed.
- We love learning and share what we know generously.
- We are trusted and valued.

Be purposeful:

- We're insatiably curious, asking questions to unlock clarity.
- We do less to achieve more.
- We look to the data and evidence to elevate our thinking.
- We deliver what we say we're going to.

Enjoy being ambitious:

- We bring a positive, can-do attitude.
- We look to make the bold decisions that will drive change.
- We think creatively to solve problems.
- We have fun along the way.

Build each other up:

- We ask for support when we need it and step in to help others.
- We're open to the constructive feedback that helps us grow.
- We see the value in ourselves and appreciate it in others.
- We're inclusive and invite active contribution from everyone.

3. ETHICAL BEHAVIOUR

We expect that all our staff, volunteers and consultants will:

- a) demonstrate respect for all human rights and challenge any discrimination including, but not limited to, discrimination on the grounds of age, gender, sexual orientation, disability, ethnic origin or religion.
- b) treat older people with dignity and respect and create an environment that prevents their physical, sexual or emotional abuse or neglect.
- c) take positive action to reduce older people's risk from harm.
- d) act fairly and honestly and treat others with dignity and respect.
- e) raise any issues or concerns arising from work in the UK or internationally through mechanisms set out in our Protection and Safeguarding policies.

4. UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR

We expect all our staff, volunteers and consultants **will not**:

- a) use the organisation's computers or any other equipment or IT systems to view, download, create or distribute inappropriate material, including but not limited to pornography.
- b) form business relationships between family members or friends and Age International, or between Age International and any other business in which individuals have a managerial or financial interest.
- c) accept or offer any favours and bribes, gifts (except small token of appreciation) from or to beneficiaries, partners or contractors, or other forms of personal enrichment under any circumstances. Small tokens of appreciation may be given or received but line managers must be informed of any gifts that are offered or received, in accordance with the Anti-Bribery Policy and Procedure.

- d) abuse a position of power or authority by forming sexual relations in the workplace or gaining any other advantage. Where staff, volunteers or consultants begin relationships with one another, it should be disclosed to the appropriate level of management so that adjustments can be made to avoid the risk of being, or perceived as being, an abuse of power.
- e) purchase, or acquire through coercion, sexual favours from colleagues or stakeholders.
- f) engage in any type of sexual relationships with programme beneficiaries or their family members.
- g) work while under the influence of any drug, including alcohol, or drug related substance (with the exception of prescribed drugs for health reasons) that affects the ability to perform duties, nor bring any such substances on Age International property or have on one's person whilst undertaking Age International's work
- h) bully or harass other people in any way, including through social media or any other form of media, in accordance with the Social Media Policy.
- i) cause damage to Age International's reputation in any way, including through social media or any other form of media

5. RELATIONSHIP TO LOCAL CULTURE AND COMMUNITIES

We expect that our staff, volunteers and consultants, when making international trips in the course of their work, will respect the host community by:

- a) endeavouring to act respectfully in interactions with beneficiaries, local staff, partners and other stakeholders.
- b) taking all reasonable action to avoid behaviour or action that might offend local sensitivities.
- c) ensuring that Age International's mission and objectives in the country are not compromised.

6. SEXUAL EXPLOITATION AND ABUSE

Age International recognises that harassment, abuse and exploitation are rooted in power inequalities, and is committed to ensuring that they have no place in our organisation. In addition to the standards set out in Section 4 above, which are more stringent than those described here, Age International upholds the IASC six core principles relating to sexual exploitation and abuse, and believe that these should apply across all of our work:

1. Sexual exploitation and abuse by humanitarian workers constitute acts of gross misconduct and are therefore grounds for termination of employment.

2. Sexual activity with children (persons under the age of 18) is prohibited regardless of the age of majority or age of consent locally. Mistaken belief regarding the age of a child is not a defence.
3. Exchange of money, employment, goods, or services for sex, including sexual favours or other forms of humiliating, degrading or exploitative behaviour is prohibited. This includes exchange of assistance that is due to beneficiaries.
4. Sexual relationships between humanitarian workers and beneficiaries are strongly discouraged since they are based on inherently unequal power dynamics. Such relationships undermine the credibility and integrity of humanitarian aid work.
5. Where a humanitarian worker develops concerns or suspicions regarding sexual abuse or exploitation by a fellow worker, whether in the same agency or not, he or she must report such concerns via established agency reporting mechanisms.
6. Humanitarian workers are obliged to create and maintain an environment which prevents sexual exploitation and abuse and promotes the implementation of their code of conduct. Managers at all levels have particular responsibilities to support and develop systems which maintain this environment.

7. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

To avoid any actual or perceived conflict of interest, all our staff, volunteers and consultants are required to:

- a) declare any financial, personal or family (or close intimate relationship) interest in matters of official business which may impact on the work of the organisation.
- b) not be involved in awarding benefits, contracts for goods or services, employment or promotion within Age International, to any person with whom they have a financial, personal, family (or close intimate relationship) interest.
- c) agree in advance any potential concurrent employment (e.g. a second job) to ensure no conflict and to check the combined workload does not have an adverse effect on wellbeing or maintaining high standards of work.

8. DATA PROTECTION

We expect all our staff, volunteers, and consultants to comply with Age International's Data Protection (GDPR) Policy and to take care when handling confidential data and sensitive information, including:

- a) To follow IT procedures in respect of computers and access to on-line tools.
- b) To keep confidential files stored in a suitably secure facility.
- c) To dispose of confidential material in an appropriate manner.

Staff, volunteers, and consultants are expected to follow advice provided by the data security team.

9. TAKING ACTION

Everybody is expected to report any breaches of this code and/or seek help if needed.

- a) report immediately any breaches of this code to a line manager, or, if not appropriate, to another senior member of staff.
- b) all suspected breaches of the code will be thoroughly investigated and treated with the utmost confidentiality.

10. MAKING THE CODE EFFECTIVE

We are committed to supporting staff to understand and act on the Code and provide a variety of ways to raise issues:

- a) discuss with manager or department Head.
- b) raise any issues arising from work in the UK or from an international trip.
- c) raise a whistleblowing concern.
- d) share our values and expectations with new staff, consultants and volunteers through induction and training.
- e) explain our values and expectations with third parties with whom we work through induction and briefing.

11. AGE INTERNATIONAL POLICIES & PROCEDURES

Age International has the following policies in place to help support good working practices. These policies provide detailed guidance and requirements for staff to fully implement this code of conduct.

- Global Security Policy
- Security Training Policy
- Social Media Policy
- Code of Conduct – Staff
- Code of Conduct – Trustees
- Gender Equality Policy
- Diversity, Equality, Inclusion and Belonging Policy
- Programme Evaluation Policy
- Safeguarding
- Conflict of Interest – Directors, Employees, and Volunteers
- Data Protection (GDPR)
- Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion
- Fundraising
- Health and Safety
- Information Systems and Security
- Prevention of Criminal Acts

- Procurement
- Risk Management
- Safeguarding
- Whistleblowing
- Modern Slavery Statement
- Environmental Sustainability Statement
- Bullying, Harassment and Victimisation Policy & Procedure
- Gifts and Hospitality
- Customers in Vulnerable Circumstances
- Working from Abroad Policy
- Feedback and Complaints Policy
- Environmental and Sustainability Policy