

Safeguarding Code of Conduct

Overview

Anglican Overseas Aid (AOA) is committed to the highest standards of professional conduct in all areas of its work, both in Australia and internationally.

Safeguarding and protecting AOA parties¹, sponsors, donors and communities in which we work is paramount. We recognise that our reputation is one of our most valuable assets and is founded largely on the ethical behaviour of the people who represent AOA. All AOA parties must be aware of perceptions and appearances in their language, actions, and relationships to children and adults, and safeguard them from harm. AOA parties should always uphold the dignity of people and treat all people with respect.

The following Code provides behavioural expectations for AOA parties undertaking any form of work for, or on behalf of AOA. All AOA parties, while on duty and off duty, must adhere to the following compulsory standards of behavior. Compliance with this Code, AOA's policies and the law are conditions of working or undertaking any form of business with or for AOA. Any breach of this Code is a serious matter that may give rise to disciplinary action, including dismissal and legal action.

Standards of behaviour

AOA prohibits all forms of transactional sex for all AOA parties. This applies while on and off duty. 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. Any person who is an employee, volunteer or contractor of an AOA program development partner must inform his or her line manager when engaging in a long-term relationship with a member of the community which is benefitting from that program in order to prevent a perception of a conflict of interest.

AOA parties must never:

- Sexually exploit, sexually abuse or sexually harass any individual
- Engage in sexual relationships with members of crisis-affected or vulnerable populations, given their increased vulnerability and since such relationships are based on inherently unequal power dynamics and undermine the credibility and integrity of aid and development work

¹ This Policy applies to Board members, staff, program development partners, program development contractors and volunteers of AOA. From here on, these groups will be collectively referred to in this policy as 'AOA parties'

- Exploit the vulnerability of any target group in the context of development, humanitarian and advocacy work, especially women and children, or allow any person/s to be put into compromising situations
- Abuse a position to withhold development or humanitarian assistance, or give preferential treatment; in order to solicit sexual favours, gifts, payments of any kind, or advantage
- Act in ways that may place a child at risk of abuse, including not giving due consideration to assessing and reducing potential risks to children as a result of implementing activities. Behaviours and actions that are prohibited include, but are not limited to, using inappropriate language or behaviour when dealing with a child or children, bullying and harassing a child verbally or physically, physical punishment, exposing a child to pornography including on-line grooming and trafficking.

AOA parties must:

- Treat all people with respect
- Not engage children under the age of 18² in any form of sexual intercourse³, or sexual activity⁴
- Wherever possible, ensure that another adult is present when working near children (excluding children that the AOA party has a parental or guardian responsibility for)
- While undertaking AOA duties and at all times during national deployment, not invite unaccompanied children into private residences, unless they are at immediate risk of injury or in physical danger
- Not sleep close to unsupervised children unless absolutely necessary, in which case the supervisor's permission must be obtained, and ensuring that another adult is present if possible (excluding children that the AOA party has a parental or guardian responsibility for)
- Never use any computers, mobile phones, video cameras, cameras or social media to exploit or harass children or adults, or access child or adult exploitation material through any medium
- While undertaking AOA duties and at all times during national deployment, not use physical punishment on children
- Not hire children for domestic or other labour, which is inappropriate given their age or developmental stage or which interferes with their time available for education and recreational activities or which places them at significant risk of injury
- Comply with all relevant Australian and local national legislation, including laws in relation to child labour
- Immediately report to the AOA CEO all charges, convictions and other outcomes of an offence that relates to child exploitation and abuse, including those under traditional law, which occurred before or occurs during association with AOA.

Seeking Assistance

Training with respect to Child Safeguarding, the Prevention of Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment, Fraud and Corruption, Bullying and Harassment will be provided to all AOA staff and partners. Refresher training will be provided on an annual basis.

If AOA parties have any questions about the Safeguarding Code of Conduct and how it applies to them, they should seek advice from the CEO or a Board member. If an AOA party is aware of or is suspicious of any kind of misconduct, unethical or illegal behaviour that contravenes this Code, AOA policy or the law, they should report this to the CEO or the Chair of the Board in accordance with the Whistleblower Policy.

¹ Where the child is 16 years or older and the other party is not more than 2 years older; and it can be established that the child consented to the relationship, an exception can be recorded promptly on personnel files.

² As defined under the *Criminal Code Act 1995*.

³ As defined under the *Criminal Code Act 1995*.

The signatory below has read, understood and is in agreement with the content of the AOA Code of Conduct and the following AOA Policies:

- Child Protection
- PSEAH
- Bullying and Harassment
- Whistleblowing
- Fraud and Corruption

This Code of Conduct is valid until the AOA party ceases to represent or work for AOA. This Code of Conduct shall be subject to periodic revision and review and AOA parties agree to be bound by any updated version hereof. The signatory accepts the consequences of any violation of any of the above provisions under this Code of Conduct. All AOA parties are required to sign this Code of Conduct.

Name:

Position:

Signature:

Date: