

## Jesuit Refugee Service Code of Conduct

### INTRODUCTION

JRS is an international Catholic agency that provides specialised support services to refugees and other forcibly displaced persons in over 50 countries around the world. Our mission, as stated in our Charter, is to accompany, serve and defend the rights of refugees and other forcibly displaced persons. This mission is built on a faith in God who is present in human history, even in its most tragic moments. All our work is inspired by this faith and by the following core values:

- Compassion that impels us to alleviate suffering, treating all with the same fairness and respect that we ourselves wish to be treated.
- Hope that provides refugees with both spiritual and practical support in their difficult period of displacement.
- Dignity that believes in the intrinsic value of every person regardless of race, gender, religion or politics.
- Solidarity that calls us to humble and respectful service to people of diverse cultures, nationalities and religions.
- Hospitality that inspires us to accompany and welcome the most vulnerable, giving priority to situations of great need where a more universal good may be achieved and to needs that others have not addressed.
- Justice that commits us to work with refugees to challenge systems that deny them their human rights.
- Participation that encourages co-responsibility, discernment and participative decision-making among our teams and with the forcibly displaced people we serve.

### SCOPE

JRS recognizes that its team members are men and women of high integrity whose actions reflect the core values that underlie the Code of Conduct. It is, however, important for all who work for JRS to understand clearly that the highest standard of conduct is expected of them in order to ensure the protection of and care for the people with whom JRS works. This code applies to all those associated with JRS, including paid staff, volunteers, board members, and consultants.

## **CODE OF CONDUCT**

### **A. Professional Behaviour**

As a team member of JRS, I commit myself to:

1. Undertake my duties as a JRS team member conscientiously and in keeping with the organization's values and its mission to accompany, serve and defend the rights of refugees and other forcibly displaced persons.
2. Uphold and promote the highest standards of ethical and professional conduct in carrying out my assigned duties in the workplace and in my life outside the official work environment. Furthermore, I will endeavour to represent and further the values and mission of JRS to the best of my ability.
3. Avoid any public statement which may unnecessarily reflect poorly on the name and reputation of JRS.
4. Maintain the highest degree of confidentiality in professional matters.
5. Receive clear instructions and approval from the International or Regional Director or a designated JRS official before taking part in any communications or media task associated with my work for JRS.
6. Never use JRS communication equipment or premises (e.g., phones, computers, e-mail, etc.) to transmit harassing, abusive, sexually explicit, racially or ethically offensive, or defamatory material.
7. Display at all times equal respect for all persons regardless of their race, gender, religion, colour, national or ethnic origin, language, sexual orientation, age, socio-economic status, political conviction, or any other distinguishing features.
8. Help create and maintain a work environment which prevents sexual exploitation and abuse.
9. Facilitate open and honest communication within JRS.
10. Help create a healthy and positive working environment that allows and encourages all team members to work harmoniously even through challenging and stressful times.

### **B. Personal Behaviour**

As a team member of JRS, I commit myself to:

1. Respect all local laws in the country where I am working and honour my private legal obligations.
2. Abide by the principles of Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse in a Humanitarian Crisis, articulated by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC), which prohibit acts of sexual exploitation and abuse, and call for particular responsibility and care towards children and vulnerable adults. I understand that any proven case of exploitation and abuse, whether of a sexual or non-sexual nature, is grounds for immediate dismissal.

3. Follow the JRS Child Protection Policy Framework that prohibits sexual activity with children (persons under the age of 18) regardless of the age of majority or the age of consent locally. Mistaken belief in the age of a child does not serve as a defence for such behaviour.
4. Recognise that sexual relationships between JRS workers and the people they serve, regardless of age, are strongly discouraged since they may be based on inherently unequal power dynamics.
5. Report when concerns or suspicions regarding sexual abuse or exploitation by a fellow JRS worker arise, whether in a JRS environment or elsewhere.
6. Adhere to JRS's strict prohibition against possessing or being under the influence of illegal substances either within or outside the workplace environment. The same prohibition applies for being under the influence of alcohol in the workplace or while representing JRS.
7. Never bring offensive weapons to the workplace or carry them while conducting JRS work or representing JRS which is grounds for dismissal, unless approval is clearly stated in one's job description (e.g., guards).
8. Respect JRS position on prohibition of any threat or act of violence, physical or verbal, either within or outside the workplace environment. Any substantiated case, will result in disciplinary sanction.
9. Behave in a way that does not jeopardise my security or the safety of my team.
10. Ensure that my conduct neither reflects negatively on JRS nor impacts or undermines my or others' ability to undertake the role for which I am employed.

### **C. Conflict of Interest, Coercion and Corruption**

Furthermore, I agree to:

1. Avoid activities outside the formal work setting (e.g., additional time-consuming employment or volunteer work) that would create a conflict of interest with my JRS duties and responsibilities or detract in any way from my JRS work assignments.
2. Not exchange money, employment, goods, or services for sex, including sexual favors or other forms of humiliating, degrading or exploitative behavior, which are prohibited by JRS. This includes exchange of assistance that is due to beneficiaries.
3. Not create business relationships between JRS and members of my own extended family or friends or any private businesses in which I have a financial interest that may lead to a conflict of interest. If I become aware of a potential conflict of interest, I must immediately discuss this matter with my supervisor.
4. Neither offer to nor accept from the people JRS serves, from partners or contractors any favours, bribes or other forms of personal enrichment under any circumstances. Small tokens of appreciation may be offered or received, but I must inform my supervisor of any such gifts.

5. Neither seek nor accept instructions from any other authority external to JRS that could jeopardise the scope or implementation of JRS's work.
6. Be accountable for the property and funds of JRS entrusted to me and to those whom I supervise in JRS. I understand that, if I am proven to have been involved in theft or fraud or if I have mishandled JRS assets, funds or records, I will be liable to pay compensatory damages and will be subject to dismissal.
7. Report behaviours of other staff when I have reasonable suspicion of breaches of the standards of the Code of Conduct.