

# Code of Conduct

## Introduction

At the British Red Cross (BRC), our vision is of a world where everyone gets the help they need in a crisis. Our mission is to mobilise the power of humanity so that individuals and communities can prepare for, respond to and recover from crises.

To accomplish that, we are committed to promoting and maintaining an environment where everyone that is associated with us, or comes into contact with our activities, feels respected, safe, and valued.

## Purpose

This Code of Conduct (the 'Code') sets out our values and the expectations we have of our people. This includes our obligations to one another and the people we support, reinforcing the exceptional level of respect we have for those across and outside of our organisation. It also outlines the process for reporting an action that breaches, or disregards, the Code.

Overall, the Code aims to support and strengthen an ethical culture throughout the BRC, one consistent with the Fundamental Principles that guide our humanitarian mission: Humanity, Impartiality, Neutrality, Independence, Voluntary Service, Unity and Universality, and our organisational values which support our decisions and actions taken in accordance with the Fundamental Principles: Compassionate, Courageous, Dynamic and Inclusive.

## Scope

The Code applies to all 'our people' which includes all BRC employees (United Kingdom [UK]-based and overseas delegates), consultants, volunteers, interns, staff-on-loan, those working under the BRC's name and legal status, and individuals with whom we have a close but indirect association, such as staff of partners acting in cooperation with the BRC.

The Code automatically forms an integral part of all BRC contracts of employment and conditions of service for all our people.

## The Code: Our Expectations

1. We will act consistently with the **Fundamental Principles**. This means, amongst other things, that our people are required at all times to maintain our neutrality, independence and impartiality, thereby ensuring that we act in the best interests of the organisation and the people we support.
2. We will follow our corporate policies and procedures, contractual terms and conditions of service, and the guidance documents we develop.
3. We will comply with applicable UK laws, as well as applicable laws in the countries in which we are present. If there is a conflict between these laws, we will seek appropriate guidance to ensure that our approach aligns with our commitments to humanitarian principles and human rights.
4. We will be an inclusive organisation. We will **respect all people equally**. We have a humanitarian, ethical and legal responsibility to celebrate and champion equity, diversity and inclusion. We strive to create an **open and honest working environment where everyone is treated with dignity and respect** and have a zero-tolerance approach towards harassment, sexual harassment, bullying, abuse, discrimination, exploitation or violence, including all forms of sexual exploitation, abuse, and violence. This includes:
  - a. Exchanging of money, employment, goods or services for sex, including engaging with sex trade workers;
  - b. Requesting sexual favours or engaging in humiliating, degrading or exploitative behaviour;
  - c. Engaging in sexual activity with anyone under 18 years or with individuals who rely on, or benefit from, our services or programmes;

- d. Using inappropriate or exploitative purposes, including accessing or distributing pornographic material.
5. We will demonstrate and bring to life our four organisational values in practice through the internal and external conduct we have set out in the Values in Action, and Mutual Expectations document
6. We will **respect the red cross, red crescent and red crystal** emblems, using them consistently with applicable rules.
7. We will **act ethically**. We have a zero-tolerance approach to fraud, bribery and corruption (including money laundering and funding terrorism), and will act against those who commit or assist anyone committing fraud.
8. We will **avoid** conflicts of interest and consider whether the giving and receiving of a gift or hospitality is appropriate when connected to our work. We will **manage conflicts of interest** and declare gifts and hospitalities according to our internal process.
9. We will handle all **confidential and sensitive information** with the greatest care, especially to protect data relating to people who use our services. However, in certain circumstances where required or permitted by law – such as the prevention of serious harm – we may need to share relevant information. Any such disclosure will be made in accordance with applicable laws and our Data Protection policies.

## Reporting a Problem

We all have a duty to report concerns or suspicions regarding any violation of the Code by our people. This can be reported confidentially using **Safecall**, an impartial and external ethics hotline. There is no risk of losing employment, or suffering any form of reprisal, if a concern is reported. Appropriate steps will be taken to protect our people reporting a concern.

## Breaches

Breaches of the Code will be subject to disciplinary measures in accordance with formal corporate disciplinary policies and procedures applicable to our people.

## Questions?

Our people are encouraged to speak with their line manager or their manager's manager in the first instance if they have general queries. Alternative contacts include:

- a. People Advice and Casework Team (our UK-based people);
- b. International Human Resources, People and Learning (our people overseas);
- c. Safeguarding Team (sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment – SEAH)
- d. Governance and Support, Chief Executive's Office (leadership queries);
- e. Professional Services (corporate policy and procedure queries);
- f. International Law and Policy (emblem use and the Fundamental Principles, both in the UK and overseas).

## Governance

<b>Policy Owner</b>	Chief Executive
<b>Policy Lead</b>	Regulatory and Reporting Manager
<b>Scope</b>	All our people
<b>Approved by</b>	Executive Leadership Team
<b>Date Effective</b>	April 2025
<b>Review date</b>	April 2028