

<b>Policy Title</b>	Protection from Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment Policy		
<b>Unit</b>	CEO, Habitat for Humanity Australia		
<b>Version</b>	Version 1.0		
<b>Authorised by</b>	Board of Directors		
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## Introduction

Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment (SEAH) are violations of basic human rights. Habitat for Humanity Australia (HFHA) aims to provide a safe and trusted environment that safeguards everyone from SEAH including beneficiary communities, staff, volunteers, and partner organisations. HFHA is committed to safeguarding the people it helps and who it works alongside.

## Purpose

This policy sets out HFHA's approach to preventing sexual exploitation and abuse. It sets out:

- The principles upon which we will base our decision making and actions,
- Our expectations of all who represent HFHA,
- How HFHA will assess risk and ensure proper conduct at all times,
- Our commitments to ensure effective action is taken if problems occur.

## Policy statement

HFHA takes a zero tolerance approach to all forms of abuse and maintains an organisational culture that prioritises safeguarding against SEAH. HFHA will make it accessible for anyone affected to come forward and report incidents and concerns with the assurance they will be handled sensitively and appropriately.

The nature of HFHA's work places staff in positions of authority and trust in relation to the communities we work with, especially vulnerable adults and children (under 18 years of age) and a range of volunteers. HFHA staff have an obligation to uphold high standards of personal and professional conduct at all times and must not abuse this position in order to exploit or abuse another person through sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment, sexual violence, bullying, fraternisation, or any other abuse of power.

## Policy in Practice

### Prevention of Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment

Sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment (SEAH) occurs when people in power exploit or abuse vulnerable people for sexual purposes. All Habitat representatives are prohibited from engaging in sexual exploitation, abuse or harassment.

- **Sexual exploitation:** Any actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power, or trust, for sexual purposes, including, but not limited to, profiting monetarily, socially or politically from the sexual exploitation of another.
- **Sexual abuse:** Any actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force or under unequal power dynamics or otherwise coercive conditions.
- **Sexual harassment:** A person sexually harasses another person if they make any unwelcome comments and/or gestures or any other conduct of a sexual nature, which an individual finds embarrassing, demeaning, intimidating or compromising. A person's motive or intention is irrelevant to whether their actions constitute sexual harassment.

### Assessing Risk

HFHA will retain an organizational risk register to identify potential SEAH risks to any stakeholder associated with the organization and as part of the risk management of projects with HFH partner organisations. Mitigation strategies will be included as part of this ongoing assessment. This will be reviewed regularly, and updates to policies and procedures will be made in line with these reviews.

### Child Labour

While Habitat actively welcomes volunteers, all HFH organizations must have standards to safeguard the labor provided by the children of employees, volunteers and homeowners. These standards are designed not only to prevent the economic exploitation of children, but also to protect their health, safety and morals.

At minimum, Habitat requires its affiliates and national organizations to comply with the child labor standards applicable within its own country. In those countries where there are no standards, or where the standards are lower than those listed below, HFHA requires the affiliate or national organization to comply with the following child labor standards (as established by the United Nations):

- **Dangerous work - Minimum age: 18 years**  
Would include working from a height of greater than six feet or 180 cm, roofing, using power tools or electrically or gas powered equipment, the use of powder actuated tools, demolition or excavation.
- **General construction - Minimum age: 15 years**  
Would include all other construction work, not considered light work or dangerous work, including carpentry, siding, plastering, flooring, laying foundations, masonry work, brick making, and finishing work. The use of hand tools would be part of general construction work.
- **Light work - Minimum age: 13 years**  
Does not include general construction, or working on a site where general construction is taking place. Would include lot clearing, meal preparation, painting, landscaping, transporting supplies (weight limit appropriate to the child's capacity and not more than 5 – 7 kilos), babysitting, and other similar work. It would also include any other activities (i) which are not likely to be harmful to the health or development of children and (ii) which is not such as to prejudice their attendance at school or their capacity to benefit from the instruction received. It should include:
  - simple and well-defined tasks;
  - lack of physical or mental effort that could endanger the child's health or development;
  - the limited number of daily and weekly hours of work;
  - regular breaks and weekly rest of at least 48 hours;
  - working at night prohibited.

Parental permission is required for any child under the age of legal majority (usually 18 or 19) to work at a Habitat for Humanity job site. In situations where homeowner children under the age of 13 accompany their parent or guardian to the job site, these children should do no work or

where unavoidable, only the lightest assistance of volunteer support or site preparation under parental/guardian supervision.

### **Management of staff and volunteers**

HFHA will ensure the protection, safety, security and well-being of staff and volunteers.

Policies and procedures regarding the management of HFHA staff are outlined in the Employee Handbook. This handbook contains policies governing Equity and diversity, Performance management, Conduct in the workplace, Integrity (including confidentiality and conflict of interest), Grievance and disciplinary procedures and Workplace health and safety, and is provided to employees when they commence work with HFHA. Management and required conduct of Global Village volunteers is outlined in the Global Village Team Leader Manual, Team Member Guide and Team Member Manual.

HFHA's Employee Handbook outlines the following policies, which are relevant to the safety, security and well-being of staff members:

- Anti-harassment and Non-discrimination Policy
- Cyber Bullying policy
- Child Protection Policy
- Sexual harassment policy
- Workplace bullying policy

All employees and office volunteers are oriented on these policies and required to sign their commitment to upholding them as part of induction processes.

In addition to these policies HFHA staff will be trained annually on issues regarding the prevention of sexual misconduct, harassment and child protection issues. Habitat for Humanity Australia will ensure there is an ongoing PSEAH focal point appointed within the head office to update policy, train staff and escalate complaints or alleged abuse made within Australia or abroad.

HFHA's Global Village volunteers who travel overseas receive HFHA manuals and verbal briefings outlining the safety, security and expected behaviors while overseas on a Global Village Habitat housing build. These include a Team Leader Manual, Pre-departure Briefing, Incident and Emergency Management Process, HFHA Global Village Team Member Guide and Team Member

Manual. Complaints mechanisms will be explained to both volunteers and community members to ensure there are ways to report potential abuse and action can be taken quickly.

All volunteers must sign the Code of Conduct before their volunteering experience can commence. PSEAH and Child Protection standards and expected behavior are also outlined in Global Village welcome packs. HFHA maintains an additional Use of Photos and Stories policy and HFHA's Global Village team monitors the social media accounts of volunteers to ensure they are complying with the policies. All volunteers undergo a mandatory police check before being allowed to visit field locations.

### **Partner Obligations**

HFHA protects primary stakeholders from discrimination, violence, abuse, exploitation or neglect based on an analysis of the context in which they are working. Habitat for Humanity Australia partners and affiliates who receive funding must sign onto and comply with the PSEAH policy. Staff, volunteers and contractors/subcontractors must also be made aware of the contents of this policy.

HFHA has a Human Rights policy, which affirms that housing and other development assistance is not delivered in a discriminatory manner including withholding aid based on race, color, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or any other status of the individuals or groups involved. This commitment to non-discrimination and social protection is also outlined in HFHA's Politics and Development Policy, Religion and Development Policy, Gender Policy and Resettlement Policy. All policies are endorsed and are regularly reviewed by HFHA's Board of Directors.

### **Reporting protocols for potential abuse**

HFHA enables stakeholders, including partners, to make alleged SEAH complaints to the organisation in a safe, transparent and confidential manner. Any individual who receives a complaint must immediately inform his or her direct supervisor confidentially. If the individual has reason to believe that his or her direct supervisor may be involved in the misconduct, he or she must immediately notify the HFHI safeguarding officer, or use the MySafeWorkplace.com reporting tool. Within 48 hours, also ensure that concerns have been entered into MySafeWorkplace.com reporting tool, Habitat's confidential, anonymous reporting hotline and central tracking repository for allegations of serious misconduct.

The process for submitting a complaint is outlined in HFHA's Complaints Policy, which outlines the processes for partners, beneficiaries, stakeholders, volunteers, donors and the general public. The policy has been endorsed by the board of HFHA and is available publically on the HFHA website. It is also outlined in the Employee Handbook, and induction program, provided to all new staff.

HFHA provides additional information about how to access the MySafeWorkplace.com via posters displayed around the office and in briefings for volunteers.

HFHA's Fraud Management and Child Protection Policies also outline clear processes for confidentially reporting and managing specific allegations related to Fraud or Child Protection breaches. HFHA and partner staff are provided with annual orientation on both of these policies and reporting processes, and reminded of their obligation to report any suspected breach. These obligations are also reflected in Partner Agreements with all overseas partners.

HFHA recognises sexual exploitation and abuse as gross misconduct and perpetrators will face disciplinary action, including immediate termination of employment and referral for criminal prosecution, where appropriate.

### **Procedure for investigating alleged misconduct**

Due to the seriousness and sensitivity of a complaint, the individual who receives a complaint **should not start any investigations**, but rather report the concern to the relevant direct supervisor or to the MySafeWorkplace.com reporting tool. Habitat's investigation process will focus on keeping the survivor safe and doing no harm in a confidential manner. As there may be circumstances where the performance of an investigation would increase the harm to the survivor, any such actions will be taken only after full consideration of the safety and the informed consent of the survivor. The basis for all decisions related to investigation performance or non-performance will be documented.

### **Obligations to survivors**

Support of potential victims of safeguarding misconduct (or survivors) will be provided regardless of the status or outcome of an investigation. Upon receipt of an allegation of safeguarding misconduct, HFHA will, in partnership with Habitat for Humanity International (HFHI) and in accordance with HFHI Safeguarding Policy, consider providing various forms of survivor

assistance, as appropriate depending on the nature of the allegations, the circumstances involved, and the informed consent of the survivor. This includes immediate material care, facilitating psychosocial support and legal/advocacy support.

