

Safeguarding policy

Purpose and scope

The purpose of this policy statement is:

1. to protect children¹, vulnerable persons,² and adults who receive EBD International's services from harm.
2. to provide staff and volunteers, as well as children and young people and their families, with the overarching principles that guide our approach to child, vulnerable persons, and adults protection.

This policy applies to **anyone working on behalf of EBD International**, including senior managers and the board of trustees, paid staff, volunteers, sessional workers, agency staff, and students.

EBD International safeguarding policy core values

All children and young people below the age of eighteen years should be protected from all forms of abuse, neglect, exploitation and violence and adheres to the fundamental rights of the child as spelled out in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child of 1989.

Vulnerable adults, persons over the age of eighteen years who are unable to take care of or protect themselves against harm or exploitation for whatever reason, require particular protection.

Both children, vulnerable persons, and adults have rights as individuals and shall be treated with dignity and respect.

¹ This includes the children of adults who use our services.

² Persons over the age of eighteen years who are unable to take care of or protect themselves against harm or exploitation for whatever reason, require particular protection

Responsibilities

In our work and collaboration, EBD International is responsible for the following activities:

Ensuring adequate measures are in place to assess and address safeguarding risks.

Putting in place adequate safeguarding policies and procedures, including relevant HR matters.

Making sure policies and procedures are effectively applied in practice and that mechanisms are in place to assure compliance.

Ensuring those safeguarding policies, practices, and performance are robustly and regularly reviewed to ensure they are up to date and fit for purpose.

Actively promoting a safe culture and strong awareness of everyone's safeguarding responsibilities.

Taking steps to help deter and prevent safeguarding issues from occurring.

Ensuring there are mechanisms in place to promptly identify and act upon emerging safeguarding trends or issues.

Ensuring that serious incidents are reported to the appropriate authorities.

Ensuring the policy is implemented.

Discuss safeguarding matters at the highest level management meetings at periodic intervals to help ensure progress and address any challenges with implementing the policy and any cases arising.

Presenting an annual safeguarding report on any instances and action is taken/lessons learned.

Ensuring awareness raising/training is undertaken for staff and stakeholders.

Ensuring all new employees receive policy training as part of their induction.

Ensuring measures are implemented within their area of responsibility.

Following up and addressing issues appropriately.

Implementing the necessary protective procedures when recruiting new staff.

Documenting who has signed the policy.

Ensuring that briefing on this policy is built into Induction processes.

Safeguarding Behavior protocol

EBD International employees and affiliates behave in ways that protect children and adults, prevent sexual exploitation and abuse, and prevent any other intentional or unintentional harm to the people EBD International serves or works amongst. Rules of behavior are based on local and culturally appropriate interactions with children, members of the opposite sex, and other vulnerable adults, and are included in each contextualized Safeguarding Policy. All EBD International employees and affiliates abide by these protocols in their activities with EBD International, for all children, vulnerable persons, and adult beneficiaries.

Acceptable Behavior – EBD International employees and affiliates:

1. Create and maintain an environment that prevents sexual exploitation and abuse of children and adult beneficiaries and promotes the implementation of these Behavior Protocols.
2. Are careful about perception and appearance in their language, actions, and relationships with children, vulnerable persons and adults. Their behavior—including in person and on digital platforms, both online and offline—demonstrates respect for children, vulnerable persons, and adult beneficiaries and their rights.
3. Ensure that all physical and online contact with children and adults is appropriate in the local culture.
4. Use positive, non-violent methods to manage children’s behavior.
5. Accept responsibility for personal behavior and actions as a representative of the EBD International organization.
6. Are always accountable for their response to a child’s behavior, even if a child behaves in a sexually inappropriate manner; adults avoid being placed in a compromising or vulnerable position with children.
7. Where possible and practical, follow the ‘two-adult’ rule while conducting EBD International work, wherein two or more adults supervise all activities that involve children and are visible and present at all times.
8. Comply with safeguarding related investigations (internal and external) and make available any documentary or other information necessary.
9. Comply with applicable data privacy laws and with relevant EBD International policy privacy
10. Immediately report through established reporting mechanisms any known or suspected safeguarding incident or breach of this Policy by an EBD International employee or affiliate.

Unacceptable Behavior – EBD International employees and affiliates do not:

1. Behave in an inappropriate physical manner, or develop a sexual relationship with a child (under 18 years old), regardless of the country-specific legal age of consent or age of majority. This also includes consenting or condoning the above behavior (including fostering or condoning child marriage (under 18 years old)).
2. Develop or seek a sexual relationship with any client staff or beneficiary of any age; such relationships are not acceptable and will not be tolerated since they are based on inherently unequal power dynamics. Such relationships undermine the credibility and integrity of EBD International's work.
3. Sexually exploit or abuse any beneficiaries (adult or child); such behavior constitutes an act of gross misconduct.
4. Exchange money, employment, goods, or services for sex (including sexual favors, other forms of humiliating, degrading, or exploitative behavior, or hiring sex workers) or other exploitative demands is strictly prohibited. This includes exchange of assistance that is already due to beneficiaries.
5. Fondle, hold, kiss, hug, or touch children or adult beneficiaries in an inappropriate or culturally insensitive way
6. Use language, make suggestions or offer advice to a child or adult beneficiary which is inappropriate or abusive, including language that causes shame or humiliation, or is belittling or degrading.
7. Spend excessive or unnecessary time alone with a child or adult beneficiary, away from others or behind closed doors or in a secluded area.
8. Condone or participate in behavior with children or adult beneficiaries which is illegal, unsafe or abusive; including harmful traditional practices, and spiritual or ritualistic abuse.
9. Hire children in any form of child labor (including as "house help") unless it is within the best interest of the child and in alignment with local law and international standards ('Child labour' is work that is mentally, physically, socially or morally dangerous and harmful to children, or that interferes with their schooling. 'Child work' in contrast may be beneficial if permitted by International Labour Organisation (ILO) Conventions and puts the child's interests ahead of any benefits gained by adults.).
10. Hit or use other corporal punishment against a child while the child is in EBD International care or the EBD International employee or affiliate is conducting EBD International work.
11. Take a child alone in a vehicle for EBD International work, unless it is absolutely necessary, and with parental/guardian and managerial consent.
12. Misuse or be careless with personal data about individual children or adult beneficiaries.
13. Communicate with a child via digital platforms (e.g. Facebook, Twitter), via mobile technology (e.g. texting, WhatsApp, Skype), or online without consent and knowledge of his/her parents. Further, EBD International employees or affiliates never

communicate on mobile, digital, or online platforms with children or adult beneficiaries in ways that are inappropriate or sexual.

14. Stay silent, cover up, or enable any known or suspected safeguarding incident or breach of the Safeguarding Policy by an EBD International employee or affiliate.

Any EBD International affiliate not required to sign the full Safeguarding Policy must at minimum acknowledge in writing the receipt and understanding of these Safeguarding Behavior Protocols.

Safeguarding Incidents and Response Protocols

EBD International is required to investigate and respond to reports of child or adult beneficiary abuse in EBD International in ways that are consistent with local law. Depending on the level of Safeguarding Incident EBD International will take one of the following actions.

Level 1 Abuse of or harm to a child, in a community where EBD International has program operations and that is not committed by EBD International employees or affiliates:

Level 2 Violation of this Policy which puts children or adult beneficiaries in direct risk of potential harm, but where no actual harm is believed to have occurred:

Level 3 Allegation or accusation of harm or abuse to a child or adult beneficiary by a WV employee or affiliate:

Disciplinary Action

Failure to follow EBD International Safeguarding Behavior Protocols, failure to follow any other part of the EBD International Safeguarding Policy, other inappropriate behavior toward children, vulnerable persons, or adult beneficiaries, or failing to report a known or suspected safeguarding incident committed by an EBD International employee or affiliate, is grounds for discipline, up to and including termination of the employment or other affiliation with EBD International.

Changes to this Safeguarding Policy

We may update this privacy policy from time to time to reflect changes in our practices or regulatory requirements. We will notify our clients of any material changes to this policy through our website or by other means.

Contact Us

If you have any questions or concerns about our safeguarding policy, please contact us at info@ebdinternational.com