

Code of Conduct

Medical Solidarity International e.V.

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Introduction

In keeping with its vision and values, Medical Solidarity International is committed to maintaining the highest level of ethical behaviour. These guidelines highlight the most important principles of professional ethics, integrity, power of representation and protection. Medical Solidarity International's capacity to ensure the success of any projects depends on the ability of its people to uphold and promote the highest standards of ethical and professional conduct.

The MVI Code of Conduct holds the values and rules that Medical Solidarity International and its people shall act by to uphold and safeguard the necessary standards of conduct and to avoid misconduct.

The rules set forth in the code are intended, to ensure respect and safety for the people and communities affected by crisis with whom the Medical Solidarity International comes into contact and provides assistance, to protect our people and to project a positive image of Medical Solidarity International so as to guarantee the effectiveness and integrity of our work. The code must be followed by anyone who works for or represents Medical Solidarity International. It applies to all parties covered by the code regardless of their function or tenure.

Failing to read or attest to the MVI Code of Conduct does not excuse you from these responsibilities. Failure to comply with any of these rules may result in the immediate termination of the volunteer invitation or be punished.

The MVI Code of Conduct intends to serve as an illustrative guide for Medical Solidarity International and its people to help make ethical decisions in their professional lives, and at times in their private lives. It is also an integral part of their conditions of employment. This code is therefore an appendix to your individual employment or engagement contract.

Guiding principles

Medical Solidarity International is guided by the humanitarian principle "Do no harm" and endorses the Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and NGOs in Disaster Relief.



Medical Solidarity International and its people will respect the dignity and worth of every individual, will promote and practice understanding, respect, compassion and tolerance, and will demonstrate discretion and maintain confidentiality as required.

Medical Solidarity International and its people will show respect for all persons equally without distinction whatsoever of race, gender, religion, color, national or ethnic origin, language, marital status, sexual orientation, age, socio-economic status, disability, political conviction, or any other distinguishing feature. Medical Solidarity International and its people will strive to remove all barriers to equality.

Medical Solidarity International and its staff will not tolerate any form of harassment, sexual exploitation or abuse and are aware that misconduct is ground for disciplinary measures, up to and including summary dismissal / contract termination.

Making good decisions and ethical choices builds trust between us and the people we serve. But not all situations are straightforward — how do you make the best choice when faced with difficult or unclear circumstances? How do you navigate ethical dilemmas? While the MVI Code of Conduct won't tell you exactly what to do in every situation, but it serves as a guide to help you make good decisions and navigate complex situations where the answer might not always be clear.

When faced with a difficult decision or situation follow these steps:

PAUSE. Does a situation make you feel uncomfortable? Are your instincts telling you something is not quite right? Pause before you act and consider how to approach the situation.

THINK. Is your approach consistent with Medical Solidarity International culture and the values in the MVI Code of Conduct? Does it build or maintain trust? Never sacrifice long-term reputation and trust for a short-term benefit.

ASK. Ask questions and get help. Talk to your team. Get help from your coordinator. These are good resources to help you make the right decision.

The Code of Conduct

Neutrality and impartiality

I will meet people of all ages, backgrounds, genders and religions and respect their individual needs, religious beliefs, cultural characteristics, sexual orientation and habits. Respecting people's dignity is a fundamental principle for all of us.

I will not favor or discriminate against anyone on the basis of their gender, age, religion or origin. The type and scope of our support is based exclusively on the individual needs of the person seeking help.

I will dress in a way that takes into account the local and cultural particularities as well as the practical requirements. Clothing that could give the impression of belonging to the military or other official authorities should be avoided.

Protection from sexual exploitation and abuse

I will not engage in any sexual activity with persons (adult or child) that look to or benefit from MVI's assistance, or with any persons under the age of 18 years, regardless of the age of majority or consent locally. „Sexual activity“ includes all forms of activity and abuse of a sexual nature, with or without physical contact and whether or not either party is aware of such abuse.

I will not offer money, goods or services in exchange for sex or any form of humiliating, degrading or exploitative acts.

Child protection

I will consider the special needs of children and adapt my actions accordingly. This includes a comprehensible form of expression adapted to their situation and needs.

I will ensure that a parent or guardian is present during the treatment of children whenever possible. If I want to transport a child the presence of a parent or guardian is essential, as well as the permission of the coordinator.

I will avoid any actions that are likely to physically, sexually or emotionally harm a child.

I will not arrange any type of personal contact to a child for a purpose that is unrelated to MVI's actions.

I will refrain from any inappropriate behavior with and around children. This includes close body contact.

I will adhere completely to the MVI child protection concept and always act accordingly

Drugs and alcohol

I will not work under the influence of alcohol or drugs. This also includes driving vehicles.

I will not buy, possess, distribute, sell or consume any illegal substances while I am with MVI.

I am aware of the legal situation in the country I am in.

Pictures, social media und protection of information

I will obtain the permission of each person before I photograph them. In the case of children, I will also ask the parents or legal guardians for permission. All persons photographed will be informed about how the photos will be used and have the right to object to their use.

I will make sure that human dignity and privacy are always respected and that no one is portrayed in a humiliating way in the pictures.

I will not disclose sensitive information about people we serve if there is a risk that revealing the identity will have a negative impact on the individuals concerned. Every effort must be made to protect the identity of beneficiaries. This includes their names, faces and geographical locations. Disclosure may only be made if concealment would put the person, employees or staff at risk. In this case, the person concerned must be informed in advance and their identity protected as far as possible.

MVI's property

I ensure that I will use MVI assets and resources entrusted to me in a responsible manner. I will account for all money and property.

I will not use MVI's equipment, software, e-Mail or social media platforms for any type of illegal or unethical actions as well as any actions that are likely to violate the MVI Code of Conduct.

Behavior during the work

I will not engage in any illegal activities, unethical activities or any activities that contravene human rights. If I have a criminal record in any country, I have to inform MVI before deployment. MVI preserves the right to conduct a criminal background check at any time.

I will ensure, that there is, if possible, a number of two (one of the same gender as the patient) team members around in any setting with a patient.

I will bring the right kit and be fit to work. If I am running late for a shift, I will inform my coordinator as soon as possible.

I will respect the schedule. This includes the case of accompanying a patient to a clinic. In that case I will consult with my coordinator.

I will ensure that I am dressed appropriately and adapted to the working and general conditions. Shoulders and midriffs should be covered all times and I will use a minimal makeup and jewelry.

I will always treat my colleagues, patients and other stakeholders with courtesy and respect. Our team consists of constantly changing members who all have a wide range of experience and backgrounds.

I will not invite other individuals or organizations to engage in MVI's projects without the permission of a coordinator.

I understand, that coordinators are acting as direct supervisors and that the coordination team, in consultation with the board, has the right to suspend or dismiss me at any time in the event of violating the code of conduct or any inappropriate behaviours. This also includes the time we spend after the shifts, especially at our homes.

Declaration of commitment

I acknowledge that I have read and understand MVI's Code of Conduct. I agree and commit to follow the guidelines and principles as well as procedures contained within this Code of Conduct. In particular I agree and undertake to:

- conduct the duties required of me as MVI's volunteer with integrity and to the best of my abilities;
- not seek to use my position or knowledge acquired through my position to unfairly benefit myself, friends, family, associates, or organizations in which I or one of these individuals or entities have an interest;
- take all necessary steps to avoid any conflict-of-interest situation, the appearance of a conflict-of-interest situation, or any other activity that may negatively impact on MVI's reputation in the community.

I understand that it is my ongoing responsibility to report any violation of this Code of Conduct and to disclose any circumstances that may be an actual, potential or perceived violation of the Code of Conduct.

I understand that there will be no retaliation for raising a concern about MVI's Code of Conduct.

I understand that failure to follow MVI's Code of Conduct, interfering with an audit or investigation, being uncooperative or untruthful during an audit or investigation, may have consequences, including termination of my employment contract with Medical Solidarity International and potentially, the initiation of legal proceedings against me.

I understand the importance of understanding and complying with MVI's Code of Conduct and commit to reviewing it annually.