

BRF CODE OF CONDUCT

Boat Refugee Foundation (BRF) is an independent and impartial aid organisation whose organisational ideals are in line with humanitarian standards¹, focussing on people on the move (internally displaced, asylum seekers, refugees, and undocumented people), located near Europe's borders. Staff members, including all volunteers, work alongside vulnerable people taking action and bearing witness in order to respond to essential medical and mental health needs and promote respect for dignity and fundamental rights.

The purpose of this Code of Conduct is to outline and guard our professional behaviour. This Code of Conduct applies to all BRF staff members, including volunteers, and representatives² regardless of the countries and locations in which BRF operates. When working for BRF, your behaviour influences the way the organisation is perceived. Your statements as well as your conduct, both during working hours and when off duty, can be interpreted as an expression of BRF's point of view. We therefore expect the code of conduct to be followed both during and after working hours. Violation of this code of conduct will lead to disciplinary action and can lead in serious cases to dismissal.

1. NON-DISCRIMINATION AND NEUTRALITY

BRF provides free support regardless of gender, ethnicity, political association, religion, sexual orientation and the presence or lack thereof, of disability(ies). The organisation works with and provides services to vulnerable people, therefore we equally respect all people and provide aid without any form of discrimination.

Do not engage in evangelisation, preaching, moralising or proclaiming any religious or political beliefs while working for BRF. Be mindful that you could be considered by others as a representative of BRF outside of working hours.

At BRF we value diversity in our team and therefore we work together as colleagues and respect each other's different backgrounds.

2. POWER DYNAMICS

At BRF power imbalances exist between supervisors and supervisees, between coordinators and volunteers and between representatives of BRF and members of the communities we support. Power imbalances can exist on the basis of differences in responsibilities, decision-making, seniority, experience, social or professional status, capital and/or identity. It is essential that all BRF team members understand these power differentials and are obliged to not exploit this position of power, especially when the relationship is characterised by lines of reporting or supervision.

3. EQUALITY AND NON-PREFERENTIAL TREATMENT

BRF provides support on the basis of equality, whilst acknowledging that there is an inherent difference in privilege and power dynamics in our working environment. The support that we provide must be carried out on the basis of needs alone without providing

¹ Humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence

² Covers all contractors e.g. consultants, journalists, photographers, videographers, external media, board members, ambassadors, donors, guests, visitors and supporters.



preferential treatment to individuals or groups of individuals based on personal relations or any other personal characteristics.

Therefore, avoid the following:

- Inviting residents to volunteer houses. (With the exception of our colleagues from the ground team for meetings/training/team building; always check with your coordinator when you want to invite ground team colleagues).
- In the sleeping and living quarters of residents/members of the ground team inside or outside the camp.
- Entering a refugee camp or accommodation such as shelter for which you are not Registered.
- Entering (or being in) the refugee camp outside working hours or without a work-related purpose.
- Entering and organising one-to-one meetings with residents/members of the ground team inside or outside the refugee camp with any activity outside your professional schedule and/or work.
- Engaging in intimate relationships with residents or ground team colleagues. This we judge as unethical and is not allowed during your volunteer period with Boat Refugee Foundation.
- Engaging in non-work related contact via social media with residents or colleagues of the ground team during your volunteer period.
- Exchanging personal data with residents.
- Providing or promising services for residents or ground team colleagues outside Boat Refugee Foundation's field of work and protocols, such as, for example, legal advice, arranging alternative accommodation or restoring family ties.

Private donations by any staff member to a user (or users) of BRFs services are prohibited. The distribution of goods such as money, gifts, presents, phones, food or drinks or acceptance of any monetary or non-monetary gifts in exchange for any kind of service is not tolerated under any circumstances.

4. PROFESSIONAL ETHICS

We strive to achieve an inclusive, respectful and professional working environment. All staff members shall behave with respect for each other and the cultural environment that we are working in. In addition, all staff members shall act responsibly and efficiently with the resources provided by BRF. There is a non-tolerance toward theft, fraud, destruction and repurposing of BRF's assets.

We keep ourselves to the highest standards of professionalism. As part of this, do not let other people, who are not registered and selected by BRF, participate in and work as a part of our team, work, or activities. Do not work - paid or voluntarily - for another organisation in the same context, in addition to your work for BRF without consulting and obtaining permission from your supervisor. Do not take part in any activity that causes a conflict of interest, such as employment and/or volunteering against BRF's interests.

Staff members are not allowed to provide medical or MHPSS support without knowledge, credentials or authorisation from BRF. In no circumstance should any staff member provide services outside of the scope of BRF projects, such as providing legal advice, arranging alternative accommodation, or family reunification.



If there are concerns about specific vulnerable people needing support that BRF does not offer, those concerns can be brought to the attention of your supervisor who will assess if BRF could refer or address them.

5. DRUGS AND ALCOHOL

Any form of substance abuse is incompatible with the health and safety standards of BRF. Working or being on-call under the influence of alcohol, narcotics, or psychoactive substances is strictly prohibited. Outside working hours, the use of alcohol is not banned, but the use of good judgement is required in compliance with local laws. Be mindful that you could be considered by others as a representative of BRF outside of hours.

6. A CRIMINAL-HISTORY CHECK

A criminal-history check (or self-declaration in exceptional cases) is mandatory. Withholding information, or providing false or misleading information about a criminal conviction (or charges) are grounds for immediate dismissal.

7. ABIDING BY THE LAW

It is the responsibility of all staff members to abide by the law of the country that we are working in. Staff members are subject to the local and national jurisdiction in which they work.

8. INTIMATE RELATIONSHIPS

Intimate relationships are defined as interpersonal relationships that are romantic, emotional, physical or sexual in nature to which all parties consent. Many intimate relationships are shaped by power dynamics. BRF does not accept intimate relationships between team members where a power imbalance exists due to direct or indirect reporting or supervision lines.

Intimate relationships between team members without any reporting lines are permitted. In that case both supervisors should be informed and an intimate relationship agreement should be signed by both parties.

All staff members who are entering into an intimate relationship need to consider the potential consequences related to power, responsibilities and boundaries. Relationships should not be disruptive to team dynamics or have a negative impact on the working environment in general. Either party may withdraw consent at any time in any manner.

Because of the inevitable power imbalance, intimate relationships with people from the community that we are assisting, including BRF interpreters or other staff, are not permitted.



9. PROTECTION AGAINST ABUSE AND EXPLOITATION

BRF believes that everyone has the right to be protected against any form of abuse (sexual or otherwise)³ or exploitation⁴, including, but not limited to abuse of power, bullying⁵, intimidation⁶, discrimination⁷, aggression⁸, harassment⁹ or violence¹⁰. Any form of abuse or exploitation is strictly prohibited.

All staff members are obliged to create and maintain an environment which prevents any form of abuse or exploitation.

This code of conduct provides guidelines for interactions between (volunteer) staff and vulnerable people. The code indicates the boundaries in contact. Many boundaries in the contact between (volunteer) staff and the residents are not unambiguous. No exact boundaries can ever be agreed on that apply to everyone and in all situations. However, there is one very clear boundary and that is the boundary that sexual acts and contacts between (volunteer) staff and residents are absolutely inadmissible.

Therefore we have drawn up a set of rules for all our (voluntary) staff members, which consists of two parts: rules that contribute to an open, transparent and safe environment for both residents and (voluntary) staff members, and the description of sexually transgressive behaviour that is the starting point of the disciplinary and sanctions policy pursued by the organisation.

Adhere to the following rules to prevent transgressive behaviour:

- Provide an environment and atmosphere in which residents feel safe and respected.
- Avoid treating residents in a way that affects their dignity.
- Do not intrude further into residents' private lives than is functionally necessary.
- Avoid any form of sexual approach and abuse towards residents. All sexual acts between the (volunteer) staff and the resident are under no circumstances permissible and are considered sexually transgressive behaviour.
- All sexual acts and sexual relations between the (volunteer) staff and a minor resident, are not permissible under any circumstances and are considered sexual abuse.

³ Abuse is a general term covering all forms of physical and/or emotional ill-treatment, sexual assault, neglect or negligent treatment or exploitation resulting in actual or potential harm to a persons health, survival or dignity in the context of a relationship or responsibility, trust or power.

⁴ Exploitation is 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.

⁵ Bullying is a term for actions or words that seek to harm, intimidate, or force in order to gain power and control. Examples: unnecessary criticism, spreading rumours, intentionally undermining, deliberate isolation, making inappropriate personal comments, hitting, pushing, damaging or stealing personal possessions.

⁶ Intimidation relates to the frightening or threatening of someone, usually in order to force or deter an action.

⁷ Discrimination relates to any distinction, exclusion or restriction on the grounds of disability or other criteria (sex, age, ethnic origin, etc.) which has the purpose or effect of compromising or preventing the recognition, enjoyment or exercise of all human rights on an equal basis with others.

⁸ Aggression refers to feelings of anger and antipathy resulting in hostile or violent behaviour that is intended to harm another individual.

⁹ Harassment consists of repetitive and unwanted conduct, whether verbal, physical or visual, which is related to a person's profile or characteristic with the purpose or effect of violating the dignity of a person or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. Violence is behaviour involving physical force intended to hurt, damage or kill someone or something.

¹⁰ Violence is behaviour involving physical force intended to hurt, damage or kill someone or something.



- Do not touch residents in such a way that could reasonably be expected to be perceived as sexual or erotic in nature.
- You have a duty to protect residents to the best of your ability from forms of unequal treatment and sexually transgressive behaviour and you will actively



12. SAFETY AND SECURITY

Staff members working in or visiting the field should abide by the safety and security protocols. We ask all staff members to be prepared by reading and watching preparation materials provided by BRF. It is not allowed to wear BRF-branded items outside working locations and hours.

13. WORKING IN OR VISITING THE FIELD

Do not organise or engage in meetings or any kind of activity with people who receive our services, outside your working hours. Do not enter your work facility (e.g. refugee camp, shelter or office) outside of working hours or without a work-related purpose.

Interactions outside of working hours with staff members who live inside a reception facility or are part of the community we support, should only happen in public places and in group settings and with prior notice given to your supervisor.

Do not exchange personal details (such as email addresses, phone numbers, or social media accounts) with people using BRF's services or engage in non-work-related contact with people receiving our services during your deployment period.

Do not participate in demonstrations or visit places that could be considered dangerous during your deployment with BRF without consulting and permission from your supervisor.

14. WHISTLEBLOWING - REPORTING OF SERIOUS CONCERNS

It is the responsibility of all staff members to report any (suspected) activity by people within the organisation that could be considered illegal, dishonest, fraudulent, unethical or in violation of the policies of the organisation.

It is contrary to the values of BRF for anyone to retaliate against any staff member who, in good faith, reports any activity by the organisation that could be illegal, dishonest, fraudulent, unethical or in violation of the organisation's policies.

For more information see BRF's whistleblowing policy.

15. SAFEGUARDING - REPORTING (SUSPICIONS OF) ABUSE

You are obliged to report any abuse or suspicions of abuse (safeguarding incidents). Failure to report or the covering up of a safeguarding incident is a serious breach of BRF's policy and could lead to disciplinary actions or appropriate external measures.

For more information see BRF's safeguarding handbook.

16. REPORTING

We strongly encourage any staff member to report behaviour which could be violating this code of conduct as soon as possible following these steps:

Step 1 - The staff member should first inform their line-manager or supervisor of any (suspected) violations. If you feel uncomfortable about reporting a serious concern to your line-manager or supervisor, or if you have a reasonable belief that they are part of the serious concern, proceed with step 2.



Step 2 - For serious violations, report directly to the Safeguarding and Compliance Officer (SCO) with this online form (bit.ly/3YoBtHl). The SCO will raise this with the Safeguarding and Compliance Committee, which consists of a member of the HQ Programmes Team, the Human Resources Manager and a member of the Supervisory Board, who will start an investigation.

17. SIGNING

By signing this document, you declare that you have read and understood this code of conduct, the safeguarding handbook and BRF's whistleblowing policy, and that you will abide by it for the entire duration of your deployment with BRF. You understand that violating this code of conduct will lead to disciplinary actions or appropriate external measures, such as, but not limited to, referrals to (local) authorities.

By signing you also declare to report misconduct if out-of-line behaviour is witnessed.

Name and surname

Date

Signature

Place