

Title: **Personal Safety, Non-harassment and Security Policies**

Policy Type: Board

Policy # **B.01.04**

Status: Approved by Board of Directors

Date of Last Revision: August 25, 2010

**PERSONAL SAFETY, NON-HARASSMENT AND SECURITY POLICIES
(Health, Physical and Sexual Abuse, Violence, Harassment, Crisis Issues and
Security)**

Preamble

Habitat for Humanity Canada ("HFHC") is a non-profit, faith-based charitable organization. With its affiliates across Canada, HFHC brings together volunteers to help construct or renovate affordable housing so as to provide those in need with a safe and decent place to live.

HFHC itself is an affiliate of Habitat for Humanity International ("HFHI"), which is the world-wide sponsoring agency of the Habitat for Humanity movement. Through HFHI, HFHC and its affiliates, directly or in conjunction with other international affiliates, provide voluntary construction and renovation services outside of Canada.

Care of Children and Vulnerable Persons

Habitat for Humanity's mandate does not include the care or nurturing of children, the infirm or otherwise vulnerable. Voluntary or staff positions with HFHC do not include any duties connected with personal care or acting as a guardian or attendant. Nonetheless, HFHC recognises that activities undertaken by it and by its affiliates may involve the temporary supervision of youth, and direct or indirect contact with vulnerable persons (vulnerable meaning under the age of 18 or challenged physically or mentally in any way).

Non-harassment & Non-violence

HFHC will not tolerate any untoward language, behaviour, communications or displays on the part of staff or volunteers which could be in any way characterised as offensive, illegal or contrary to the aims and goals of HFHC, nor which undermine the promotion of good order and discipline among volunteers and staff or the maintenance of a safe environment.

Affinity with Habitat for Humanity International

HFHC wishes to engage with other HFHI-approved affiliates and national organizations and, to that extent, those bodies should have provisions for Personal Safety, Non-harassment and Security that mirror those adopted in Canada.

Terrorism

Any construction, work or operation of any kind whatsoever performed by or on behalf of HFHC, whether domestic or foreign, shall be performed only in strict compliance

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with all governing laws, statutes or ordinances. In particular, any Affiliate with whom HFHC has agreements shall not apply any HFHC resources or funds to the direct or indirect support of terrorism and shall represent and warrant that it does not support and has never supported and will not in the future support, directly or indirectly, any terrorist activities or terrorist groups.

Personal Health and Safety

HFHC understands that some countries in which international projects are located may be subject to political or criminal unrest. To that end, HFHC asks that all volunteers who wish to participate in international projects be familiar with not only this policy document, but also particular issues concerning those countries as may be discerned from other sources including embassies, high commissions and trade offices located in Canada.

Personal security requires that staff and volunteers who agree that they are ready, willing and able to carry out tasks that may be assigned to them accept personal responsibility for their own health and other related concerns.

These policies, taken together, will allow HFHC and its affiliates to foster a reasonable and safe environment for HFHC volunteers and staff, and provide a framework for investigating allegations of untoward conduct so as to create and maintain safe environments.

1 Volunteer and Staff Positions Engagement Policy

All HFHC volunteers and staff will receive a copy of this policy and are required to acknowledge, in writing, that they have received, read and understood the policy.

- 1.1 All volunteers and staff shall be engaged in accordance with the completion of an application that shall be reviewed by the President and CEO or equivalent of the entity to which application is made.
- 1.2 All volunteers shall be required to sign a release and waiver of liability in the format from time to time prescribed by HFHC which releases HFHC from any injury and declares the volunteer to be in good health.
- 1.3 All volunteers and staff who may or are expected to become involved in the supervision and care of children and who are not the parents or legal guardians of such children shall, prior to being placed in such a role, provide a letter of reference or such similar document from their local police detachment indicating that they have not at any time been convicted of an offence involving physical, mental or

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sexual abuse of children. Such record shall be maintained in the file of the staff or volunteer.

2 Crisis Policies

In the event of a crisis constituting a threat to the well-being of staff and volunteers on a HFHC project, HFHC will create a crisis management team to handle the crisis through resolution and follow-up. In the context of international projects, HFHC will liaise with the appropriate Canadian embassy or High Commission or, where there is no Canadian representation, the British embassy, to seek advice and support for HFHC staff and volunteers.

- 2.1 As a matter of policy, HFHC will not pay ransom or any other form of extortion demanded for any staff or volunteer who may be involved in a crisis situation.
- 2.2 HFHC will assist in the arrangement of transportation to remove Canadian resident volunteers and staff from a crisis zone should they be threatened.
- 2.3 Canadian volunteers who must leave the site of any Habitat for Humanity project are responsible for the arrangement of their own transportation back to Canada, unless their departure is due to a crisis situation.

3 Non-harassment & Non-violence Provisions (including Sexual Misconduct)

HFHC and its affiliates strive to provide work environments that are free of harassment and violence. All staff and volunteers and those engaged on behalf of HFHC should treat one another and the public with dignity and respect in a manner that would not offend a reasonable person. Distinct provisions for the investigation of sexual misconduct are found below.

- 3.1 Harassment shall consist of conduct meant to belittle or demean someone by way of unlawful discrimination based upon race, ethnicity, ancestry, religion, national origin, sexual preference, marital status, age, physical or mental disability or such other similar characteristic or circumstance.
- 3.2 Harassment shall also include any conduct that interferes with the ability of an employee or volunteer to carry out his or her function, or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment. Examples of this conduct may include:
 - displaying or circulating offensive pictures or materials;
 - making remarks, jokes or innuendo that demean, ridicule, intimidate or offend;
 - sending repeated offensive or intimidating phone calls or emails; or
 - bullying.

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3.3 Sexual harassment includes unwelcome advances, propositions, comments or physical conduct that are characterised by a suggestive sexual nature, whether connected with employment, opportunity or advantage. Sexual harassment also includes obscene gestures, the display of pictures or items calculated to offend, lewd jokes and provocative comments and any activity by a person in authority over a person not in authority that in any way suggests that an employment advantage will be gained or lost based upon a willingness or unwillingness to be subjected to sexual harassment.

3.4 Workplace violence shall consist of the attempted or actual exercise of physical force by a person against an employee in a workplace that causes or could cause physical injury to the employee, and any statement or behaviour that a person could reasonably interpret as a threat to exercise physical force against an employee in a workplace. Examples of this conduct may include:

- leaving threatening notes or sending threatening messages or e-mails to a workplace;
- shaking a fist in a worker's face;
- carrying a weapon at work;
- hitting or trying to hit a worker or throwing an object at a worker;
- sexual violence against a worker; or
- kicking an object the worker is standing on such as a ladder.

3.5 HFHC will not condone any violence or harassing behaviour. Such conduct by employees or volunteers will result in disciplinary action up to and including discharge.

3.6 All employees and volunteers are encouraged to report any complaint of harassment to their immediate supervisor or, where such would be inappropriate, to the VP Finance and Administration or his or her supervisor. All employees and volunteer must report any incident of violence to their immediate supervisor or, where such would be inappropriate to the VP Finance and Administration. All supervisors who receive reports of any incident of violence must in turn report the incident to the VP Finance and Administration. All complaints and incidents will be dealt with confidentially to the extent practicable and appropriate in the circumstances and will be promptly and thoroughly investigated.

3.7 HFHC will not retaliate against any individual who makes a report of harassment or violence, nor will it permit any employee or volunteer to retaliate. Any person found to be retaliating against another individual for reporting harassment or violence will

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be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, including suspension as a volunteer or termination as an employee.

3.8 HFHC has adopted Protocols for Cases of Alleged Misconduct to respond to cases of alleged harassment, violence and physical and sexual abuse. The purpose of the Protocols is to provide an orderly and principled basis to ascertain whether a complaint made has validity and, if so, the appropriate procedures to follow for resolution.

4 Supervision of Vulnerable Persons

In dealing with vulnerable persons, staff and volunteers will make every reasonable effort to ensure that all activities undertaken by their organization:

- have both male and female adult supervisors;
- do not allow males and females under the age of 18 to be unsupervised;
- do not result in a situation whereby one adult supervisor or volunteer is alone with an individual vulnerable person;
- require minimum contacts between vulnerable persons and adults;
- if involving overnight stays where supervision of vulnerable people is required, will have at least two supervisors present;
- do not permit inappropriate or unwanted advances by one person upon another.

5 Personal Health and Safety

5.1 HFHC encourages participation by volunteers from all walks of Canadian society. While every volunteer has a contribution to make, not every volunteer will have the same abilities to make that contribution. Any volunteer who is or may be prevented by a medical or other condition from providing labour services typically encountered during construction should so advise the person co-ordinating their voluntary services. It is the obligation of every volunteer to assess climatic and other factors relevant to their providing services for any particular project.

5.2 Volunteers will be asked to acknowledge through the application and waiver and release forms mandated by HFHC that they are ready, willing and able to provide voluntary services, are fully aware of the medical and health circumstances of the sites where they will be volunteering their services, and have no physical or mental health issues that would interfere with their participation in any Habitat for Humanity project.

5.3 Volunteers will be asked to sign a waiver to release HFHC from liability associated with voluntary work. Youth, whether individual or group members involved in a Habitat for Humanity project under supervision of a HFHC staff member or

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volunteer, will obtain from their parent or guardian a Consent and Release allowing them to take part in HFHC projects.

5.4 In the case of voluntary projects located outside of Canada, HFHC cannot make any representation as to the safety or condition of the country wherein the work will take place. To that end, volunteers should take such steps to inform themselves of the political and medical climates of such countries and their own personal needs before accepting any position connected with a HFHC project.

6 Security of Information

HFHC is dedicated to protecting the privacy of its employees and volunteers, and maintaining the trust that they have placed in it. HFHC will ask for only the information it needs to maintain and/or administer the volunteer or employment relationship. It will not release any personal information, except with the consent of the employee or volunteer, or when required by law. All personal information will be collected, maintained, used and destroyed according to HFHC's Privacy Policy.

7 Agreements with other Habitat for Humanity International Affiliates

From time to time, HFHC or its affiliates may send staff and volunteers to participate in foreign countries on projects sponsored or co-ordinated by Habitat for Humanity International or its affiliates.

7.1 HFHC will only send volunteers to work with affiliates in countries that are approved as hosting countries by HFHI.

7.2 HFHC will obtain a representation by HFHI that they have in place programs dealing with personal safety and security that are similar in kind and nature to those of HFHC and its affiliates. Further, HFHC will obtain an outline of the political and security risks that might be foreseen in the circumstances and for which HFHC or its affiliates and their respective volunteers should be forewarned.