

SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Introduction

Article 19 of the 1989 United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child considers **child abuse** as „all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse”. It also states that „state parties shall take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s) or any other persons who have care of the child”.

According to the Law no. 272/2004 of 06/21/2004 Published in the Romanian Official Gazette, Part I, no. 557 on 06/23/2004 on the protection and promotion of the rights of the child: **child abuse** means „any voluntary action of a person who has a relation of responsibility, trust or authority towards the child, through which the life, the normal physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social development, the bodily integrity, and the physical and mental health of the child are endangered. Also, it is forbidden to enforce physical punishments of any kind or to deprive the child of his or her rights, which may result in the endangerment of the life, the physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social development, the bodily integrity, and the physical and mental health of the child, both within the family, as well as in any institution which ensures the protection, care and education of children”.

According to European Commission „**child safeguarding** is the responsibility that organisations have to make sure their staff, operations, and programmes do no harm to children, that is that they do not expose children to the risk of harm and abuse, and that any concerns the organisation has about children’s safety within the communities in which they work, are reported to the appropriate authorities.”

Purpose

Some of the overall aims of CMA IDA are:

- ✓ Increasing the quality of life and promoting territorial, economic and social cohesion in the Cluj Metropolitan Area;
- ✓ Developing the system of innovative social services, supporting social inclusion.

Some of the main activities of the organization are:

- ✓ Generating programs and projects, as only organization or in partnership with other individuals and legal entities in the country and abroad for the development of the Cluj metropolitan area and its promotion outside this area;
- ✓ Research and innovation activities. Development of strategies, programs, studies and research.

- ✓ Promoting an integrated and inclusive development of disadvantaged areas in the Cluj Metropolitan Area but also outside it, including disadvantaged Roma communities, by reducing risk factors leading to poverty and social exclusion and by supporting people and families at risk of poverty and exclusion in the field of education, employment, housing and health, as well as other services designed to improve their quality of life, combat discrimination against minorities and strengthen social cohesion;
- ✓ Providing social services to support the social inclusion of disadvantaged people and families;
- ✓ Providing integrated socio-educational services in order to increase school participation and reduce school dropout among children from marginalized families;
- ✓ Promoting social innovation by developing methodologies and working methods, supporting the strengthening of cooperation at regional, national and international level, supporting the development of the capacity of local authorities and civil society to provide quality services, designed to combat the social exclusion of vulnerable groups;
- ✓ Promoting integrated solutions in the field of social housing;
- ✓ Organizing educational and cultural activities and developing partnerships in this regard;
- ✓ Collaboration on preventing and combating crime and various risk behaviors among the population of the Cluj Metropolitan Area;
- ✓ Providing consultancy, counseling and training to interested persons / organizations;

The purpose of this current child safeguarding and protection policy is:

- ✓ To protect children and young people who receive CMA IDA's services from harm. This includes the children of adults who use our services;
- ✓ 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 protection.

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

This policy demonstrates how CMA IDA will meet its legal obligations and reassure volunteers, employees, partners and members of the public:

- a) On what they can expect CMA IDA to do to protect and safeguard children;
- b) That all reports of abuse or potential abuse are dealt with in the most serious way;
- c) That there is an efficient recording and monitoring system in place;
- e) That employees, volunteers, sub contracted agencies and partners receive appropriate induction on safeguarding;

Legal framework

This policy has been drawn up on the basis of legislation, policy and guidance that seeks to protect children in Romania.

Supporting documents

This policy statement should be read alongside our organisational policies, procedures, guidance and other related documents:

- Role description for the designated children safeguarding personnel;
- Dealing with disclosures and concerns about a child or young person;
- Managing allegations against staff and volunteers;
- Recording concerns and information sharing;
- Child protection records retention and storage;
- Code of conduct for staff and volunteers;
- Behavior codes for children and young people;
- Photography and sharing images guidance;
- Safer recruitment;
- Online safety ;
- Anti-bullying;
- Managing complaints;
- Whistleblowing;
- Health and safety;
- Induction, training, supervision and support;
- Adult to child supervision ratios.

We will seek to keep children and young people safe by

- Valuing, listening to and respecting them;
- Appointing a nominated child safeguarding officer for children and young people;
- Adopting child protection and safeguarding best practice through our policies, procedures and code of conduct for staff and volunteers;
- Developing and implementing an effective online safety policy and related procedures;
- Providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision;
- Support, training and quality assurance measures so that all staff and volunteers know about and follow our policies, procedures and behaviour codes confidently and competently;
- Recruiting and selecting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made;
- Recording and storing and using information professionally and securely, in line with data protection legislation and guidance;
- Sharing information about safeguarding and good practice with children and their families via leaflets, posters, group work and one-to-one discussions;

- Making sure that children, young people and their families know where to go for help if they have a concern;
- Using our safeguarding and child protection procedures to share concerns and relevant information with agencies who need to know, and involving children, young people, parents, families and care givers appropriately;
- Using our procedures to manage any allegations against staff and volunteers appropriately;
- Creating and maintaining an anti-bullying environment and ensuring that we have a policy and procedure to help us deal effectively with any bullying that does arise;
- Ensuring that we have effective complaints and whistleblowing measures in place;
- Ensuring that we provide a safe physical environment for our children, young people, staff and volunteers, by applying health and safety measures in accordance with the law and regulatory guidance;
- Building a safeguarding culture where staff and volunteers, children, young people and their families, treat each other with respect and are comfortable about sharing concerns.

Responsibilities

All

All employees, volunteers, consultants, agency staff, sub-contractors, partner organizations and visitors are obliged to follow this policy and maintain an environment that prevents exploitation and abuse and which encourages reporting of breaches of this policy using the appropriate procedures.

Managers

Managers at all levels are responsible for ensuring employees, volunteers, consultants, visitors and partner organizations are aware of the policy and are supported to implement and work in accordance with it, as well as creating a management culture that encourages a focus on safeguarding. They must ensure that they are responsive, acting immediately if they become aware of any safeguarding concerns, and supportive towards employees or volunteers who complain about breaches in this policy.

Designated Safeguarding Officer

Designated safeguarding officer is responsible for handling reports or concerns, about the protection of vulnerable people, appropriately and in accordance with the procedures that underpin this policy.

CMA IDA Executive Board

The CMA IDA Executive Board is responsible for ensuring the effective implementation of this policy and associated procedures and ensuring that everyone linked with CMA IDA is equipped and supported to meet their responsibilities.

All people working with CMA IDA will:

- Read, understand and adhere to the Safeguarding Policy and CMA IDA Code of Conduct Policy;

- Strive to promote a zero tolerance approach to discrimination, sexual harassment and abuse in all working environments;
- Strive to develop relationships with all stakeholders which are based on equality, trust, respect and honesty;
- Place the safety and welfare of children and vulnerable people above all other considerations;
- Report any concerns they may have about the welfare of a child or vulnerable person;
- Report any concerns they may have about the behaviour of a CMA IDA representative in relation to safeguarding;
- In a one-to-one situation with a child or young person, where privacy and confidentiality are important, try to make sure that another adult knows the contact is taking place and why. If possible ensure another adult is in sight and that the child or young person knows another adult is around;

All people working with CMA IDA will not:

- ✓ Sexually harass, assault or abuse another person;
- ✓ Physically harass, assault or abuse another person;
- ✓ Emotionally abuse another person, such as engaging in behaviour intended to shame, humiliate, belittle or degrade;
- ✓ Condone, or participate in behavior which is abusive, discriminatory, illegal, or unsafe;
- ✓ Develop, encourage or fail to take action of relationships with children or other vulnerable people which could in any way be deemed sexual, exploitative or abusive;
- ✓ Act in ways that may be violent, inappropriate or sexually provocative;
- ✓ Agree with a child to keep a secret which has implications for their safety or the safety of other young people.

Recruitment and Selection:

- Safe recruitment and vetting processes are followed for all volunteers, employees, consultants and partners;
- Where an employee, volunteer or partner is engaged in 'regulated activity' (direct work with vulnerable individuals), a criminal background check will be undertaken as part of the recruitment process.
- All CMA IDA employees and volunteers must sign and abide by this safeguarding policy and the Code of Conduct. The code sets out the standards of practice we expect of employees and volunteers - in terms professional competence, integrity, acting as a representative and in safeguarding - which support our vision, mission and values.

Induction and Support:

Advice, support and training on safeguarding will be provided to all employees and volunteers on:

- ✓ What they should do in the event of a disclosure;
- ✓ What to do if they have concerns about the welfare of a child;

- ✓ How to recognise signs of abuse;
- ✓ What to do if they have concerns about a CMA IDA employee, volunteer, or employee of a partner organization;
- ✓ Where to go for advice and support within the organization;

Data Protection

We will ensure that personal information is kept confidential unless we have the agreement of the individual and/or their parent/guardian, except where it is necessary to pass this to a specialised child welfare or law enforcement agency in relation to a safeguarding incident.

Minimum Standards

Where employees or volunteers are contracted by other employers, or when working with partners, sub contracted agencies, CMA IDA will brief them on our safeguarding policy and ask for information on how the organisation works to protect vulnerable people and ensure that they meet our Safeguarding Standards.

Social Media

CMA IDA has a policy regarding the media and the use of actual names, images, including photographs and recordings. This should be applied in all situations. Specifically relating to protection of children, young people and vulnerable adults, we will:

- Use names and images of children, young people or vulnerable adults which are respectful and not expose them to further vulnerability;
- Reproduce images and use names of children only where we have the written permission of their parents / guardians using a consent form.
- Reproduce images and use names of young people and vulnerable adults only where we have their written permission or that of their parents/guardians, whichever is the most suitable.
- Make clear to vulnerable people and their families that agreement to providing information or images is not a condition of involvement in CMA IDA activities and programmes.

Raising and responding to concerns

CMA IDA places a mandatory obligation on all employees, volunteers, contractors and partners to report concerns, suspicions, allegations and incidents which indicate actual or potential abuse or exploitation vulnerable people or which suggests this policy may have in any other way been breached. It is not the responsibility of the employees to decide whether or not abuse has taken place, however, concerns should be raised with the manager, functional lead or a designated safeguarding officer who will initiate the procedure for dealing with suspected or actual incidents of abuse.

To ensure that all such situations are handled appropriately and effectively:

- Reports must be made, and decisions and actions taken;

- CMA IDA is not an investigative authority. It is essential that referrals are made to the relevant law enforcement agency to ensure that appropriate protection and support is given to the vulnerable individual, and that any evidence is collected in accordance with the law.
- All sensitive and personal data must be kept confidential (including the names of anyone who makes a report of abuse), and be shared on a strictly 'need to know basis', that is, access must be necessary for the conduct of one's official duties.
- Where a CMA IDA employee is the subject of an investigation, the lead designated safeguarding officer will lead the case.

Contact details

Nominated child safeguarding officer

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