



Hearts For Ghana Mission

Reaching the unreachable, untouchable, and unlovable for Christ.

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Hearts for Ghana Mission Abuse Prevention Policy Prohibiting Abuse, Exploitation and Harassment

As a Christian faith based non-profit organization and a non-governmental organization NGO, Hearts For Ghana Mission (HFGM) is committed to creating and maintaining programs that facilitate a community in which the children, friends, employees and volunteers can live, learn and work together in an atmosphere free from all forms of discrimination, harassment, exploitation or intimidation. All persons associated with HFGM should be aware that the MISSION is strongly opposed to Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Harassment and that such behavior is prohibited by HFGM policy. It is the intention of the MISSION to act to prevent and correct behavior that is contrary to this policy and, if necessary, to discipline those persons who violate this policy.

It is important that each HFGM employee and volunteer be adequately prepared and educated for the work in which they serve others. Each person needs to understand the ways in which their use or misuse of authority may impact others. It is the policy of HFGM to encourage its paid and volunteer staff to nurture safety within their various roles by being attentive to self-care and education while maintaining appropriate boundaries, and referring those in need to supportive and helpful resources.

SEXUAL EXPLOITATION OR SEXUAL HARASSMENT OF STAFF, VOLUNTEERS, CHILDREN OR OTHERS WILL NOT BE TOLERATED WITHIN THE MISSION.

Sexual Exploitation: sexual activity or contact (not limited to sexual intercourse) in which a staff or volunteers might be engaged in and takes advantage of the vulnerability of the person being served by causing or allowing that person to engage in sexual behavior with the staff.

Sexual Harassment: is defined as repeated or coercive sexual advances toward another person contrary to his or her wishes. It includes behavior directed at another person with the intent of intimidating, humiliating, or embarrassing the other person, or subjecting the person to public discrimination.

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Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment when:

- Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition or circumstance of instruction, employment, or participation in any mission activity.
- Submission to, or rejection of, such conduct by an individual is used as a basis for evaluation in making personnel or mission-related decisions affecting an individual; or
- Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's performance or participation in mission activities or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work or mission environment.

Sexual harassment also includes continuing to express sexual interest in someone after being informed directly that the interest is unwelcome. It also includes using sexual behavior to control, influence, or affect the career, salary, work, learning, or MISSION environment of another.

Prohibited sexual harassment includes unsolicited and unwelcome contact that has sexual overtones, particularly:

- Written contact, such as sexually suggestive or obscene letters, notes, e-mails, pictures, cartoons or invitations.
- Verbal contact, such as sexually suggestive or obscene comments, threats, slurs, epithets, jokes about gender-specific traits, sexual propositions.
- Physical contact, such as intentional touching, pinching, brushing against another's body, impeding, or blocking movement, assault, coercing sexual intercourse.

It is impermissible to suggest, threaten, or imply that failure to accept a request for a date or sexual intimacy will affect a person's job prospects, volunteer position, status, HFGM leadership, or comfortable participation in the life of the MISSION.

It is forbidden either to imply or withhold support for an appointment, promotion, or change of assignment, to suggest that a poor performance report will be given because a person has declined a personal proposition; or to hint that benefits, such as promotions, favorable performance evaluations, favorable assigned duties or shifts, recommendations, or reclassifications, will be forthcoming in exchange for sexual favors.

Procedures for Handling Complaints of Sexual Exploitation or Harassment

Generally,

A subcommittee of the HFGM, (The Response Team) with no less than two members, one male and one female, will be established each year in preparation for the possibility of hearing complaints under this policy.

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The subcommittee, hereinafter referred to as “The Response Team,” will be familiar with the terms of this policy, as well as the established procedures of the mission for dealing with a complaint.

- B. Several approaches may be taken in addressing incidents of alleged sexual exploitation or harassment:
1. The complainant can attempt to resolve the matter directly with the respondent, the individual accused of sexual exploitation or harassment.
 2. The complainant can report the incident to a team leader, to resolve the matter informally.
 3. If an informal resolution of the complaint does not seem wise, appropriate, possible, or fails, the complainant may request that the Response Team institute formal proceedings which shall include the following steps:
 - a. The Response Team shall advise the President upon the receipt of any and all complaints. The Team shall keep both the complainant and the President apprised of ongoing steps and actions taken. If either the President or any member of the board of directors is the subject of the complaint, this notice requirement shall not apply as to that person.
 - b. The Response Team shall gather statements or other information from the individuals involved in the alleged exploitation or harassment and from others who may have pertinent information, such as qualified professional consultants, and present such information to the Board of Directors or an appropriate subcommittee thereof.
 - c. The Response Team shall make determinations and take actions appropriate to resolve the matter. These may include:
 - i. Finding that sexual exploitation or harassment has occurred or very probably has occurred. In this case, the board of directors is called upon to act; accordingly, such action may include one or more of the following:
 - (1) A formal reprimand, with defined expectations for changed behavior.
 - (2) Recommending or requiring psychological or psychiatric assessment, counseling and/or treatment
 - (3) Probationary standing, with the terms of the probation clearly defined.
 - (4) Dismissal from employment or authorized volunteer position by, affiliation with, or membership in, the church.
 - (5) Reporting the incident to the appropriate governing authorities.
 - ii. Finding that sexual exploitation or harassment did not occur.
 - iii. The Response Team may seek the advice of legal counsel or others to advise it in performing its functions.

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- C. A written summary of the Response Team proceedings in such cases will be maintained.
- D. The person(s) toward whom the inappropriate behavior is directed need not be the complainant. Moreover, neither consent nor acquiescence will excuse or exonerate inappropriate behavior. At any time, the mission may initiate or proceed with the formal complaint process.
- E. In determining whether alleged conduct constitutes sexual harassment or exploitation, consideration shall be given to the record of the alleged incident(s) as a whole and to the totality of the circumstances, including the context in which the alleged incident(s) occurred.
- F. Any person bringing a sexual harassment or exploitation complaint or assisting in investigating such a complaint will not be adversely affected in terms and conditions of employment or affiliation, or otherwise discriminated against or discharged.
- G. If the complainant or respondent is not satisfied with the disposition of the matter by the Response Team, he or she has the right to appeal to the President, or to the board of directors if the President is the subject of the complaint, who shall refer the matter to the Hearts For Ghana Mission Board (BOARD).

If the BOARD determines that the procedures of this policy were not followed or if in their determination, the Response Team arrived at an incorrect conclusion, the BOARD may refer the matter back to the Response Team or form a New Response Team to deal with the matter. Or at their discretion, the BOARD may seek justice in another manner.

Child Abuse: A large percentage of the children we serve have been sexually abused in their past. Our purpose at this time is to

Make sure the abuse has stopped.

Remove the child from the abusive environment.

Protect him or her from the abuser(s).

If the abuse is current, The Response Team will follow all legal requirements and make a report to the appropriate authorities, including but not limited to the Social Welfare Dept.

If at any time a staff member or team leader, becomes aware of facts or circumstances that lead him or her to believe child abuse or neglect has occurred with a child under our care, or that there exists a substantial risk that child abuse or neglect may occur in the reasonably foreseeable future to any such child, that staff member or team leader shall immediately report the matter to the President so that the mission may take appropriate action in a timely manner.

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Exhibit A

Hearts for Ghana Mission Staff and Volunteer Application and Disclosure Form – U.S.

Printed Name: Last, First, Middle _____

Address: Street, City, ZIP _____

(____) _____ - _____ (____) _____ - _____
Daytime Phone Evening Phone Email

☐ Male ☐ Female

Driver's License # _____ State of issue. _____ Expiration date _____

I completed the Ministry Safe course on month: _____ day ____ year _____

3 References:

Name _____

Address City State _____

(____) _____ - _____
Phone Email

Name _____

Address City State _____

(____) _____ - _____
Phone Email

Name _____

Address City State _____

(____) _____ - _____
Phone Email

BACKGROUND CHECK AUTHORIZATION

During the application process and at any time during the tenure of my voluntary or paid service with Hearts for Ghana Mission, I hereby authorize the various law enforcement agencies within my state and across the United States, on behalf of Hearts for Ghana Mission, to procure a background report. I understand that I may request a complete and accurate disclosure of the nature and scope of the background verification; to the extent such investigation includes information bearing on my character, general reputation, personal characteristics or mode of living.

Applicant Signature _____ Date _____

I looked for a man among them who would build up the wall and stand before me in the gap on behalf of the land. Ezekiel 22:30a

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I _____ have never been convicted of, nor pled guilty or no contest to, a crime other than a misdemeanor.

The covenants between persons seeking authorized staff or volunteer positions with the mission require honesty, integrity, and truthfulness for the health of the mission.

To that end, I attest that the information set forth in this application is true and complete. I understand that any misrepresentation or omission may be grounds for rejection of consideration for, or termination of, the position I am seeking to fill.

I acknowledge that it is my duty in a timely fashion to amend the responses and information I have provided if I come to know that the response or information was incorrect when given or, though accurate when given, the response or information is no longer accurate.

Beginning such relationships with an open exchange of relevant information builds the foundation for a continuing and healthy covenant between staff and volunteers and the mission they seek to serve.

To that end, I authorize Hearts for Ghana Mission and/or its board to make inquiries regarding my character and qualifications, including all statements I have set forth above.

I also authorize all entities, persons, former employers, supervisors, courts, law enforcement, and other public agencies to respond to inquiries concerning me, to supply verification of the statements I have made, and to comment on and state opinions regarding my background, character, and qualifications.

To encourage such persons and entities to speak openly and responsibly, I hereby release them from all liability arising from their responses, comments, and statements.

Hearts for Ghana Mission authorized volunteer and employee recruitment process involves the sharing of information regarding applicants with those persons in a position to recruit, secure, and supervise both the position I am seeking to fill and program I am seeking to participate in.

To that end, I authorize Hearts for Ghana Mission and its board to circulate, distribute, and otherwise share information gathered in connection with this application to such persons for these purposes.

I understand that Hearts for Ghana Mission will share with me information it has gathered about me if I request it to do so.

I acknowledge my receipt and understanding of the Hearts for HFGM Safe Policy.

Signature

Printed Name

Date