



Reaching out with love

PREVENTION OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT (POSH) POLICY

*Including prevention of sexual exploitation,
abuse & harassment (PSEAH) policy*

APPLICABILITY	:	(See Scope)
VERSION	:	(April 2024)
WILL BE AUTHORISED BY	:	(BOARD)
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INTRODUCTION

All humans, regardless of race, religion, ethnicity, indigeneity, disability, age, displacement, caste, gender, gender identity, sexuality, sexual orientation, poverty, class and socio-economic status, hold human rights equally. In fulfilling our responsibilities, we affirm everyone's dignity and worth and protect each other's rights, through respectful interactions that seek to do no harm.

Sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment is a violation of basic human rights. Vision Rescue recognises that vulnerable adults and children are particularly at risk of sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment. Sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment, as well as a range of non-sexual abuses of power, take various forms and can happen to anybody at any time during their lives, but are more likely when one person is in a position of power over another. Therefore, this policy has been developed to outline our commitment and strategies to prevent and limit the risk of sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment occurring within our programs or perpetrated by our stakeholders.

POSH Act

The Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition & Redressal) Act, 2013 is India's first law against the (Prevention, Prohibition & Redressal of sexual harassment for women at the workplace. The Act, along with its rules, is collectively called the POSH law. The law mandates that every company must have a POSH policy i.e. an anti-sexual harassment policy for prohibition, prevention, and redressal of sexual harassment at the workplace and to promote gender-sensitive safe spaces and remove factors that contribute towards a hostile work environment against women.

GUIDING DOCUMENTS

- The Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition & Redressal) Act 2013¹
- The Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition & Redressal) Rules 2013²
- The Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act (POCSO) Act 2012³
- UN Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)

PURPOSE

The purpose of this Prevention of Sexual Harassment Policy (POSH) is to outline the preventative and responsive measures Vision Rescue has in place to safeguard people against sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment. This policy aims to achieve this by:

- Demonstrating Vision Rescue's commitment and approaches to prevention of sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment;

¹ <https://labour.gov.in/sites/default/files/sexual-harassment-at-workplace-act.pdf>. Also ref to Handbook from Ministry of Women and Child Development.
<https://wcd.nic.in/sites/default/files/Handbook%20on%20Sexual%20Harassment%20of%20Women%20at%20Workplace.pdf>

² <https://www.msde.gov.in/sites/default/files/2022-02/Sexual-Harassment-at-Workplace-Rules.pdf>

³ <https://wcd.nic.in/sites/default/files/POCSO%20Act%2C%202012.pdf>

- Outlining the expectations and responsibilities of Vision Rescue stakeholders;
- Providing guidance on how to respond to concerns and allegations; and
- Setting high standards around personal behaviour that must be adhered to by all Vision Rescue stakeholders.

SCOPE

Vision Rescue is gender sensitive, and hence the provisions of POSH Policy are applicable equally for all genders.

This policy applies to all Vision Rescue's **Stakeholders** defined below.

- All Vision Rescue's **Staff, Contractors and Consultants**.
- All Vision Rescue's **Volunteers** including but not limited to office and event-based volunteers.
- All Vision Rescue's **Interns**.
- All Vision Rescue's **Partners and Donors**.
- All Vision Rescue's **Board Members**.

Those who fall within the scope as listed above are required to read, sign and adhere to this POSH Policy as follows:

- Board Members, Staff, Contractors and Consultants – Full Policy
- Volunteers, Interns, Partners and Donors – POSH Code of Conduct (Appendix 2).

Though visitors or third-party vendors or any other business associates who walk-in to project locations or Vision Rescue offices for delivery of items, etc aren't required to read and sign the POSH Policy, but are required to adhere to the code of conduct as per POSH Policy.

The scope of this Policy is extended beyond the workplace for all the Vision Rescue's stakeholders listed above.

RELATED POLICIES

This policy should be read and enforced together with:

- Vision Rescue's POSH Internal Complaints Guidelines
- Vision Rescue's Code of Conduct
- Vision Rescue's Child Protection Policy and Procedures
- Vision Rescue's Complaints Handling Policy
- Vision Rescue's Whistle-blower Policy

DEFINITIONS

The "**aggrieved person**" means—

- a person, of any age whether employed or not, who alleges to have been subjected to any act of sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment by the respondent;

The "**workplace**" includes:

- All offices or any other premises such as classrooms, training centres, Bus & Mobile Vans where the Vision Rescue's work- or work-related activities are conducted.
- All Vision Rescue-related activities performed at any other site away from the Vision Rescue's premises, Buses & Mobile Vans such as schools, training activities in institutions/partner locations, etc
- Any social, business or other functions where the conduct or comments may have an adverse impact on the workplace or workplace relations.

Sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment (SEAH) occurs against a child or an adult and can occur between people of the same or different genders. It includes situations such as:

- Sexual exploitation and abuse;
- Sexual harassment;
- Child sexual abuse and exploitation;
- Women and men sexually exploited through sex work;
- Possessing, controlling, producing, distributing, obtaining or transmitting sexually exploitative images of adults and children.

Sexual Exploitation - means 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. It includes but is not limited to exchanging money, employment, goods or services for sex. This includes transactional sex regardless of the legal status of sex work in the country. It also includes any situation where sex is coerced or demanded by withholding or threatening to withhold goods or services or by blackmailing.⁴

Sexual Abuse - means the actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force or under unequal or coercive conditions. Any sexual activity with children (persons under the age of 18 years) constitutes sexual abuse.

Sexual Harassment - A person sexually harasses another person if the person makes an unwelcome sexual advance or an unwelcome request for sexual favours, or engages in other unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature, in circumstances in which a reasonable person, having regard to all the circumstances, would have anticipated the possibility that the person harassed would be offended, humiliated or intimidated. Sexual harassment can take various forms, which can also include jokes that is sex-oriented. It can be obvious or indirect, physical or verbal, repeated or one-off and perpetrated by any person of any gender towards any person of any gender.

Child Abuse - The World Health Organisation defines Child Abuse as: "All forms of physical and/or emotional ill-treatment, sexual abuse, neglect or negligent treatment or commercial or other exploitation, resulting in actual or potential harm to the child's health, survival, development or dignity in the context of a relationship of responsibility, trust or power."⁵ WHO, 2006

- **Physical abuse** is commonly characterised by physical injury resulting from practices such as punching, beating, shaking, biting, burning or otherwise harming a child.

⁴

<https://www.unhcr.org/in/what-we-do/how-we-work/tackling-sexual-exploitation-abuse-and-harassment/what-sexual-exploitation>

⁵ [What is child abuse and neglect? | Australian Institute of Family Studies \(aifs.gov.au\)](http://www.aifs.gov.au/childabuseandneglect/)

- **Sexual abuse** occurs when an adult or older child, uses their power or authority over the child or takes advantage of the child's trust to involve them in sexual activity. This sexual activity does not just mean sexual intercourse; it means any sexual activity including flashing, fondling, masturbating and oral sex.
- **Emotional abuse** tends to be a chronic behavioural pattern directed at the child/young person whereby their self-esteem and social competence is undermined or eroded over time.
- **Neglect** is characterised by the failure to provide for the child/young person's basic needs. This can occur through direct and deliberate action or by omission or deliberate inaction to care for the child/young person.
- **Abuse** happens to both male and female children of all ages, ethnicity and social backgrounds, abilities, sexual orientation, religious beliefs and political persuasion. Abuse can be inflicted on a child by both men and women, as well as by young people themselves. In some cases, professionals and other adults working with children in a position of trust also abuse children.

Child Exploitation - Child exploitation includes one or more of the following:

- Committing or coercing another person to commit an act or acts of abuse against a child.
- Possessing, controlling, producing, distributing, obtaining or transmitting child exploitation material.
- Committing or coercing another person to commit an act or acts of grooming or online grooming⁶.

Fraternisation - Any relationship that involves, or appears to involve, partiality, preferential treatment or improper use of rank or position including but not limited to voluntary sexual behaviour. It could include sexual behaviour not amounting to intercourse, a close and emotional relationship involving public displays of affection or private intimacy and the public expression of intimate relations⁷

Program Beneficiary - A person engaged in, or benefiting from Vision Rescue project.

Survivor – Centred Approach - A survivor-centred approach prioritises the rights, needs, wishes and empowerment of survivors of sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) in both the prevention of and response to SEA. In practice, this means ensuring:

- those who are affected by SEAH have accessible mechanisms to make a complaint that are designed with their needs and contexts in mind;
- SEA complaints are investigated sensitively and confidentially with primary concern for the survivor; and
- any response is both robust and sensitive to the wishes and protection of survivors.⁸

COMMITMENT

Vision Rescue is committed to:

- not tolerating any form of sexual exploitation, abuse or harassment.

⁶ AIFS, CFCA Resource Sheet, 2018, aifs.gov.au/cfca/publications/australian-child-protection-legislation.

⁷ Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Prevention of Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment Policy, 2019,

<https://dfat.gov.au/international-relations/themes/preventing-sexual-exploitation-abuse-and-harassment/Documents/pseah-policy.pdf>

⁸ Australian Council for International Development,

https://acfid.asn.au/sites/site.acfid/files/resource_document/Guidance%20for%20the%20development%20of%20a%20PSEAH%20Policy.pdf

- take all necessary steps to ensure that none of the stakeholders are subjected to any form of exploitation, abuse or harassment
- creating and providing safe work environment that ensures every stakeholder is treated with dignity and respect and afforded equitable treatment.
- ensure all our stakeholders are informed regarding the commitments and policies outlined in this document including how to report concerns or allegations;
- develop organisation-specific strategies to prevent and respond to sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment;
- undertake risk assessments to identify areas of risks and mitigation strategies;
- promoting a work environment that is conducive to the professional growth of our stakeholders such as employees, volunteers, interns, and encourages equality of opportunity.
- investigate all reports of sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment linked to our stakeholders or projects. Concerns or allegation of sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment will always be taken seriously, investigated and acted on; and
- take immediate and appropriate action against our stakeholders who commit sexual exploitation, abuse or harassment.

COMPLAINT MECHANISM & COMMITTEE:

An appropriate complaint mechanism in the form of “Internal Complaints Committee” has been created in Vision Rescue for time-bound redressal of the complaint made by the aggrieved person.

The Internal Complaints Committee has instituted for redressal of sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment complaints made by the aggrieved person/other stakeholders and for ensuring time bound treatment of such complaints.

Initially, and till further notice, the Internal Complaints Committee will comprise of the following four members out of which at least two members will be of the same gender as that of the complainant:

1. Chief Executive Officer (Presiding Officer)
2. Leadership and/or Founders (Member)
3. Department/ Manager/ Coordinator from where the complaint has originated (Member)
4. External Member from another NGO or Lawyer (Member)

The Internal Complaints Committee is primarily responsible for:

- Investigating every formal written complaint of sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment
- Taking appropriate remedial measures to respond to any substantiated allegations of sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment
- Discouraging and preventing employment-related sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment

A Sub-Committee of Internal Complaints Committee will be formed at all project locations of Vision Rescue, which will constitute as follows:

- with a Nodal Officer and 1 member, for a team smaller than 10 stakeholders, and
- with a Nodal Officer and 3 members, for a team larger than 10 stakeholders

Refer Appendix 4 (Vision Rescue’s POSH Internal Complaints Guidelines) to for complete details of Internal Complaints Committee, Sub-Committee and the Procedures.

DUTIES AS EMPLOYER⁹

Vision Rescue shall—

- provide a safe working environment at the workplace with shall include safety from the persons coming into contact at the workplace;
- display at any conspicuous place in the workplace, the penal consequences of sexual harassments; and the order constituting the Internal Committee under sub-section (1) of section 4 of POSH Act 2013;
- organise workshops and awareness programmes at regular intervals for sensitising the employees with the provisions of the Act and orientation programmes for the members of the Internal Committee in the manner as may be prescribed;
- provide necessary facilities to the Internal Committee or the Local Committee, as the case may be, for dealing with the complaint and conducting an inquiry;
- assist in securing the attendance of respondent and witnesses before the Internal Committee or the Local Committee, as the case may be;
- make available such information to the Internal Committee or the Local Committee, as the case be, as it may require having regard to the complaint made under sub-section (1) of section 9 of POSH Act 2013;
- provide assistance to the aggrieved person if he/she so chooses to file a complaint in relation to the offence under the Indian Penal Code (45 of 1860) or any other law for the time being in force;
- cause to initiate action, under the Indian Penal Code (45 of 1860) or any other law for the time being in force, against the perpetrator, or if the aggrieved person so desires, where the perpetrator is not an employee, in the workplace at which the incident of sexual harassment took place;
- treat sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment as a misconduct under the service rules and initiate action for such misconduct;
- monitor the timely submission of reports by the Internal Committee.

STAKEHOLDER STANDARDS / CODE OF CONDUCT

All Vision Rescue Stakeholders must uphold and promote the highest standards of ethical and professional conduct and abide by Vision Rescue policies.

Vision Rescue Stakeholders will NOT:

- Request any service or sexual favour from beneficiaries of Vision Rescue funded programs, children or others in the communities in which Vision Rescue works, in return for protection or assistance.
- Engage in sexually exploitative or abusive relationships. An example of this would be using a position of authority or power to coerce a sexual favour or relationship from anyone, including a co-worker.
- Exchange money, employment, goods or services for sex, including sexual favours or other forms of humiliating, degrading or exploitative behaviour. This prohibition against exchange of money for sex means Vision Rescue Stakeholders must not engage the services of sex workers.

⁹ https://www.indiacode.nic.in/handle/123456789/2104?sam_handle=123456789/1362

- Have sexual activity with any person under the age of 18, regardless of the local age of consent, i.e. the local or national laws of the country in which the stakeholder works. Ignorance or mistaken belief of the child's age is not a defence. Refer to Vision Rescue Child Protection Policy.
- Support or take part in any form of sexual exploitative or abusive activities, including, for example, child pornography.

Vision Rescue Stakeholders MUST:

- Undertake to create and maintain an environment that promotes implementation of this policy.
- Immediately report any concerns or suspicions they have regarding possible violations of this policy by other Vision Rescue Stakeholders.
- Be aware that sexual behaviour is an area of particular sensitivity, where conduct may more easily be seen as offensive or be misinterpreted.
- Ensure personal conduct is not exploitative or such that it reasonably leads to a perception of exploitation or harassment.
- Immediately inform their Vision Rescue Reporting Manager if they become engaged in a personal relationship which may be perceived as inappropriate or exploitative, including fraternisation, or where real or perceived unequal power dynamics exist. Workers who are unsure if their relationships fall into this category should discuss the situation with their Reporting Manager. Vision Rescue strongly discourages any stakeholders from engaging in such a relationship with a program beneficiary due to the inherent conflict of interest and potential for abuse of power. Such relationships can undermine the credibility and integrity of Vision Rescue's work.

Vision Rescue Stakeholders who are in management positions must:

- operate from a survivor centred approach
- commit to limit the use of non-disclosure agreements within grievance procedures

RECRUITMENT AND SCREENING

Vision Rescue recruitment practices aim to recruit the safest and most suitable staff and volunteers and deter those who wish to cause harm to people from seeking engagement with Vision Rescue. The following screening measures are required for all short-listed candidates or applicants:

- **Police Check & Reference Checks** for staff, full time contractors and consultants
- **Reference Checks:** A minimum of two non-related referees will be contacted verbally and asked specific questions regarding any concerns of sexual misconduct for all other stakeholders other than employees.

TRAINING AND AWARENESS

All Vision Rescue stakeholders have a role to play in safeguarding the rights and protection of people from all forms of abuse, exploitation and harassment. Therefore, Vision Rescue is committed to ensuring we equip and train all our stakeholders to outwork this responsibility and promote the protection and rights of those in contact with our programs and people.

Vision Rescue will ensure all stakeholders:

- Receive this policy and relevant induction training at the commencement of their engagement with Vision Rescue; and

- Sign and agree to abide by the policy, including through contracts and partnership agreements/MOUs, as applicable.

Additional training and awareness raising may also be provided through following mechanisms:

- Once a year training and workshop will be conducted vide HR dept for the Presiding officer and his team. An external POSH consultant will be hired for the same
- Twice a year training and workshop will be conducted for staff, full time contractors and consultants.
- If any stakeholder has any queries, all the queries for POSH Policy and ICC GUIDELINE must be sent to HR department, who will respond within 2 working days in consultation with Internal Complaints Committee.

INCIDENT REPORTING

Vision Rescue is committed to providing a safe, supportive and secure environment to report SEAH. Vision Rescue will take all concerns seriously and respond immediately. All reports of SEAH will be recorded.

Vision Rescue stakeholders must immediately report in writing (within 3 months of the last alleged incident) any concerns, suspicions or allegations of sexual exploitation, abuse, harassment or breach of this policy. This includes any concerns, suspicions or allegations involving an employee/volunteer or any incident occurring within Vision Rescue projects.

Community members, or any other external person are also strongly encouraged to report any concerns and to immediately notify Vision Rescue if they, or someone they know, is thought to have been the aggrieved person (victim/survivor) of sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment perpetrated by an Vision Rescue stakeholder or within an Vision Rescue project.

A report should be made to Sub-Committee Nodal Officer of respective project location of the aggrieved person or any other person making the complaint with a copy to Presiding Officer of Internal Complaints Committee. Details of respective Sub-Committee Nodal Officers are provided to all stakeholders as per the policy and is available at all locations.

Following are the details of Presiding Officer of Vision Rescue's Internal Complaints Committee:

Name	:	Dr.Susan Raju Paul
Email	:	susan@visionrescue.co.in
Phone	:	+91 88281 65059
Address	:	# 18 1/1, Opp Building No. 235, Near Jotibha Phule Hospital, Kannamwar Nagar 2, Vikhroli East, Mumbai – 400083 Maharashtra

Vision Rescue Whistle-blower Policy is in place to ensure the protection and support for any person making such a report.

INVESTIGATION

When an allegation, belief or suspicion of sexual exploitation, abuse or harassment is reported to ICC nodal officer with copy to Presiding Officer of Internal Complaints Committee, he/she will act immediately by

launching an investigation and developing an investigation plan based on the following procedures and in accordance with the Vision Rescue Complaints Handling Guiding Principles. If the incident involves a child, Vision Rescue Child Protection Policy will be followed.

All reports will be investigated in accordance with the procedure stated below, irrespective of the identity of alleged perpetrator. When applicable, the incident is reported to the police, government agencies or other relevant organisations.

THE SEAH COMPLAINT PROCESS

A fair, prompt, and impartial inquiry process starts with a local Sub-Committee of Internal Complaints Committee capable of creating an environment of trust and confidence throughout the inquiry.

Step 1 : Receive and Acknowledge Receipt of the Complaint

The complainant submits a SEAH complaint in writing within three months of the last alleged incident to the Sub Committee Nodal officer with a copy to Presiding Officer of Internal Complaints Committee.

Upon receipt, the complaint should be reviewed for:

1. In the context of workplace that the SEAH complaint is to be met with under the Act, such as, Service Rules/Employee Handbook, Workplace Policies, Vishaka Guidelines by Supreme Court and related laws.
2. Clarity in the complaint.
3. Additional information needed from the complainant.

The complainant will be notified in writing to acknowledge receipt.

Step 2: Meet and Talk to the Complainant to Explore Options for Formal and Informal Resolution

The Internal Complaints Committee will take up the case forward and contact the complainant the informal or formal options available for the redress

Step 3: Informal Mechanism

If the aggrieved person chooses to adopt the informal process to resolve his/her complaint/experience of workplace sexual harassment, then it is the responsibility of the Internal Complaints Committee to explore enabling ways to address the complaint.

This can include counselling, educating, orienting, or warning the respondent to promptly stop the unwelcome behaviour or appointing a neutral person to act as a conciliator between the parties to resolve the complaint through conciliation. However, before recommending conciliation, the Internal Complaints Committee must assess the severity of the situation and if necessary, advise and enable the aggrieved person to opt for the formal route.

At no point, the Internal Complaints Committee will advise the aggrieved person to resolve the matter directly with the respondent. Where such an informal process is successful, such resolution is to be recorded by the conciliator and forwarded to the HR dept.

The choice of a formal process rests with the aggrieved person even if the conciliator or the Internal Complaints Committee believes that this can be resolved through an informal process.

Step 4: Formal Mechanism

1. If the aggrieved person opts for formal redress, or the nature of the complaint is serious which calls for formal redress, then the Internal Complaints Committee responds to the complaint with further action.
2. It will be ensured that the Internal Complaints Committee members must be free of any conflict of interest with either the concerned parties or with the outcome.
3. It will be ensured that the independent third-party Internal Complaints Committee member has sound knowledge, skill, and experience in dealing with SEAH complaints.

Step 5: Respondent and Response

1. As per the procedure provided in the Service Rule; or in absence of the same.
2. Within seven days of receiving a complaint, the Internal Complaints Committee will inform the respondent in writing that a complaint has been received.
3. The respondent will have an opportunity to respond to the complaint in writing within ten days thereafter.

Action /Outcome

1. The final action/outcome decided by the Internal Complaints Committee will be informed to the complainant through a formal email vide the HR department with 3 working days.
2. The Action taken against the perpetrator also will be initiated by HR department and completed within 7 working days.
3. The personal counselling of the aggrieved person will be initiated vide HR department within 7 working days
4. Report on the counselling to be submitted to the local Sub-Committee of the Internal Complaints Committee for their records.

During the investigation:

- The Presiding officer of the Vision Rescue's Internal Complaints Committee will lead the investigation with other members of senior management and if deemed appropriate Vision Rescue board member, Giving consideration to gender diversity among the group.
- The Presiding officer of the Vision Rescue's Internal Complaints Committee will ensure relevant laws and legislative procures are followed (external legal advice will be sought when required).
- The reporter, aggrieved person (victim/survivor) and person subject to an allegation will be treated with respect from the start of the process until the case is closed. External counselling will be provided, if necessary, to those involved.

- The person subjected to an allegation may be stood down or partnership suspended. This process does not indicate guilt or innocence. If the individual is an employee, they will continue to receive full pay and other entitlements.
- Vision Rescue will seek to be guided by respect for the choices and wishes of the aggrieved person (victim/survivor), whilst also ensuring that due process, outlined in this policy, is followed. This could include ensuring a gender appropriate translator and or liaison point etc.
- If the allegation involves a Vision Rescue Partner and it is considered in the best interests of children/adult involved; or if the organisation is non-cooperative, then Vision Rescue may suspend the partnership (including discontinuing accepting or disbursing funds) until the investigation has concluded and an acceptable resolution has been achieved.
- The investigation will be given high priority throughout the duration of the investigation.

What happens if the incident is proven or suspicion credible?

In the event that an incident has been proven or there is credible suspicion, Vision Rescue's Internal Complaints Committee, and/or members of the Board as necessary, will determine what action should be taken based on the severity of the allegation and in consultation with relevant parties following the investigation process. In the result of a proven incident or credible suspicion the following outcomes are possible:

Minor Breaches:

- Formal apology
- Counselling
- Written warning to the perpetrator and a copy of it maintained in the stakeholder's file.
- Change of work assignment / transfer for either the perpetrator or the aggrieved person.
- Suspension of employment or association with Vision Rescue
- Responses may include providing further education regarding this policy, the importance of PSEAH and outlining consequences of ongoing non-compliance.

Serious Breaches:

- Termination of employment or association with Vision Rescue
- Referral to law enforcement authorities as appropriate (as per national and any mandatory reporting laws)
- If an incident involves a Vision Rescue partner and reasonable action is not taken to address the concern, Vision Rescue will end the partnership.
- In case the complaint is found to be false, the Complainant shall, if deemed fit, be liable for appropriate disciplinary action by the Management.

What if I am not satisfied with Vision Rescue response?

If one is not satisfied with Vision Rescue's Internal Complaints Committee response, he/she may contact the General Secretary of Vision Rescue's Board.

Contact Details

Name : Mr. Navin Chatterjee
 Email : secretary@visionrescue.co.in
 Phone : +91 98677 45305

SURVIVOR SUPPORT AND ASSISTANCE

Vision Rescue is committed to ensuring that no aggrieved person or any other person who brings forward a SEAH concern is subject to any form of reprisal or discrimination. Any reprisal will be subject to disciplinary action.

Vision Rescue will ensure survivors of sexual exploitation, abuse and/or harassment are offered support and assistance, such as referral to safe health/medical, psychosocial and legal/justice services where appropriate and, where required, to specialised children's or women's facilities.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Vision Rescue understands that it is difficult for the aggrieved person to come forward with a complaint of SEAH and recognizes the aggrieved person's interest in keeping the matter confidential.

- To protect the interests of the aggrieved person, the accused person/respondent and others who may report incidents of sexual harassment, confidentiality will be maintained throughout the investigatory process to the extent practicable and appropriate under the circumstances.
- Vision Rescue Whistle-blower Policy is in place to ensure the protection and support for any person making such a report.
- All records of complaints, including contents of meetings, results of investigations and other relevant material will be kept confidential by Vision Rescue except where disclosure is required under disciplinary or other remedial processes.

BREACH OF POLICY

Sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment constitute acts of gross misconduct and therefore, a breach of this policy is potentially grounds for termination of employment or association with Vision Rescue. Any reported or suspected breach of policy will be managed in accordance with the investigation procedures outlined above.

FALSE OR MALICIOUS COMPLAINT AND FALSE EVIDENCE

Vision Rescue will ensure that the aggrieved person or any other person making the complaint or witnesses are not victimized or discriminated against while dealing with complaints of SEAH. However, anyone who abuses the procedure (for example, by maliciously putting an allegation knowing it to be untrue) will be subject to disciplinary action.

- Where the Internal Complaints Committee arrives at a conclusion that the allegation against the respondent is malicious or the aggrieved person or any other person making the complaint has made the complaint knowing it to be false or the aggrieved person or any other person making the complaint has produced any forged or misleading document, it may recommend to the Vision Rescue's Management or Board, as the case may be, to take necessary disciplinary action against the aggrieved person or any other person who has made the complaint, after considering following:
 - Provided that a mere inability to substantiate a complaint or provide adequate proof need not attract action against the complainant under this section;

- Provided further that the malicious intent on part of the complainant shall be established after an inquiry in accordance with the procedure prescribed, before any action is recommended.
- Where the Internal Complaints Committee arrives at a conclusion that during the inquiry any witness has given false evidence or produced any forged or misleading document, it may recommend to the employer of the witness to take action in accordance with the provisions of the service rules applicable to the said witness or where no such service rules exist, in such manner as may be prescribed.

MONTHLY AND ANNUAL REPORTS

- Monthly reports have to be filed by the respective Internal Complaints Committee sub-committee's Nodal officer and submitted to the HR department at the end of the month.
- Even in case if there is no incident reported a nil incident report has to be submitted, as per the Monthly report template is as per Appendix 3
- The Internal Complaints Committee shall in each calendar year prepare an annual report and submit the same to the board and the district officer.

REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed every three years. Vision Rescue's "Policy Council Committee" will manage the review and stakeholders will be consulted during this process.

COMMITMENT & DECLARATION

I, _____ (full name), have read and understood the above Prevention of Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment Policy and Code of Conduct, and agree to adhere to it and the associated procedures in their entirety.

Sign: _____ Date: _____

APPENDIX 1: CONFIDENTIAL INCIDENT REPORTING FORM

In accordance with Vision Rescue reporting procedures, any incident, belief or suspicion of sexual exploitation, abuse or harassment violation is to be reported and the information passed on to the Vision Rescue's Sub-Committee Nodal Officer and Presiding Officer of Internal Complaints Committee. This includes non-compliance with Vision Rescue Prevention of Sexual Exploitation, Abuse or Harassment Policy. Activities or practices in Vision Rescue projects that do not protect the best interests of the aggrieved person (victim/survivor) or do not meet applicable local laws or standards must also be reported.

Please note:

- In no way, nor under any circumstances, is anyone to attempt to persuade someone not to notify, or even to delay notifying, authorities in the case of sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment concern.
- It is not your responsibility to investigate even for the purpose of gathering information for this form. It is sufficient to just report on what you observed, aware of or were told.

PART ONE: ABOUT YOU (Note: This form is to be filled out by the person making the report)

Name: _____

Contact Details (e.g. phone, email, address): _____

Relationship with Vision Rescue (e.g. Employee, Volunteer etc): _____

Relationship with person: _____

PART TWO: AGGRIEVED PERSON (VICTIM/SURVIVOR) DETAILS

Name (s): _____ Age: _____ Gender: F / M

Any other relevant details or issues to be aware of (e.g. cultural issue, disability, ethnicity, religion etc):

Who does the individual live with (include address and contact details)? _____

Is the individual aware of this referral? Yes/No Is the parent/guardian aware of this referral? Yes/No

Where is the individual now? Is s/he in a place of safety and are there any immediate medical issues?

PART THREE: YOUR CONCERN

Sexual Exploitation, Abuse or Harassment concern:

Observed/suspected by yourself

Disclosure by the person

Allegation made by (name & details) _____

Date(s), time(s) and location(s) of incident(s): _____

Who is the person suspected?

Vision Rescue Staff or other representative

Staff of a Vision Rescue's Partner organization

Someone in the community

Name and other relevant details of person suspected (e.g. address, job position, relationship with person, etc):

Details of Report

Please include the following:

- Details of the sexual exploitation, abuse or harassment concern or incident (Include what is alleged to have happened? What were the circumstances etc)
- Write down exactly what the aggrieved person (victim/ survivor) has said (in his/her own words) and what you said (NB: Do not ask the aggrieved person (victim/survivor) leading question-record actual details)
- Observations made by you (e.g. observed injuries, persons perceived emotional state etc. Mark which observations are fact or opinion)

Have local authorities/external agencies been notified? Yes/No Date of notification: _____

Explain (e.g. name of authorities/agency, advice received, actions etc):

Signature: _____ Date: _____

PART FOUR: TO BE FILLED OUT BY NODAL OFFICER OF SUB-COMMITTEE OF INTERNAL COMPLAINTS COMMITTEE

Date matter was referred: _____ Date responded to complainant: _____

Investigation: How was the investigation conducted? Who was involved in the investigation, roles and responsibilities? Include key dates of investigation.

Findings & Comments:

Actions: Include action taken and any continued follow-up needed.

Organisational Change Opportunities Identified: Strengths and weaknesses in areas such as the PSEAH Policy and its implementation and management etc.

Recommendations: To prevent possible sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment violations and improve the investigation process in the future.

Report prepare by: _____

Signed: _____ Date: _____

PRESIDING OFFICER / CEO Name: _____

Signed: _____ Date: _____

APPENDIX 2: POSH CODE OF CONDUCT

All Vision Rescue Stakeholders must uphold and promote the highest standards of ethical and professional conduct and abide by Vision Rescue policies.

All Vision Rescue Stakeholders will NOT:

- Request any service or sexual favour from beneficiaries of Vision Rescue funded programs, children or others in the communities in which Vision Rescue works, in return for protection or assistance.
- Engage in sexually exploitative or abusive relationships. An example of this would be using a position of authority or power to coerce a sexual favour or relationship from anyone, including a co-worker.
- Exchange money, employment, goods or services for sex, including sexual favours or other forms of humiliating, degrading or exploitative behaviour. This prohibition against exchange of money for sex means Vision Rescue Stakeholders must not engage the services of sex workers.
- Have sexual activity with any person under the age of 18, regardless of the local age of consent, i.e. the local or national laws of the country in which the stakeholder works. Ignorance or mistaken belief of the child's age is not a defence. Refer to Vision Rescue Child Protection Policy.
- Support or take part in any form of sexual exploitative or abusive activities, including, for example, child pornography.

All Vision Rescue Stakeholders MUST:

- Undertake to create and maintain an environment that promotes implementation of this policy.
- Immediately report any concerns or suspicions they have regarding possible violations of this policy by other Vision Rescue Stakeholders.
- Be aware that sexual behaviour is an area of particular sensitivity, where conduct may more easily be seen as offensive or be misinterpreted.
- Ensure personal conduct is not exploitative or such that it reasonably leads to a perception of exploitation or harassment.

Immediately inform their Vision Rescue Field Manager, Project Manager, or Vision Rescue contact if they become engaged in a personal relationship which may be perceived as inappropriate or exploitative, including fraternisation, or where real or perceived unequal power dynamics exist. Workers who are unsure if their relationships fall into this category should discuss the situation with Vision Rescue Staff.

Vision Rescue strongly discourages any stakeholders from engaging in such a relationship with a program beneficiary due to the inherent conflict of interest and potential for abuse of power. Such relationships can undermine the credibility and integrity of Vision Rescue's work.

DECLARATION

I have read and understood the Vision Rescue POSH Policy and agree to adhere to the above Code of Conduct.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Name: _____

POSH INCIDENT REPORT

Report Generated By	
Job Role/Title	
Date of Report	
Location	
Reference Number	

Our POSH Policy aims to protect our stakeholders in our organization from any form of sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment. As per the policy guidelines each Internal Complaints Committee is responsible to report monthly harassment incidents from their respective centres.

INCIDENT DETAIL REPORT

1.	Date/ time/place of the incident	
2.	Name of the complainant/aggrieved person	
3.	Name of the person against whom the complaint has been done	
4.	Incident in brief (Attach detailed incident report by the complainant/aggrieved person)	
5.	Reported to whom/when/where/time	

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6.	Witnesses to the incident if any (Names & Details)	
7.	Investigation of the complaint & detail report including witness report	
8.	Nature of action taken (Attach detail about the action initiated)	
9.	Final report with recommendation	
10.	Date by which action is to be taken?	

Signatures

Sub-Committee Members

Name: _____

Signature/Date: _____

Name: _____

Signature/Date: _____

Name: _____

Signature/Date: _____

Name: _____

Signature/Date: _____

POSH Internal Complaints Committee

Name: _____

Signature/Date: _____