

# Code of Conduct to Prevent and Respond to Sexual Exploitation and Abuse

## Core principles

- 1) Sexual exploitation and sexual abuse by SHC representatives constitute acts of serious misconduct and are therefore grounds for disciplinary measures, including summary dismissal.
- 2) Sexual activity with children (persons under the age of 18) is prohibited regardless of the age of majority or age of consent locally. Mistaken belief in the age of a child is not a defense and in no way shall ignorance of the age of the person be accepted as a justification.
- 3) Exchange of money, employment, goods, or services for sex, including sexual favors or other forms of humiliating, degrading, or exploitative behavior is prohibited. This includes any exchange of assistance that is due to beneficiaries of assistance.
- 4) Sexual relationships between SHC staff and beneficiaries of assistance, since they are based on inherently unequal power dynamics, undermine the credibility and integrity of our work, and are prohibited.
- 5) When SHC representatives develop concerns or suspicions regarding sexual abuse by an individual, whether the individual works for SHC or other organizations, partners, suppliers, or other related stakeholders, they are mandated by a legal and moral duty of care. They must report such concerns through the means and tools available within the agency's reporting mechanisms.

## Definition

SHC adopts the U.N. Secretary-General's definition on protection from sexual exploitation and abuse as follows:

- **Sexual Exploitation:** 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.
- **Sexual Abuse:** Actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force or under unequal or coercive conditions.
- **Sexual Harassment:** Any unwanted sexual advance, request for sexual favor, verbal, or physical conduct of a sexual nature.

## How to report

All reports of alleged SEAH incidents should be called, texted, or emailed to:

**+421 918 432 840**

**help@shr.sk**

The email could be signed or anonymous. It should include as much information as possible: **date, time, location, details about the incident, names of people involved, including witnesses.**

Please also consider the questions below in your email preparation:

- If you are the survivor: Are you still at risk? Do you fear reprisal?
- If you are a bystander: Does the survivor know that you are reporting the incident? Is the survivor still at risk? Are you at risk?
- If there were witnesses: Who are they? Can they be contacted? Are they at risk?
- Does the incident involve a minor?

Reports will be dealt with in a timely manner, and where required will be reported to relevant regulatory bodies. Where safe to do so, and when in accordance with the wishes of the victims, survivors, all alleged SEAH incidents that involve a criminal aspect should be reported through the correct local law enforcement channels.