

# CoC - Code of Conduct

## 1. Introduction

CJF is a global non-profit who work with children and at-risk youth in some of the most vulnerable circumstances and whose goal is to serve the communities we work in. There are standards we need to uphold as an organization to make sure we are helping and protecting our service users/beneficiaries to the best of our ability, as well as conducting ourselves in a manner that we are proud of as individuals associated with a global non-profit.

The CJF Code of Conduct (CoC) is intended to serve as a guide for staff, volunteers and other people working for, or otherwise associated with, CJF to make ethical decisions.

Abiding by this CoC is important in upholding CJF standards and breaking this CoC can result in disciplinary action, dismissal, suspension and/or termination of any paid or unpaid role or involvement you have with CJF, so please read this carefully and only sign if you agree to abide by this CoC during your time with CJF.

## 2. Scope of Application

This code applies to any individual working with CJF including:

- Those involved in work during 'project implementation' which is working within a predefined project timeline within particularly vulnerable environments alongside project service users (formerly beneficiaries) on the ground at location within a predefined project capacity.
- All local and international staff.
- All volunteers.
- All members of the board.

Any persons associated with CJF are personally and collectively responsible for maintaining standards in how we serve, and interact with, those who benefit from our work. While all those involved with CJF are expected to uphold these standards, Senior Board Members have a particular responsibility to abide by these standards, to advise on an environment that supports and empowers staff to abide by these standards and, in cases where these standards are not upheld and the CoC is broken, to decide on disciplinary action.

This CoC may extend beyond to conduct outside the immediate work with CJF.

CJF work with vulnerable individuals: exploitation and abuse of power are not tolerated.

CJF are required to ensure the protection of and/or assistance to persons, including children, classed as service users (formerly called beneficiaries). These individuals live on location and are to be found in environments where projects are initiated. Staff, volunteers, board members and other people associated with CJF who interact with these individuals are expected to uphold high standards of professional conduct.

The individuals CJF work with include but are not limited to:

- Beneficiaries and/or service-users
- Disadvantaged youth
- NEET (not in education or employment) youth
- Those living in low or middle income countries
- Those living in under-resourced communities

Children are defined as those under the age of 18, however service users (formerly called beneficiaries), who may be defined as vulnerable to all those conditions identified above, may be ANY age.

It is recognized that CJF's work often puts its staff in positions of authority in relation to service users of any age. Staff, volunteers and anyone associated with CJF have an obligation not to abuse this power.

Guidance on appropriate interpretation can be found in the CJF Humans Resources Policy.

### 3. The CoC vs local laws and customs

While acknowledging that local laws and customs may differ from one country to another, the CoC is based on international legal standards. For example, the CoC applies to all CJF members and associated persons, who will be requested to sign it. Persons working within a voluntary capacity and/or associated with CJF within a specific project time period will also receive the CoC and be requested to confirm that they uphold its standards as far as applicable to their status. Other charities and non-governmental organizations and/or companies which, through their staff, work for and/or with CJF.

All CJF staff are responsible for encouraging, advocating and promoting the dissemination of this CoC to all those they employ, hire or accept to work with CJF on a voluntary basis whether on an international or local basis. They also have a role in implementing, monitoring and enforcing its standards. Staff are also urged to encourage any volunteers, interns, partners and/or supporters involved in any CJF activities to maintain the standards of the code.

### 4. Core Values and Guiding Principles

All staff and associated persons are committed to the following fundamental values and principles:

#### **The dignity of the human being:**

CJF, in all its endeavours, will strive to protect and promote the dignity of the individuals in its own workplaces, in dealing with partners and the society at large. CJF in all its efforts will promote respect for human lives irrespective of Religion, Caste, Culture, Gender, Language, Territory or any other distinction.

#### **Equal opportunities**

CJF believes in a society where equal opportunities are provided to every person to avail, access and control resources in proportion to each one's needs and capacities. CJF is aware of the need to be gender sensitive, gauging the limitations of the present day society. Our efforts are to ensure indiscriminate participation of women and men. However, we believe in rewarding those who have shown a willingness and commitment to further CJF's mission on location and in the community and it is on this basis that opportunities will be offered, regardless of gender. It is also our conviction that we need to reduce vulnerabilities and marginalization through our interventions within the society so that each one has the opportunity to be included and be an enriched human being.

#### **Justice:**

We will promote justice and peace in society. We believe that every human being has the right to express and be heard and treated justly in all situations. We are aligned with the United Nations Goal 16: to promote peaceful and inclusive societies, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels. People everywhere should be free of fear from all forms of violence and feel safe as they go about their lives whatever their ethnicity, faith or sexual orientation.

#### **Solidarity:**

CJF will strive to enhance solidarity among all. Through solidarity we express a firm determination and commitment to the common good.

### 5. Commitment to the Code of Conduct

#### **1. Treat all beneficiaries and/or service users and other persons of concern fairly, and with respect and dignity.**

I will always seek to understand the difficult experiences that our beneficiaries and other persons of concern to CJF have faced and survived, as well as the disadvantaged position in which they – particularly on the basis of gender, age or disability – may find themselves in relation to those who hold power or influence over aspects of their lives.

I will always seek to care for and protect the rights of children associated with CJF, and act in a manner that ensures that their best interests shall be the paramount consideration.

If my work with CJF involves direct work with beneficiaries or other persons of concern, I will do what is necessary to fully understand their experiences and needs while following the Child Protection Policy set for the project first, to fully understand the wider social environment in which my work with CJF takes place, and to explain the role of CJF and the scope of its work to the beneficiaries or other persons of concern I am working with where necessary.

## **2. Uphold the integrity of CJF by ensuring that my personal and professional conduct is, and is seen to be, of the highest standard.**

I will demonstrate integrity, truthfulness, dedication and honesty in my actions. I will be patient, respectful and courteous to all persons with whom I deal in an official capacity, including beneficiaries and other persons of concern, representatives of operational and implementing partners, governments and donors.

I will observe local laws, will meet all legal and financial obligations, and will not seek to take personal advantage of any privileges or immunities that have been conferred on me in the interest of CJF. I will do my utmost to ensure that the conduct of myself and any persons associated with myself does not reflect unfavourably on the integrity of CJF in the field or outside of project time.

## **3. Perform my official duties and conduct my private affairs in a manner that avoids conflicts of interest, thereby preserving and enhancing public confidence in CJF and their work.**

My actions will be free of any consideration of personal gain, and I will resist any undue political or private pressure in decision-making. I will neither seek nor accept instructions regarding the performance of my duties from any government, non-government organisation and/or individual for their own gain, including any authority external to CJF.

I will not accept any decoration, favour, gift, remuneration, from any individual, organisation or authority external to CJF that may be at odds to the Core Values and Principles. I will not accept supplementary payments or subsidies from any other source, or participate in political or private activities that jeopardize the Core Values and Principles of CJF.

I will avoid assisting private persons or companies in their undertakings with CJF where this might lead to actual or perceived preferential treatment. I will never participate in activities related to procurement of goods or services, or in human resource activities, where a conflict of interests may arise.

## **4. Contribute to building a harmonious workplace based on team spirit, mutual respect and understanding.**

I will show respect to all colleagues and beneficiaries, regardless of status or position, and will allow all persons the opportunity to have their views heard, and to contribute from their knowledge and experience to team efforts. I will communicate openly and share relevant information (subject to confidentiality requirements) with other colleagues and beneficiaries and will endeavour to put the collective interest ahead of any personal motives of gains.

I will respect my colleagues' and beneficiaries' privacy and avoid misinformation. I will seek to resolve differences and solve problems when they arise. I will contribute to building constructive dialogue, guided by mutual respect and an open, positive approach, between Board Members, staff representatives and beneficiaries.

As a Board Member and/or Senior Project Staff, I will be open to the views of all team members. I will provide timely and honest feedback on the queries and relevant performance of other team members through guidance, motivation and full recognition of their merits.

## **5. Promote the safety, health and welfare of all CJF staff and project beneficiaries as a necessary condition for effective and consistent performance of project delivery.**

I will remain aware of and comply with all instructions designed to protect my health, welfare and safety during project implementation. I will always consider the safety of staff and project beneficiaries in operational decisions. If I have doubts regarding the occurrence of situations that I consider threatening to my safety or the safety of other persons, or situations that break the CJF Code of Conducts or Core Values and Principles, I will bring this immediately to the attention of CJF Board Members.

As a Board Member and/or Senior Project Staff, I will endeavour to ensure that the health and well-being of CJF staff, volunteers, affiliates and project beneficiaries are not subjected to undue risk. I will promote a healthy work-life balance for and will respect staff and beneficiary entitlements.

## 6. Safeguard and make responsible use of the information and resources to which I have access by reason of my involvement with CJF

I will exercise due care in all matters of CJF business during and outside of project implementation, and not divulge any confidential information about beneficiaries, colleagues and other project-related matters.

I will protect, manage and utilise CJF human, financial and material resources efficiently and effectively, bearing in mind that these resources have been placed at CJF's disposal under the guidelines of donors for the benefit of project beneficiaries and other communities of concern.

## 7. Prevent, oppose and combat all exploitation and abuse of beneficiaries, CJF staff and other persons of concern.

### 7A. Definition of terms

- **7A.01 Service user (formally referred to as beneficiary)**

A service user is anyone who uses or benefits from a CJF service (programmes) or facilities (skateparks and youth centers), whether provided by the charity on a voluntary basis, as a contractual service, or on behalf of a body like a local authority.

Service users under the age of 18 are considered children. Service users over 18 remain considered as service users 2 years after being involved in any of CJF's activities.

- **7A.02 Disadvantaged youth**

Children and youth who grow up in areas with a lack of socio-economic opportunities, without equal access to education and the workforce.

- **7A.03 NEET (not in education or employment)**

Those who are not in education, employment, apprenticeships or training.

- **7A.04 Staff**

A person employed for wages, salary or as an intern at CJF.

- **7A.05 Volunteer**

We define volunteering as any activity that involves spending time, unpaid, doing something that aims to benefit the mission of CJF.

- **7A.06 Intimate relationship**

An intimate relationship is an interpersonal relationship that involves physical or emotional intimacy. Physical intimacy is characterized by romantic or passionate attachment (kisses, hugs)

- **7A.07 Sexual relationship**

Sexual relations refer to physical sexual activity that does not necessarily end up in an intercourse. It involves touching another person in his/her private parts. However, the person who touches and the person who is touched engage in sexual relations. It is also termed as sexual activity.

- **7A.08 Exploitation**

To use inequality between two people or to treat someone unfairly to gain personal benefit

- **7A.08 Abuse of power**

Improper use of a position of influence, power or authority against another person. Using influence, power or authority to improperly influence the career or employment conditions of another, including but not limited to, appointment, assignment, contract renewal, performance evaluation or promotion. Abuse of power may also include a conduct that creates a hostile or offensive work environment, which includes but is not limited to the use of intimidation, threats, blackmail or coercion. Discrimination, harassment and sexual harassment are particularly serious when accompanied by abuse of power.

- **7A.10 Any relationships that compromise the ability of CJF staff, board members or volunteers to perform their duties**

Any improper relationships, manipulation, abuse of power, exploitation, intimate or sexual relationships which create an unequal workplace dynamic and/or give some an unfair advantage, putting CJF staff and board members in a position where they are not able to carry out their duties in a fair way.

### The importance of boundaries when conducting CJF relationships

- **7A.11** When people work closely together with shared aims and objectives, often on a one-to-one basis, it is important to maintain professional boundaries. It is the responsibility of the staff member to ensure that the relationship remains on a professional footing at all times.
- **7A.12** It is necessary to maintain a degree of objectivity in order to make appropriate care assessments and judgements, and to offer appropriate advice. If this objectivity is compromised you must discuss this in supervision and arrange to transfer the work to a colleague if necessary.
- **7A.13** The expectation for staff members is similar to that for teachers; it is presumed that designated tasks will be carried out in a professional manner, with a degree of objectivity which facilitates fair assessments and appropriate decisions.
- **7A.14** It is prohibited to have an intimate relationship between a staff member and a service user. Regardless of how the staff member may see the relationship, it leaves them open to allegations of exploitation, abuse of authority, unfairness, harassment or even sexual assault. This is especially the case in 2022 and 2023 onwards, where #metoo has shown that the way individuals see a relationship can change over time, and we have seen many instances of victimization, exploitation and sexual harassment brought to court even though offences and events have occurred in the past.
- **7A.15** Sexual relationships between a staff member and a beneficiary and/or service user, since they are based on inherently unequal power dynamics, undermine the credibility and integrity of the work of the Concrete Jungle Foundation and are prohibited.
- **7A.16** In the event where a CJF staff, volunteer or board member is dating someone with no CJF association who then wants to become a CJF service user, or wishes to join CJF, this needs to be declared and agreed before they become a service user.
- **7A.17** Risk reduction strategy must be a matter of constant concern.
- **Table 7A.18** Below outlines these guidelines clearly

|   | Intimate relationship | Sexual relationship |
|---|-----------------------|---------------------|
| Staff vs service-user (formerly called beneficiary)     | Prohibited            | Prohibited          |
| Volunteer vs service-user (formerly called beneficiary) | Prohibited            | Prohibited          |
| Staff vs Staff  | OK with conditions*   | OK with conditions* |

#### \*Conditions: Need to notify the Trustees

Notifying means letting the Board know of the nature of the relationship involved.

The Board may comment on the decision but will not interfere with the nature of the relationship unless absolute necessity.

**8. Refrain from any involvement in criminal or unethical activities, activities that contravene human rights, or activities that compromise the image and interests of CJF.**

I will neither support nor take part in any form of illegal, exploitative or abusive activities, including, for example, child labour, and trafficking of commodities (legal or illegal).

As CJF is committed to the highest standards of protection and care for children, I am fully aware that I am expected not to engage in any activities with any person under the age of 18 that constitute criminal and/or unethical activities, activities that contravene human rights, and/or activities that compromise the image and interests of CJF.

**9. Refrain from any form of harassment, discrimination, physical or verbal abuse, intimidation or favouritism during project implementation period.**

I will not engage in or tolerate any form of harassment in the workplace, including sexual harassment and abuse of power.

As a Board Member or Senior Staff I will not solicit favours, loans or gifts, nor will I accept unsolicited ones that are of more than token value.

I recognise that there is an inherent conflict of interest and potential abuse of power in having sexual relations with staff and project beneficiaries. Should I find myself in such a relationship, I will resolve this conflict of interest without delay

## **6. Breaching the Code**

I understand that anyone has the right to report me for breaching the code and should the board judge me to have breached the code, this could result in my suspension and/or termination of my involvement with CJF.

## **7. Whistleblowing and reporting a violation of the CoC**

This section draws from the Human Resources Policy and sets out the ways in which individuals may raise any concerns that they have and how those concerns will be dealt with by CJF.

Everyone should be aware of the importance of preventing and eliminating wrongdoing at work. Staff and others working on behalf of CJF should be watchful for illegal or unethical conduct at odds with the Code of Conduct and CJF's Core Values and Guiding Principles. It is the responsibility of all staff and associated persons to report anything of that nature that they become aware of.

Any matter raised under this procedure will be investigated thoroughly, promptly and confidentially, and the outcome of the investigation reported back to the person who raised the issue, throughout which anonymity will be protected by CJF unless this is at odds to the nature of the violation.

No employee or other person working on behalf of CJF will be victimised for raising a matter under this procedure. This means that the continued employment and opportunities for future promotion or training of the worker will not be prejudiced because they have raised a legitimate concern.

Victimisation of an individual for raising a qualified disclosure is a disciplinary offence.

If misconduct is discovered as a result of any investigation under this procedure our disciplinary procedure will be used, in addition to any appropriate external measures.

Maliciously making a false allegation is a disciplinary offence.

An instruction to cover up wrongdoing is itself a disciplinary offence. If told not to raise or pursue any concern, even by a person working in a senior role, you should not agree to remain silent. You should report the matter to the Chief Executive or the Chair of the Board of Trustees.

It is important that any breach of the CoC by staff or others working on behalf of CJF is reported and properly dealt with. CJF adheres to the responsibility of providing the appropriate channels in which staff and other persons working on behalf of CJF can report any violations to the Code of Conduct in a safe and secure manner.

I recognise my responsibility in reporting any violations of the CoC, and my failure to do so constitutes a breach of the CoC itself.

## 8. Your understanding of these terms and guidelines

I understand what is meant by the terms 'beneficiary', 'service-user', 'disadvantaged youth', 'NEET', 'low or middle income countries' and 'under-resourced' communities as described in this document.

I also understand what is meant by 'abuse of power' and 'exploitation' concerning these individuals and my role with CJF. If I do not understand any of these terms, I agree it is my responsibility to ask the relevant CJF UK Board Chairpersons what is meant by this and to ensure I understand these terms BEFORE signing this document and agreeing to these terms. By signing this document, it is assumed I understand these terms and any breach of the CoC after signing can result in disciplinary action under the assumption I understood said terms prior to signing.

I agree not to abuse the power and influence that I have by virtue of my position over the lives and well-being of project beneficiaries, service-users and other persons of concern.

I will never request any service or favour from project beneficiaries or other persons of concern in return for protection or assistance. I will never engage in any exploitative relationships, be they sexual, intimate, emotional, financial or employment-related, with project beneficiaries or other persons of concern.

I confirm I understand what is meant by sexual, intimate, emotional, financial or employment-related and exploitative in this context.

I will act responsibly when engaging with project beneficiaries or other persons of concern for private matters that may transcend the immediate project scope. I will discuss the nature and conditions of this relationship with a CJF Board Member.

When I am informed of CJF updates, I will read and sign in a timely manner and/or address any questions to a Board Member in a timely manner. about CJF policies, objectives and activities and about changing concerns amongst beneficiaries and the wider community in which I am working, and I will do my utmost to support CJF's protection and assistance work as outlined within this Code of Conduct, the Human Resource Policy, Safeguarding Children Policy and the predefined core values and guiding principles of CJF.

## 9. Agreement to these terms

I have read the CJF CoC in full and have understood the terms, definitions and conditions outlined.

I understand that I am expected to live up to the standards of behaviour described therein. I have also read, and accept to be bound by, the standards of conduct contained within the Human Resources Policy. I fully understand that conducting myself in a way that breaks these standards as described within either document can result in being asked to leave the project, disassociation with CJF, and/or further repercussions.

Name:

Project Title:

Functional Duty:

Date:

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_