



**MAKE EVERY CHILD HAPPY
(MECH) ORGANIZATION
CODE OF CONDUCT AND ETHICS
POLICY
2025**

1. PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

Make Every Child Happy (MECH) Organization is committed to upholding the highest standards of ethical behavior and professionalism in all its activities. This Code of Conduct and Ethics Policy establishes clear expectations for all individuals associated with MECH, including board members, volunteers, staff, and contractors. The objective is to promote integrity, respect, accountability, and transparency in support of our mission to empower and assist children and communities in need.

Adherence to this Code is vital for building trust with our beneficiaries, donors, partners, and the broader community. It ensures that everyone acting on behalf of MECH operates within a framework that encourages ethical decision-making and responsible conduct. By committing to this Code, members contribute to an environment where respect and dignity are paramount.

The Code also aligns with national standards and legislation governing non-profit organizations, including the ethics guidelines of South Africa's Companies and Intellectual Property Commission (CIPC) and the Department of Social Development (DSD). These bodies provide governance frameworks that MECH embraces to maintain legal compliance, good governance, and social responsibility.

2. SCOPE AND APPLICABILITY

This Code applies to all individuals who represent or act on behalf of MECH Organization, including directors, officers, employees, volunteers, and contractors. Everyone associated with MECH has a shared responsibility to understand and comply with the standards outlined in this document. Failure to do so may jeopardize the reputation and operational effectiveness of the Organization.

MECH requires that all new members formally acknowledge this Code upon joining and renew their commitment annually. This ensures continuous awareness and accountability. The principles in this Code also guide interactions with external stakeholders, partners, and the public, promoting consistent ethical conduct at all levels.

The applicability of this Code extends beyond mere compliance; it embodies MECH's commitment to fostering an ethical culture. This includes respecting laws, embracing diversity and inclusion, and prioritizing the welfare of

children and communities served by the Organization. Members are encouraged to seek guidance whenever ethical dilemmas arise.

3. CORE ETHICAL VALUES

At the heart of MECH's operations are core ethical values that underpin every action and decision. Integrity is fundamental; members must act honestly and truthfully, avoiding any behavior that could damage the Organization's reputation. Transparency requires openness in communication and decision-making, fostering trust among beneficiaries and partners.

Respect and dignity are essential values guiding our treatment of others. MECH expects all members to engage with colleagues, beneficiaries, and external stakeholders in a manner that is courteous, inclusive, and free from discrimination or harassment. Compassion drives our commitment to positively impact vulnerable communities and children.

Accountability is central to MECH's mission. Members must take responsibility for their actions and decisions, ensuring resources are used wisely and ethically. These values are consistent with the ethical frameworks promoted by CIPC and DSD, which emphasize responsible governance, social accountability, and public trust in non-profit operations.

4. PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT AND COMPLIANCE

All individuals representing MECH are required to conduct themselves with professionalism, upholding ethical standards in every activity. This includes following all relevant laws, regulations, and organizational policies. Compliance with legal requirements ensures MECH's sustainability and credibility within the non-profit sector.

Confidentiality is a key element of professional conduct. Members must protect sensitive information relating to beneficiaries, donors, staff, and the Organization, sharing such information only when authorized or legally required. Breaches of confidentiality can harm trust and have legal consequences.

MECH also requires members to avoid any actions that could result in conflicts of interest. Situations where personal or financial interests may influence decision-making must be promptly disclosed to the Board or ethics officer. Transparency in these matters safeguards MECH's impartiality and aligns with best practices advocated by CIPC and DSD.

5. ANTI-DISCRIMINATION, HARASSMENT, AND INCLUSIVITY

MECH is firmly committed to maintaining a safe, inclusive, and respectful environment free from discrimination and harassment. No form of unfair treatment based on race, gender, age, disability, religion, sexual orientation, or any other protected status will be tolerated. Upholding equality is a cornerstone of MECH's ethical principles.

Harassment in any form—including bullying, intimidation, or offensive behaviour—is strictly prohibited. Such conduct undermines the dignity and well-being of individuals and disrupts the Organization's work environment. Members must treat each other and all beneficiaries with respect and professionalism.

This commitment to inclusivity aligns with the DSD's focus on social justice and equity within South Africa's non-profit sector. MECH embraces diversity as a strength, encouraging open dialogue and collaboration among all members and stakeholders to better serve communities in need.

6. CONFLICT OF INTEREST AND GIFTS POLICY

All members must avoid conflicts between personal interests and the interests of MECH. Situations that may compromise, or appear to compromise, an individual's objectivity should be disclosed immediately. The Organization requires full transparency and appropriate management of such conflicts to protect its integrity.

Offering, accepting, or soliciting gifts, favours, or hospitality that may influence decisions is prohibited unless approved by the Board. Any gifts or benefits received must be declared and assessed for appropriateness. This policy helps MECH maintain impartiality and public trust, consistent with guidelines from CIPC and DSD.

By managing conflicts of interest and gifts transparently, MECH ensures that decisions are made solely on the basis of what benefits the Organization and its beneficiaries. Members must always prioritize MECH's mission and ethical standards over personal gain.

7. USE OF MECH RESOURCES AND CONFIDENTIALITY

- **Members have a duty to protect and responsibly use all MECH assets, including financial resources, property, and intellectual property. Resources must be utilized only for authorized purposes aligned with MECH's mission. Misuse or misappropriation of assets will not be tolerated.**
- **Confidentiality obligations extend to all sensitive information accessed during one's involvement with MECH. Members must safeguard beneficiary data, donor information, and internal communications, disclosing such details only with proper authorization or as legally required. Protecting confidentiality is crucial for maintaining trust and complying with privacy laws.**
- **These responsibilities reflect MECH's alignment with DSD and CIPC requirements for sound governance and risk management. Protecting assets and information is vital for organizational sustainability and public confidence.**

8. REPORTING MISCONDUCT AND WHISTLEBLOWER PROTECTION

MECH encourages all members to report any concerns about unethical behaviour, violations of this Code, or illegal activities. Reports can be made confidentially to a designated Board member or ethics officer without fear of retaliation. Open reporting is essential for maintaining an ethical culture.

Whistle-blowers acting in good faith will be protected against any form of intimidation, discrimination, or reprisal. MECH is committed to investigating all reports promptly, fairly, and confidentially, taking corrective action where necessary.

This reporting framework reflects best practices advocated by both CIPC and DSD, which emphasize transparency, accountability, and protection for those who expose wrongdoing within non-profit organizations.

9. DISCIPLINARY MEASURES

Level 1: Minor Offenses

These include first-time breaches such as unintentional violations of policy, minor neglect of duties, or breaches of professional etiquette. Responses may involve verbal or written warnings, mandatory ethics training, or counseling. The goal is corrective action and education to prevent recurrence.

Level 2: Moderate Offenses

Moderate offenses involve repeated policy violations, failure to disclose conflicts of interest, misuse of organizational resources, or harassment. Disciplinary actions may include suspension from duties, removal from certain responsibilities, or temporary suspension of membership or volunteer status. A formal investigation process will be followed with the opportunity for the accused to respond.

Level 3: Serious Offenses

Serious breaches encompass fraud, corruption, gross misconduct, criminal behavior, or actions causing significant harm to MECH's reputation or beneficiaries. These may result in immediate dismissal, termination of membership, and referral to legal authorities. MECH will cooperate fully with any regulatory investigations by CIPC, DSD, or other relevant bodies.

10. COMMITMENT AND ANNUAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

All MECH members, officers, and volunteers must annually review and sign an acknowledgment form confirming their understanding and acceptance of this Code of Conduct and Ethics Policy. This process reinforces accountability and ensures continuous alignment with MECH's ethical standards.

Failure to sign or comply with the Code may result in suspension of privileges or removal from the Organization. MECH commits to providing ongoing training and support to help members meet their ethical responsibilities.

11. REVIEW AND AMENDMENT PROCESS

The Board of Directors will review this Code annually to ensure its relevance and effectiveness in a changing operational environment. Amendments may be proposed by any Board member or ethics committee and must be approved by the Board before implementation.

All changes will be communicated promptly to all members and stakeholders. MECH encourages feedback on the Code to improve governance and ethical standards continually.

APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

NAME OF BOARD MEMBER	MR K MYENDE
SIGNATURE	
DATE	

NAME OF BOARD MEMBER	MISS SA KHESWA
SIGNATURE	
DATE	

NAME OF BOARD MEMBER	MR TST KHESWA
SIGNATURE	<i>T. Kheswa</i>
DATE	27 JUNE 2025