



Handbook for new employees

INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE RED CROSS

FIRST EDITION
2019

Welcome to the ICRC network

We work worldwide to bring hope to people affected by armed conflicts and violence, and do all we can to protect their dignity and alleviate their suffering.

Getting started

It is because of the support of people like you that we can keep bringing hope to those caught up in the horror of war.

This handbook will help you understand how we work and fulfill our mission. It's also very important that you review our values that provide us with direction and inspiration on how we do our work and treat others.

We will explain why our humanitarian work worldwide is more important than ever and how we can help people's lives together.



Greetings from our president

The International Committee of the Red Cross works every day, around the clock, across the world, to confront today's emergencies while building foundations of peace for tomorrow. We are feeding the hungry, fighting disease and pressing for a nuclear-weapon-free world. We are strengthening peacekeeping, peacebuilding and preventive diplomacy as well as our tools for justice and accountability.

These tasks are ambitious. We need people to make them real. That means you. I encourage you to join forces with like minded individuals and groups to generate change and promote mutual tolerance, understanding and respect. Never forget that the real challenges and the real rewards of serving the ICRC are out there, in the field, where people are suffering, where people need you.

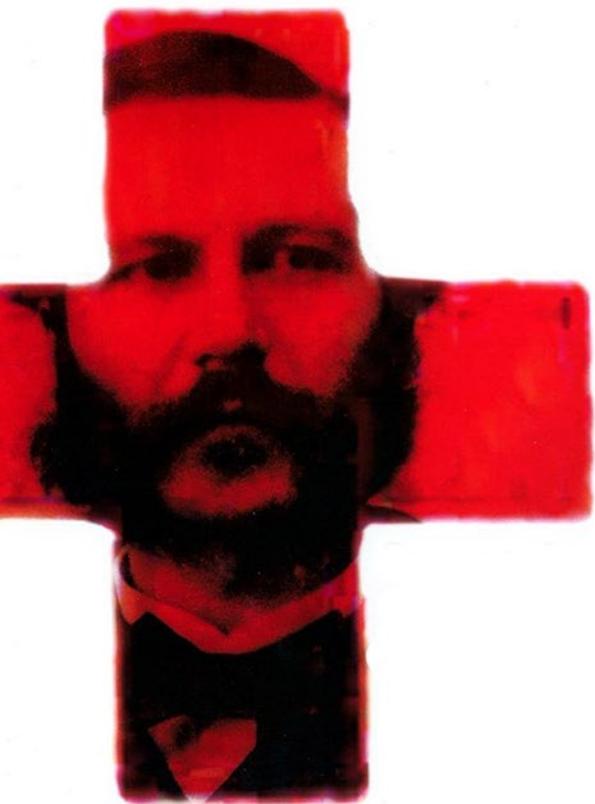
In a world that is more connected, we must be more united. With our fates ever more entwined, our future must be one of ever deeper and wider cooperation. That is the global logic of our times.

I look forward to the contributions you will make to our shared humanitarian work for peace development and the respect for the International Humanitarian Law. Please accept my best wishes for a memorable experience.

All the best.

PETER MAURER
President
ICRC

How it all began



Over 150 years ago, **Henri Dunant**, a citizen of Geneva, was an unwilling witness to the atrocity of war at the Battle of Solferino in Italy. He was appalled by the human suffering that had always been regarded as an inevitable consequence of war, and determined that laws should be passed to limit that suffering. The laws would have to be promoted and, if necessary, amended, and work had to be done to see they were abided by. In 1863, with four of his fellow citizens, Henry Dunant established the International Committee of the Red Cross and, the following year, States adopted the original **Geneva Convention** to improve the lot of people wounded during conflict. The idea was simple: **all the wounded would be treated, whatever side they were on.** International Humanitarian Law was born.

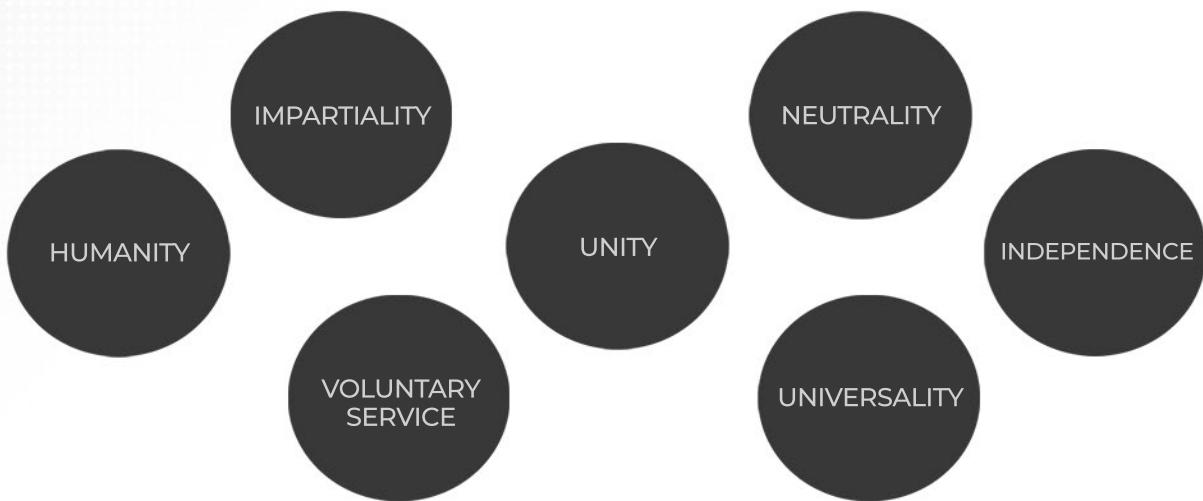
The Geneva Conventions (in a nutshell)

- People who are *hors de combat* shall in all circumstances be protected and treated humanely.
- It is forbidden to kill or injure an enemy who surrenders.
- The wounded and sick shall be collected and cared for.
- Captured combatants and civilians are entitled to respect for their lives and dignity.
- Parties to a conflict shall distinguish between the civilian population and combatants in order to spare civilians. Attacks shall be directed solely against military objectives.



Our humanitarian values

The seven fundamental principles unite the components of the **ICRC** and are key to its distinct identity. Adherence to these principles ensures the humanitarian nature of our work and brings consistency to the broad range of activities we undertake around the world.





ICRC



We act

- ❶ Provide emergency relief (food, medical care, drinking water)
- ❷ Restore damaged infrastructure (hospitals, schools, water services)
- ❸ Improve conditions of detention
- ❹ Support physical rehabilitation for amputees and others
- ❺ Trace the missing and support their families

We speak up

- ❻ Disseminate, promote and monitor implementation of International Humanitarian Law
- ❼ Dialogue to all the parties to a conflict (government, armed groups, etc)
- ❽ Dialogue with influential actors on the world stage and campaign on subjects central to the ICRC's mandate
- ❾ Develop new International Humanitarian Law norms

Additional benefits

The ICRC provides a complete package of benefits to all eligible full-time employees. All contracts (except for the resident field staff kind) are Geneva-based. Besides health and financial insurance, paid personal leave, maternity and paternity leave, the ICRC offers some additional benefits to help you achieve a fulfilling career while **continuing to learn** and **having fun**.



languages
classes



constant
training



yoga



muay thai



Code of conduct

The ICRC's code of conduct contains essential principles and rules that reflect the values underpinning our mission. It seeks to uphold the high standards of **integrity** and **professionalism** that we all hold dear, establishing an ethical and behavioural framework that all of us are expected to abide by in our daily work. Here are some highlights to take note:

- ICRC employees must respect the dignity of the people with whom they come into contact, in particular the beneficiaries of the ICRC's work.
- Employees must carry out their duties for the ICRC ever mindful that each of their actions in this context can have repercussions for the fate of many human beings.
- Employees must obey the law of the countries in which they work, including bilateral agreements between that country's authorities and the ICRC.
- Employees must show due respect, particularly through their conduct, dress and language, for the religious beliefs, usages and customs, rules, practices and habits of the people of the country or context they are in and of their place of work (e.g. a hospital or prison).
- Employees are prohibited from taking photographs, filming or making audio recordings in the course of their duties, irrespective of the medium used.



- Employees are prohibited from using their position to obtain nor to accept advantages, favours, gifts in cash or in any kind.
- Employees must refrain from wearing the official ICRC insignia when not officially on duty.

You can find the full Code of Conduct document here:
https://www.icrc.org/sites/default/files/wysiwyg/code_of_conduct_may_2018.pdf

We know the vast majority of ICRC staff do their very best to safeguard the ICRC's ability to achieve institutional excellence with integrity. Thank you all for your steadfast commitment to making a real difference in the lives of people suffering the consequences of war and armed violence in some of the toughest places around the world.



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February, 2019