



CHILD SAFEGUARDING POLICY

FOR THE ASSOCIATION Mobility Opportunities Happening APS



Bari, 2024



I. Introduction

The Association Mobility Opportunities Happening APS (MOH APS) has zero-tolerance towards abuse and neglect of children and young people. We are committed to the rights of all children and young people to feel safe and be safe when participating in our activities, services and programs. It is important not to underestimate the relevance of child safety to our organisation. When child safety is taken for granted, the wellbeing of children and an organisation's reputation can be at risk.

Engagement with a child or young person can happen incidentally and need not be planned or coordinated. Being a child safe organisation is therefore everyone's business. Compliance with this policy ensures all incidents are reported and managed in a way that is responsive to the immediate circumstances of the incident, the rights of those involved, and wherever possible, any risks of recurrence are minimised.

This policy assists staff and volunteers and contractors to:

- recognise the different types of abuse and neglect,
- respond to the immediate needs of individuals involved in an incident (including personnel),
- guide responses to allegations and matters of concern, including Codes of Conduct in municipality,
- ensure their legal responsibilities when working with children and young people are upheld.

The purpose of the Child Safety Policy is to ensure that all employees, volunteers and contractors are aware of City's commitment to being a child safe organisation. It provides strategic and operational guidance to keep children safe, and outlines the responsibilities, procedures and practices that support this. It applies in all our operational environments and without fail wherever children and young people are participating in our organisation's activities, programs, services and/or facilities, as well as within the community of MOH APS when employees, volunteers and contractors are fulfilling their roles when children are present.

This policy sets out the key principles, goals and implementation strategies that will be imbibed by the organization to create a safe environment for the children.



2. Definitions

- It is difficult to define “harm” to children because children can be abused in so many ways depending on the context and culture. They may be abused in a family, an institution, community or faith setting, or via social media/internet. They may be harmed by an adult or adults or another child or children. There are also practices such as female genital mutilation (FGM), forced or early marriage that cause significant harm to children.
- The following definitions can be used as a guide:
- Physical abuse: actual or potential physical harm perpetrated by another person, adult or child. it may involve hitting, shaking, poisoning, drowning and burning. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child.
- Sexual abuse: forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities that he or she does not fully understand and has little choice in consenting to. This may include, but is not limited to, rape, oral sex, penetration, or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching. It may also include involving children in looking at, or producing sexual images, watching sexual activities and encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.
- Child sexual exploitation: a form of sexual abuse that involves children being engaged in any sexual activity in exchange for money, gifts, food, accommodation, affection, status, or anything else that they or their family needs. It usually involves a child being manipulated or coerced, which may involve befriending children, gaining their trust, and subjecting them to drugs and alcohol. The abusive relationship between victim and perpetrator involves an imbalance of power where the victim's options are limited. It is a form of abuse that can be misunderstood by children and adults as consensual. Child sexual exploitation manifests in different ways. It can involve an older perpetrator exercising financial, emotional or physical control over a young person. It can involve peers manipulating or forcing victims into sexual activity, sometimes within gangs and in gang-affected neighbourhoods. It may also involve opportunistic or organised networks of perpetrators who profit financially from trafficking young victims between different locations to engage in sexual activity with multiple men.



- Neglect and negligent treatment: allowing for context, resources and circumstances, neglect and negligent treatment refers to a persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, which is likely to result in serious impairment of a child's healthy physical, spiritual, moral and mental development. It includes the failure to properly supervise and protect children from harm and provide for nutrition, shelter and safe living/working conditions. It may also involve maternal neglect during pregnancy as a result of drug or alcohol misuse and the neglect and ill treatment of a disabled child.
- Emotional abuse: persistent emotional maltreatment that impacts on a child's emotional development. Emotionally abusive acts include restriction of movement, degrading, humiliating, bullying (including cyber bullying), and threatening, scaring, discriminating, ridiculing or other non-physical forms of hostile or rejecting treatment.
- Commercial exploitation: exploiting a child in work or other activities for the benefit of others and to the detriment of the child's physical or mental health, education, moral or social-emotional development. It includes, but is not limited to, child labour.
- Source:
https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/default/files/standards_child_protection_kcsc_en_1.pdf





3. Background

The guiding principles of MOH APS policy is based on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and abides by the clauses laid down in the "Child Safeguarding Standards and how to implement them" by Keeping Children Safe.

Keeping Children Safe Standards and this policy cover four areas:

I. Standard 1: Policy

The organisation develops a policy that describes how it is committed to preventing, and responding appropriately to, harm to children.

II. Standard 2: People

The organisation places clear responsibilities and expectations on its staff and associates and supports them to understand and act in line with these.

III. Standard 3: Procedures

The organisation creates a child-safe environment through implementing child safeguarding procedures that are applied across the organisation.

IV. Standard 4: Accountability

The organisation monitors and reviews its safeguarding measures.

Although all children are vulnerable, some children face additional vulnerabilities, namely children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and children with disabilities.

Guiding principles:

- All children have a right to safe environment
- All children have equal rights to respect, dignity, protection, and freedom from all forms of abuse and exploitation
- Violation of rights of children is never acceptable.
- All children have a right to express their opinion and take their own decisions in matters pertaining to their life
- All children have a right to privacy and confidentiality

Related documents:

- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
- European Parliament resolution of 16 January 2008: Towards an EU strategy on the rights of the child (2007/2093(INI))
- European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (ECHR)



4. Policy statement

Keeping children and young people safe is a shared responsibility within the MOH APS. We have developed a framework of policies and procedures to address risks to child safety and to establish a safeguarding culture and practices for the children and young people using the organisation's activities, programs, services and/or facilities.

4.1 Our Commitment:

- MOH is committed to the safety and well-being of children and, as such, is committed to creating and maintaining a child safe organisation. We understand that child safety is everyone's responsibility.
- We have zero tolerance of child abuse and are committed to actively contributing to a child safe city where children are protected from abuse. Our commitment will be enacted through the implementation and monitoring of the Child Safe Standards.
- We will ensure the safety of children by:
- documenting our commitment to safeguarding children and young people from abuse and neglect and communicating our commitment to all of staff, volunteers and contractors
- educating volunteers, contractors and the community about the safety of children and young people. This includes understanding their role and the behaviour we expect
- providing environments that are safe for children and young people when delivering services and programs, including online, physical or psychological environments
- embedding processes that safeguard children and young people from abuse across all aspects of our operation responding appropriately and ensuring children are taken seriously if they raise concerns in relation to their safety and well-being
- listening to the voices of children and young people, particularly as we plan and deliver programs and services
- having appropriate screening processes in place to minimise the likelihood that we or a contractor recruit a person who is unsuitable to work or volunteer with children and young people
- making our Child Safety Policy and procedures accessible, online and in forms that are easy to understand



4.2 Child Safe Standards of Behaviour

Acceptable Behaviours

- Adherence to Child Safe Policy at all times
- Take all reasonable steps to protect children from child abuse
- Treat all children with respect and in the context of their age and development
- Listen and respond to the views and concerns of children, particularly if they are disclosing child abuse or are concerned with their own safety or that of another
- Promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of children with culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds
- Promote the safety, participation and empowerment of children with a disability
- Report any child safety concerns or allegations of abuse to a Responsible Person. If it is reasonably believed a child or young person is at immediate risk of abuse this should be reported to police immediately
- Encourage children to contribute in relevant organisational consultations where appropriate and possible, especially on issues that are important to them as members of their community

Unacceptable Behaviours

- Developing any 'special' relationships with children that could be viewed as favouritism and/or grooming
- Exhibiting behaviours with children which may be construed as unnecessarily physical
- Putting children at risk of child abuse
- Doing things of a personal nature that a child or young person can do for themselves, e.g. toileting or changing clothes
- Engaging in open discussions of a mature or adult nature in the presence of children
- Utilising inappropriate language in the presence of children
- Expressing personal views on cultures, race or sexuality in the presence of children and young people
- Discriminating against any child or young person, including because of culture, race, ethnicity or disability
- Having any online contact with a child, young person or their family unless necessary for the purpose of conducting MOH APS's business.
- Ignoring or disregarding any suspected or disclosed child abuse



4.3. Reviewing

This policy will be reviewed and updated annually and following significant incidents if they occur. Feedback received from families and children will be considered as part of the review process. Where possible we will do our best to work with culturally and/or linguistically diverse communities and people with a disability when reviewing this policy

4.4. Reporting

- All incidents or allegations of child abuse should be reported to the Internal Response Team at moh.organisation@gmail.com or phone number +393409323771. Allegations or incidents can be reported by children, young people, families, members, employees, contractors or volunteers.
- A reportable allegation is made where a child, young person or adult makes an allegation, based on a reasonable belief, that a Member, employee, contractor or volunteer of MOH has been involved in the abuse of a child or young person.
- If a Member, employee, contractor or volunteer becomes aware of an incident or allegation of abuse, the first responsibility is to ensure that the child or children are safe, and the risks of further abuse or harm are mitigated. If the incident or allegation of abuse could involve criminal conduct, the matter must be immediately reported to Police. If there is any immediate risk to a child or children, then the employee, contractor or volunteer should immediately call 112. If a reasonable belief is formed by a Members, employee, contractor or volunteer that a child is in need of protection, notifications will be made to the Police.
- All reports of child abuse will be treated as serious, whether they are made by an adult or a child.
- If children, young people, families, Members, employees, contractors or volunteers have concerns regarding the organisation's leadership in relation to child safety, they can report these concerns under the Reportable Conduct Scheme.

Under the Scheme, reports can be made on the conduct of Members, employees, contractors or volunteers to the Internal Response Team. Children, young people or adults can make first contact with MOH's team requesting to speak with a member of the Internal Response Team.



4.5. Support

Where appropriate, following a child safety concern, President will:

- Assist alleged victims and their families to access counselling and support services via proper institutions.
- Privacy, Record Keeping and Incident Monitoring

Board of MOH APS is committed to protecting an individual's right to privacy. All personal information considered or recorded during the process of a report or investigation will be handled in accordance with MOH APS's Privacy Policy. MOH APS is committed to best practice when keeping and maintaining confidential records of child abuse allegations or reports. Records will be retained in keeping with the recommendations from the Public Records Office Victoria.

Internal Response Team to ensure that they are appropriately managed. Risks to child safety that are identified in complaints, reports or allegations of abuse will be reviewed and incorporated into the relevant risk register.

Designated person who is responsible for making sure that the child safeguarding measures are integrated throughout the organisation and acts as a focal point: Rosanna Bellomo – President of the NGO, e-mail: moh.organisation@gmail.com , tel.+393409323771.

Specific Manager Responsibilities for Implementation of the Policy:

- all new employees who will work with children 13-18 years old, receive child safeguarding policy training as part of their induction programme, and all staff working with children 13-18 receive child safeguarding training which is relevant and appropriate to their engagement with the organisation,
- all employees who will work with children aged 13-18 read this document,
- all visitors in their area of responsibility, who are in contact with children through the organisation, are provided with a copy of the Child Safeguarding Policy. Visitors should be informed that they must comply with the policy in all contacts and communications with children during their visit,



- ensure that children and families with whom the organisation works are aware of the Child Safeguarding Policy and applicable local procedures, so that they know what behaviours they can expect from staff, associates and visitors and whom to report any concerns,
- ensure that protective measures which guide the implementation of the Child Safeguarding Policy are fully embedded within their areas of responsibility as it applies to them,
- ensure that those who have reported child safeguarding concerns or are accused of child abuse are given appropriate care, support and protection in dealing with all aspects of the case including any safety concerns and potential reprisals which may arise from the incident or from the reporting of such concerns.

Job description recommendations/key questions:

- What contact with children will the job involve?
- Will the employee have unsupervised access to children, or hold a position of trust?
- What other sort of contact may the person have with children (e.g via email, phone, letter, internet)?
- The selection-criteria outlines the relevant experience needed if the post involves direct work with children.
- The commitment to keeping children safe is included in details of any post sent to prospective job candidates.
- Asking for documentation to confirm identity and proof of relevant qualifications.
- Making sure that we have a well-planned interview process and ensure the interviewers
- Have the relevant experience of and knowledge about child safeguarding and best practice.
- Including some specific questions in the interview that draw out people's attitudes and values in relation to the protection of children. Can they give examples of where they





Access to advice and support

Staff with designated responsibilities for child safeguarding need to have access to advice and support where concerns or incidents arise. These staff will also need to be able to identify sources of support for children and their families.

Agreements with partners

MOH APS has a range of partners, including donors, local NGOs, government, contractors, and suppliers. All need to agree to a commitment to keep children safe that is appropriate to that partnership. This means making sure that:

- partners are clear about the nature of the partnership relationships that they enter into
- there is a sound assessment of the partner's contact with, and impact on children during the partnership and what this means for child safeguarding agreements (if applicable),
- agreement is reached on how your organisation and the partner will support one another to achieve compliance and competence around child safeguarding, including the provision or exchange of resources,
- obtain parental or primary caregiver consent for children's participation in activities
- whenever possible.
- discuss with children what makes them feel safe and unsafe and agree on ways for children
- to complain if they have a concern about themselves or their friends.

