

PROTECTION GUIDE FOR CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE ADULTS



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1. Introduction

This guide aims to establish clear measures to protect the children and vulnerable adults with whom our organization interacts. As a collective, we are committed to ensuring their safety and well-being at all times, promoting a safe, respectful, and abuse-free environment. This guide sets out principles, procedures, and responsibilities to prevent and address any risk situation.

2. Key Definitions

- Children: Any person under 18 years of age.
- Vulnerable adults: People over 18 years of age who, due to disability, mental health, or special circumstances, are susceptible to abuse or neglect.
- Abuse: Any action or omission that causes physical, emotional, or sexual harm, or neglect.
 - Physical abuse: Hitting, pushing, or any aggression causing bodily harm.
 - Emotional abuse: Humiliation, intimidation, threats, or attitudes that affect self-esteem.
 - Sexual abuse: Any sexual contact or activity without consent.
 - Neglect: Failure to attend to a person's basic, emotional, or health needs.

3. Fundamental Principles

1. Respect and dignity: Treat all people with respect, recognizing their rights and dignity.
2. Safe environment: Create a space free from risks of abuse, harassment, or discrimination.
3. Transparency: Ensure that actions and decisions are clear and justified.
4. Confidentiality: Protect personal information, sharing it only with the users' authorization.
5. Team care: Ensure that vulnerable users are always attended by more than one person, reducing the risk of abuse and making it easier for any incident to be reported to another team member.

4. Prevention Procedures

- Training of staff and volunteers: All collective members must receive mandatory training in the protection of children and vulnerable adults. This training must be periodic and updated.
- Risk identification: Before each activity, a risk assessment will be carried out to identify possible threats and establish preventive measures.
- Constant supervision: Supervision must be ensured during all activities with children and vulnerable adults, always by more than one member of the work team.
- Differentiated care: In the case of female users of the collective, efforts will be made for them to be attended by other women and/or by people from their own community. This measure seeks to respect their culture and provide a greater sense of trust and security.
- Clear care protocols: Clear and detailed procedures must be established for the care of children and vulnerable adults, always ensuring the participation of at least two people in all interactions.
- Interviews and staff selection processes: A rigorous selection process must be implemented for collaborators, including background checks and interviews aimed at assessing commitment to the protection of vulnerable people.

5. Procedure in Case of Suspicion or Abuse

1. Report immediately: Any suspicion or report of abuse must be communicated immediately to the designated persons within the collective via the email address quejas@caminandofronteras.org.
2. Record the details: The date, time, place, and detailed description of the incident must be documented. Information about the people involved and any available evidence should also be included.
3. Protect the victim: Immediate measures will be taken to ensure the safety and well-being of the alleged victim. This may include removing them from the risk situation.
4. Internal investigation: An internal investigation will be carried out quickly, thoroughly, and confidentially. During the process, the person involved will be automatically removed from their position to prevent any contact with vulnerable users.
5. Judicial actions: If evidence of abuse is found during the internal investigation, the case will be referred to judicial authorities, filing the relevant complaints with the competent authorities.
6. Disciplinary measures: If abuse is confirmed, disciplinary sanctions will be applied, including the dismissal of the responsible person.
7. Support for victims: Legal, psychological, and emotional support will be provided to victims and their families throughout the process.

6. Commitment and Responsibilities of Staff

All staff, including volunteers and collaborators, must:

- Sign and comply with the collective's code of conduct.
- Report any suspected situation of abuse or neglect.
- Participate in regular protection training.
- Comply with established procedures for team care, ensuring that vulnerable users are never alone with a single staff member.
- All staff who have or have had contact with minors must present, before starting the job, a criminal record certificate showing they have never had a record, especially not related to child abuse.

7. Monitoring and Evaluation

- Periodic review: The implementation of this guide will be regularly evaluated by the management team to ensure its effectiveness.
- Continuous improvement: Adjustments will be made based on evaluation results and observed experiences.

Our collective reaffirms its commitment to ensuring a safe environment and to acting with the utmost diligence in the protection of children and vulnerable adults, always applying the principles of justice, transparency, and responsibility.