



## Code of Conduct & Safeguarding Policy Agreement

Vanni Hope

ABN: 19614675231



2020

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## Vanni Hope - Code of Conduct & Safeguarding Policy Agreement

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I, \_\_\_\_\_ (Volunteer, Member, Sponsor & Visitor), have read, understand and agree to the Vanni Hope code of Conduct and Safeguarding Policy Agreement. I commit to the required standards of behaviour and practice as outlined in the Code of Conduct & Safeguarding.

### *Personal and professional behaviour*

- Volunteers are to perform all tasks in a conscientious, competent, and honest manner, consistent with the values of the organization.
- Volunteers are to treat all participants with respect and courtesy, having regard for their dignity and rights.
- Volunteers are to act fairly and equitably, respecting diversity in the environment which they work in.
- Volunteers are to prevent and respond to unlawful discrimination against other volunteers, beneficiaries, and stakeholders.
- Volunteers do not engage in bullying, violence, harassment, or any other forms of victimisation.
- Volunteers dress and act in public in a professional manner that does not reflect adversely on the organization or other members.
- Volunteer's use of social media should not compromise the organization's reputation and must not include derogatory, shaming, or other personal attacks towards or about other volunteers, the governing body, members, clients, or stakeholders.

### *Accountability*

- Volunteers use equipment, facilities, and funds for the primary purpose of undertaking organizational duties.
- Volunteers maintain confidentiality of all organization and personal information obtained during informal and formal engagement with the organization, and utilize such information for the purposes of carrying out duties, and not for financial or other benefit, or to take advantage of another person or organization.
- Volunteers maintain organization and personal records in accordance with legislative and organizational policy requirements.
- Volunteers ensure all decisions made in the course of their duties are transparent and align with organizational policy and procedures.
- Volunteers understand and comply with organization policies and procedures.



- Volunteers are responsible for seeking clarification where needed regarding any part of their task, including details of this Code of Conduct.
- Volunteers take responsibility for reporting conduct by other volunteers, governing body members or visitors which contravenes any law, organizational policy and procedures, or this Code of Conduct.

### ***Conflicts of interest***

- Volunteers declare and manage any potential, actual or apparent conflicts of interests.
- Volunteers do not accept gifts, benefits, or favours that may influence or be reasonably seen to influence decision making.
- Volunteers prevent and respond to nepotism and patronage.
- Volunteers manage conflicts of interest in accordance with organizational conflict of interest policies and procedures.

### ***Safe Environment***

- Volunteers are to perform their tasks in a safe and competent manner in accordance with organizational workplace health and safety policies and procedures, and relevant workplace health and safety legislation.
- Volunteers must take care to not put themselves or others at risk or reduce their ability to carry out their duties through unsafe practices, inappropriate behaviours or the misuse of alcohol or drugs.
- Volunteers act in preventing, identifying, and responding to workplace health and safety risks.



## ***Safeguarding policy***

### ***Introduction***

Vanni Hope is committed to maintaining learning and working in an environment free of sexual harassment and sexual misconduct. This policy is intended to make all members and volunteers aware of the various reporting and confidential disclosure options available so that they can make informed choices about where to turn should they become a victim of, or become aware of sex discrimination. Reports may be made by volunteers or beneficiaries for events occurring while on duty as well as off duty.

### ***Responsibility to Report***

All Volunteers (except Confidential Resources), including field staff, directors and administrators, have a responsibility to report to the Coordinator any potential sexual misconduct or violations of this policy of which they become aware so that Vanni Hope can respond appropriately.

### ***Making a Report / Filing a Complaint***

Vanni Hope encourages anyone who experiences or witnesses sexual misconduct to report the misconduct, seek assistance and support services, and to pursue action for their own protection and that of the entire community. However, the decision whether or not to report sexual misconduct is a difficult and intensely personal one. It may take some time to process an incident and decide how best to proceed. Vanni Hope wishes to provide support and assistance during this time.

### ***Reporting Options***

A complainant or witness to sexual misconduct may make a report by talking to a trusted Vanni Hope office bearer such as a Director or to the local project coordinator. A complainant can also file a criminal complaint directly with local Police or law enforcement agent. If he or she might not be ready to report, before or during this decision-making process, they are encouraged to seek assistance from a Confidential Resource before deciding how to proceed.

### ***Confidential Resources***

Professionals in the Counselling unit can maintain complete confidentiality unless there is a concern for the safety of the individual or others. Conversations are privileged and these professionals cannot and will not disclose these conversations. Unless the individual takes additional action, such as reporting to a member of the safeguarding Team, the disclosure will not result in any action by Vanni Hope.



## *Making a Report*

Instances of sexual harassment and/or misconduct may be reported to a member of the project coordinating team, a supervisor, a responsible member of Vanni Hope or a local law enforcing agent. If an alleged victim or witness wants to tell a member about an incidence of sexual misconduct and wishes their conversation to remain confidential, the individual should understand that the Coordinator will consider the request but cannot guarantee confidentiality in all cases.

In most cases, a report of sexual misconduct will be investigated by the local law enforcing officers, regardless of whether the reporting individual wishes to pursue a formal complaint. A complaint is a request that the incident is investigated. This can follow an informal or a formal process. Individuals may file a complaint with any member of the officers Team. The immediate goal is to stop the offensive conduct and ensure everyone's safety. Private information will be shared with as few people as possible on a need to know basis.

The complainant should be prepared to give a detailed description of the sexual misconduct, the date and time of occurrence, the names of the persons involved, the names of any witnesses, and any further action taken. The complaint will be reviewed by a member of the officers Team, first seeking an informal resolution if appropriate.

## *Making a Criminal Complaint*

In addition to violating Vanni Hope policy, sexual misconduct might also constitute criminal activity. Every alleged victim of a sexual assault maintains the right to file criminal charges with the appropriate local law enforcement agency simultaneously and in addition to making a report and/or filing a complaint with Vanni Hope. The alleged victim can decline to notify such agency. Local Police can assist in contacting the proper authorities if the alleged victim chooses to. If a criminal complaint is filed, the complainant will be asked to assist the police with the investigation and provide them with details of what happened and with the collection of all relevant evidence. In some cases, a protective order may be obtained. The chances of a successful criminal investigation are greatly enhanced if evidence is collected and maintained immediately by law enforcement officers.

The Vanni Hope Safeguarding officer investigation and the criminal law system are independent of one another and, regardless of whether criminal charges are brought or not, Vanni Hope will move forward with its internal investigation. The Vanni Hope Safeguarding team will meet its responsibilities regarding any orders of protection, no contact orders, or restraining orders. For more information about pursuing criminal charges, contact the local Police.



## ***Timeframe for Reporting***

Vanni Hope strongly encourages prompt reporting of any violation of this policy in order to provide immediate protection and support for the victim. Vanni Hope's ability to conduct a thorough investigation, however, may be limited with the passage of time or unavailability of the accused or witnesses.

## ***Bystander Intervention***

Maintaining a healthy, safe, and respectful environment is the responsibility of all members of Vanni Hope. Our shared faith teaches us to help those in need. Vanni Hope strongly encourages all volunteers & beneficiaries to take action to prevent or stop acts of sexual misconduct if it is safe to do so. Such actions might include direct intervention, calling local Police or seeking assistance from other authorities. A volunteer / member who calls for medical help will not be sanctioned for any accompanying conduct code violations.

## ***Amnesty for Reporting Sexual Misconduct***

Vanni Hope does not condone excessive drinking or illegal use of controlled substances. However, in order to encourage reporting of conduct that is prohibited under this policy, a Vanni Hope volunteers involved in filing a complaint or participating in the investigation of an allegation of sexual misconduct prohibited by this policy, will not be subject to disciplinary action under Vanni Hope's Life and Conduct Statement for his or her own personal consumption of alcohol or drugs at or near the time of the incident, provided that any such violations do not place the health or safety of any other person at risk. Vanni Hope may initiate project discussion or pursue other project remedies regarding alcohol or other drugs.

## ***The Importance of Preserving Evidence***

Regardless of whether an incident of sexual misconduct is reported to the police or Vanni Hope, Vanni Hope strongly encourages individuals who have experienced sexual misconduct to preserve evidence to the greatest extent possible, as this will best maintain all legal options for them in the future.

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (Volunteer, Member, Sponsor & Visitor), have read, understand and agree to this organization's Code of Conduct & Safeguarding policy. I commit to the required standards of behaviour and practice as outlined in the Code of Conduct.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Member / volunteer signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date