

The Synodical Board of Social Services, Church of North India



SAFEGUARDING POLICY

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CNI SBSS

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**Approved by CNI SBSS Board
March 2022**

1. INTRODUCTION

Synodical Board of Social Services is the development and justice board of the Church of North India. We work with marginalized communities focusing primarily on Dalits, Adivasi, and Women & Children. CNI SBSS facilitates holistic development of the marginalized communities, contributing to the mission of Church of North India and towards country's growth. As an organization we follow the principle of Do No Harm, where we work towards effective implementation of our program activities and to minimize the harm that may be caused inadvertently as a result of our organizational activities. The purpose is to protect and safeguard our target community-children, women and at-risk adults and beneficiaries of assistance who come in contact with CNI SBSS.

2. STATEMENT OF ORGANIZATION

CNI SBSS acknowledges that “all persons are created in the image of God” ...therefore we work in ways that respect dignity, uniqueness and the intrinsic worth and human rights of every individual irrespective of their race, gender, age, religion, disability, sexual orientation, social background or culture.

Believing in this commitment we have a zero-tolerance approach to any form of abuse and respect rights of every individual; to participate and engage with them in a meaningful way so that they are able to reach their full potential.

3. SCOPE & PURPOSE

CNI SBSS believes that all individuals have the right to protection from all forms of violence, abuse and exploitation. We recognize the unique needs of children and vulnerable adults and, therefore, commit to create and maintain an environment that protects these individuals. Everyone associated with CNI SBSS and others representing or visiting the SBSS projects are responsible for maintaining a professional role with everyone, which means establishing and maintaining clear professional boundaries that serve to protect everyone from

misunderstandings or a violation of the professional relationship. This Safeguarding policy outlines the behaviour and expectation of everyone associated with CNI SBSS with regards to working with or in the proximity of our target community-children, women and at risk adults and beneficiaries of assistance who come in contact with CNI SBSS.

4. DEFINITION OF TERMS

- i. By **Safeguarding** we mean, protecting people, including children and at risk adults, from harm that arises from coming into contact with our staff or programmes. Safeguarding means taking all reasonable steps to prevent harm, particularly sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment from occurring; to protect people, especially vulnerable adults and children, from that harm; and to respond appropriately when harm does occur.
- ii. **Children/child:** anyone below the age of 18
- iii. **Women:** Female above the age of 18
- iv. **At risk adult:** Sometimes also referred to as vulnerable adult. A person who is or may be in need of care by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness; and who is or may be unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation.
- v. **Abuse**
 - a. **Physical Abuse:** Physical abuse or physical injury, such as evidence of hitting, kicking or shaking, where there is definite knowledge or reasonable suspicion, that the injury was inflicted or knowingly not prevented.
 - b. **Sexual Abuse:** the actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, including inappropriate touching, by force or under unequal or coercive conditions (United Nations Secretary General's Bulletin 2003/13, 9 October 2003; Special Measures for Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse).
 - c. **Emotional Abuse:** Emotional abuse of a person holding power over another person. Emotional 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.

- d. **Verbal Abuse:** Shouting or screaming at others, blaming, condescending, threats, manipulating information.
- e. **Sexual Harassment:** Sexual Harassment is unwanted behaviour of a sexual nature which: violates your dignity, makes you feel intimidated, degraded or humiliated or creates a hostile or offensive environment. Sexual harassment can include: • sexual comments or jokes • physical behaviour, including unwelcome sexual advances, touching and various forms of sexual assault • displaying pictures, photos or drawings of a sexual nature • sending texts or emails with a sexual content.
- f. **Sexual Exploitation:** Sexual exploitation means any actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power, or trust, for sexual purposes, including, but not limited to, profiting monetarily, socially or politically from the sexual exploitation of another.
- g. **Online Abuse:** Online abuse can include cyber bullying, harassment and stalking, the creation and sharing of sexually explicit materials, grooming or being persuaded to perform sexual acts online or being exposed to sexual content
- h. **Child Exploitation and Abuse** may involve physical abuse leading to injuries, emotional abuse through verbal acts, neglecting a child and not taking care of him/her or sexual abuse/harassment of any form.
- i. **Beneficiary:** Someone who directly receives goods or services from CNI SBSS's programme.

5. POLICY PRINCIPLES

The principles in this policy have been drawn from key international and regional instruments such as: International Standards for Keeping Children Safe, the UN Convention on the Rights of a Child, IASC Minimum Operating Standards for PSEA and the Core Humanitarian Standard on Quality and Accountability.

CNI SBSS is committed to:

- i. Safeguarding the wholeness and wellbeing of beneficiaries, staff, volunteers, and all those associated with the activities of CNI SBSS, and ensuring they have equal rights to protection from harm.
- ii. Ensuring concerns or allegations are taken seriously, investigated and acted on as appropriate.
- iii. Ensuring all staff, trustees, volunteers, consultants, contractors and partners or any representatives of CNI SBSS are familiar with this policy and know their responsibilities within it.
- iv. Undertaking safeguarding risk assessments to identify areas of safeguarding and sexual harassment, exploitation, and abuse, and child abuse risks, and document steps that are being taken to remove or reduce these risks.
- v. Ensuring that survivors of abuse are supported and alleged perpetrators are held to account
- vi. Employing staff who are aligned with our vision, mission and values, and adhere to our rules and code of conduct. , proper reference check and background check is conducted before hiring of any new employee.
- vii. Ensuring that alleged perpetrators of abuse are treated fairly and in accordance with local law.
- viii. Ensuring of reporting of criminal acts to the relevant statutory agency.
- ix. Ensuring all beneficiaries, staff, volunteers, and all those associated with the activities of CNI SBSS is aware of our Safeguarding Policy, our expected behaviours and conduct, and how to report wrongdoing.
- x. Ensuring of reporting of incidents to relevant donors.
- xi. Designing and delivering programmes which are safe for all
- xii. Ensuring our beneficiaries and supporters are fully aware of the expected behavior of our staff, volunteers, trustees, consultants and partners.

- xiii. Supporting staff and all people involved in our work to navigate online spaces and use equipment and online tools safely and effectively.
- xiv. Ensuring the full cooperation to police and legal team to conduct the investigation

6. REPORTING PROCEDURE TO RESPOND TO SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS

I. Safeguarding Provisions:

- i. In the event of any violation or substantial suspicion of breach of the policy by anyone associated with CNI SBSS the offence must be reported immediately to the safeguarding focal person and reporting Supervisor where the incident has occurred and the Supervisor and Safeguarding focal person will inform about the incident to the Senior Management of CNI SBSS. In cases when the Supervisor is involved, the complainant can directly write to the Senior Management directly.
- ii. The incident should be reported in the Complaint Reporting Form.
- iii. Ensure that during any investigation, the safety and confidentiality of the complainant remains paramount.
- iv. Information about the incident needs to be kept confidential and discussed only when it is for the safety of the child with the concerned Supervisor/ Senior Management.
- v. When a complaint is received, an enquiry shall be made by the Senior Management and it can be done using the action taken form.
- vi. After validating the facts as per the organizational policies, if found that the code of conduct has been breached, related disciplinary measures will be taken and bring the matter to closure within 3 months.
- vii. Provide assistance to the police and other legal organization when the case is being referred.

II. Our Response:

- i. Confidentiality of the complainant and the issue raised will be maintained at all levels and only those personal directly involved in handling the case will be made aware of the issue.

- ii. CNI SBSS will maintain all safeguarding information securely in head office and all files physical and electronic will be kept securely in a locked folder.
- iii. CNI SBSS takes all safeguarding concerns and allegations very seriously and will investigate all matters where there is a case to do so. This is regardless of role or rank within the organization.
- iv. CNI SBSS will take any disciplinary action necessary against staff or others if they are found to have breached our Code of Conduct and Safeguarding Policy.
- v. The organization will not tolerate anyone who wishes to seek or carry out retaliatory action against complainants, survivors, witnesses, the Subject(s) of Complaint, investigators or anyone else involved in a safeguarding investigation.
- vi. All documents and data related to the issues raised will be maintained and safely kept.
- vii. CNI SBSS will report safeguarding concerns to relevant stakeholders whenever it is required to donors, legal authorities.

III. Safeguarding Focal Person:

1. Amy Mookerji

Email: amy@cnisbss.org

Mobile 8130591956

2. Shailja Dungdung

Email: shailjadungdung@cnisbss.org

Mobile: 9939559568

IV. Support for the Survivors of Abuse:

- i. Whenever required CNI SBSS will support the complainant by referring to other organization for counseling and other legal support if needed on the case to case basis
- ii. CNI SBSS will provide assistance as and when it is required to the police or other legal entity in their investigation process

7. Associated Policies:

- i. Child Safeguarding Policy
- ii. HR policy (which includes Sexual Harassment at workplace)

- iii. Gender policy

8. Recruitment:

- i. CNI SBSS will ensure that proper background check be done of people applying for different position in the organization
- ii. CNI SBSS will not hire anyone who has a history of any case of abuse- against children, women and vulnerable adults.
- iii. Safeguarding aspect of the role will be discussed with the newly hired staff
- iv. CNI SBSS Code of conduct will be signed and new recruits will be trained on Safeguarding aspect and related policies

9. Code of Conduct and Responsibilities:

All staff, trustees, consultants and volunteers and representatives of CNI SBSS must follow the Code of Conduct. The following are relevant to safeguarding.

As a representative of CNI SBSS, **I will** adhere to the following:

- i. I will maintain my conduct in the best professional way, keeping the standard, beliefs and values of CNI SBSS.
- ii. I will treat everyone equally, with respect and dignity
- iii. I will create and maintain a safe and equitable organizational culture that prevents and opposes any form of abuse: emotional, mental, verbal, sexual harassment, exploitation and abuse.
- iv. I will treat everyone with dignity and respect and challenge attitudes and behaviours that disregard CNI SBSS Safeguarding Policy and Safeguarding Code of Conduct.
- v. I will immediately report any concerns I have regarding possible violations of the CNI SBSS Safeguarding Policy or Safeguarding Code of Conduct, whether by an Employee or by Related Personnel. I understand that failure to report any concerns may lead to disciplinary action. I will ensure I am aware of the options available to me to report and that when I report a concern or allegation, I will do so confidentially.

- vi. I will share sensitive information I may be aware of that relates to concerns of harassment, exploitation and any form of abuse , whether involving staff, program participants or others in the communities where CNI SBSS works, through the reporting options available to me. I understand that for respect, dignity and safety of everyone involved, it is essential that I maintain confidentiality about any concerns or information I am aware of and only share information with management and the focal person.
- vii. I am aware that breach of this policy may put others at risk and will therefore result in disciplinary procedures.

I will not:

- i. I will not abuse my position as a CNI SBSS representative/staff/volunteer/ by requesting any personal service or favour from the beneficiaries or others in return for any assistance during project delivery.
- ii. I will not degrade, humiliate anyone or use offensive language, or misuse my position as a representative/staff/volunteer of CNI SBSS.
- iii. I will not have sexual relations with children (defined as under 18 years old) and any of the beneficiaries/ the community I work in; I will ensure that my relationships and behaviour are not exploitative, abusive or corrupt in any way.
- iv. I will not disregard the opinions of my colleagues and will treat everyone equally and will maintain healthy and respectful relation and will not harass/exploit/intimidate anyone on the basis of their caste, class, gender, ethnicity, disability.
- v. I will not support or take part in any form of exploitative or abusive activities, including, for example, child pornography, trafficking of human beings or child marriage.
- vi. I will not use language or behaviour towards anyone at work with colleagues or with any of the beneficiaries/community I work with, that is inappropriate, harassing, abusive, sexually provocative, demeaning or culturally inappropriate.

- vii. I will not be involved in theft, of physical items and intellectual property including data
- viii. I will not be involved in taking or giving or soliciting bribes or any illegal gratification.
- ix. I will not misuse any form of social media, or share inappropriate information, images, videos which can harm the organization or any individual.

10.MANAGEMENT RESPONSIBILITIES

The management CNI SBSS has a responsibility to ensure that all staff is aware of this safeguarding policy, that they understand what it means in concrete behavioral terms and how it applies to their program context.

The Safeguarding Code of Conduct is read and signed by all associated with CNI SBSS and also included in staff orientation package and all new comers are oriented about this policy.

The CNI SBSS board will approve this Safeguarding Policy and will ensure that all the staff adheres to its principles and if anybody breaches the Code of Conduct, he/she will be dealt according to the policy.

11. POLICY REVIEW

- The Safeguarding policy is approved by Board on March 2022.
- This policy will be reviewed every 3 years.



ANNEXURES

CNI SBSS REPORTING FORM

In the event of a Safeguarding incident, the following procedure should be followed

- For all safeguarding incidents, complete this form and submit it to SMT members/ Safeguarding focal persons

Personal Information		
Your name:		Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/>
Age:		
Address		
Tel No:		Mob:
E-mail:		
Whose concerns are being reported?		
Are you reporting your own concerns or responding to concerns raised by someone else?		
My own concerns <input type="checkbox"/> Someone else's concerns <input type="checkbox"/>	If someone else's concerns, their details:	
	Name:	
	Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/>	
	Age:	
	Village/Block/state	
	Contact details:	
Person(s) involved in the incident or alleged to have caused the incident:		
Name:	Age:	Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/>
Address:		
Telephone Number:	Mobile:	
E-mail address:	Position in organization:	

Incident Information:	
What Happened?	
Where did it happen? (Location and address):	
How did it Happen?	
When did it happen? (Time and date)	
When was it reported? (Time and date)	
Who was it reported to?	Tel No:
Who was it reported by?	Tel No:
Any witnesses? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Witness name and contact details:
	Witness 1:
	Witness 2:
Has the incident been reported to any external agencies? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Which Agency was it reported to?
	When was it reported? (time & date):
	Who reported it? (name & contact details):
	Agreed actions/Advice given:

Action taken form:

To be filled by the SMT members/Safeguarding focal person after the incident has been reported

Actions taken and Follow Up Actions			
Actions taken and recommended follow up action:			
SMT members/Focal person informed? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	When? (time & date):		
	By Whom? (name & contact details):		
	By Whom? (name & contact details):		
	Is further action required to encourage them back into the sport?		
Additional Information			
Individual Completing the Form			
Signature	Name	Position	Date
Organisation Official (Committee Member)			
Signature	Name	Position	Date

UNDERTAKING

Safeguarding Code of Conduct

I have read and understood and I am in agreement with the content of this document. I affirm that I accept the consequences of any violation of any of the above provisions under this Safeguarding Policy. I shall adhere to the guidelines and assure that I will serve the organization with integrity and utmost commitment to uphold the dignity, freedom and protection of every individual.

I have read the CNI SBSS Safeguarding Policy and Safeguarding Code of Conduct. I am aware that CNI SBSS expects me to uphold at all times the standards of behaviour described in the Safeguarding Code of Conduct above. I also understand that disciplinary measures and/or legal steps will be taken if I am found to be in breach of the Safeguarding policy Safeguarding Code of Conduct.

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- ix. I will not misuse any form of social media, or share inappropriate information, images, videos which can harm the organization or any individual.

Name: _____
Position/Designation: _____
Signature: _____
Date: _____
Place: _____

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