

CANADEM Safeguarding Policy

September 2023

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to protect people, particularly children, at risk-adults and beneficiaries of assistance, from any harm that may be caused by CANADEM. The policy lays out the commitments made by CANADEM, and informs staff and associated personnel of their responsibilities in relation to safeguarding. This includes:

- The conduct of staff and personnel contracted by or otherwise engaged by CANADEM
- The conduct of associated personnel whilst engaged with work or visits related to CANADEM, including but not limited to the following: consultants; volunteers; contractors; programme visitors including journalists, celebrities and politicians
- The design and implementation of CANADEM's programmes and activities

What is Safeguarding?

Safeguarding means protecting people's health, wellbeing and human rights, and enabling them to live free from harm, abuse and neglect.

In our sector, we understand it to mean protecting people, including children and at-risk adults, from harm that arises from coming into contact with our staff or programmes.

Further definitions relating to safeguarding are provided in the glossary below.

Policy Statement

CANADEM believes that everyone we come into contact with, regardless of race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status including age, gender identity, disability, sexual orientation or ethnic origin has the right to be protected from all forms of harm, abuse, neglect and exploitation. CANADEM will not tolerate abuse and exploitation by staff or associated personnel.

This policy addresses the following areas of safeguarding: child safeguarding, adult safeguarding, and protection from sexual exploitation and abuse.

CANADEM commits to addressing safeguarding throughout its work, through the three pillars of prevention, reporting and response.

Prevention

CANADEM responsibilities

- Ensure all staff have access to, are familiar with, and know their responsibilities within this policy
- Design and undertake all programmes and activities in a way that protects people from any risk of harm that may arise from their contact with CANADEM
- Implement stringent safeguarding procedures when recruiting, managing and deploying staff and associated personnel
- Ensure staff receive training on safeguarding at a level commensurate with their role in the organization
- Follow up on reports of safeguarding concerns promptly and according to due process

CANADEM staff and associated personnel responsibilities

Child safeguarding

CANADEM staff and associated personnel must not:

- Engage in sexual activity with anyone under the age of 18
- Sexually abuse or exploit children
- Subject a child to physical, emotional or psychological abuse, or neglect
- Engage in any commercially exploitative activities with children including child labour or trafficking

Adult safeguarding

CANADEM staff and associated personnel must not abuse anyone, but in particular they must not:

- Sexually abuse or exploit at-risk adults
- Subject an at-risk adult to physical, emotional or psychological abuse, or neglect

Protection from sexual exploitation and abuse

CANADEM staff and associated personnel must not:

- Exchange money, employment, goods or services for sexual activity
- Engage in any sexual relationships with beneficiaries of assistance, since they are based on inherently unequal power dynamics and constitute sexual exploitation

Additionally, CANADEM staff and associated personnel are obliged to:

- Contribute to creating and maintaining an environment that prevents safeguarding violations and promotes the implementation of the Safeguarding Policy

- Report any concerns or suspicions regarding safeguarding violations by a CANADEM staff member or associated personnel to the appropriate staff member

Enabling Reports

CANADEM will ensure that safe, appropriate, accessible means of reporting safeguarding concerns are made available to staff, associated personnel, and the communities we work with.

Individuals reporting concerns or complaints through formal whistleblowing channels (or if they request it) will be protected by CANADEM's Disclosure of Malpractice in the Workplace Policy.

CANADEM will also accept complaints from external sources such as members of the public, partners and official bodies.

Reporting a safeguarding concern

Individuals who have a complaint or concern relating to safeguarding should report it immediately to CANADEM's Safeguarding Focal Point (the Deputy Executive Director), or a supervisor. If the individual does not feel comfortable reporting to the Safeguarding Focal Point or a supervisor (for example if they feel that the report will not be taken seriously, or if that person is implicated in the concern) they may report to any other appropriate staff member. For example, this could be any senior manager or the CANADEM Executive Director.

Response

CANADEM will follow up safeguarding reports and concerns according to policy and procedure, and legal and statutory obligations (see related procedures for reporting and response to safeguarding concerns).

CANADEM will apply appropriate disciplinary measures to staff or associated personnel found in breach of policy.

CANADEM will offer support to survivors of harm caused by staff or associated personnel, regardless of whether a formal internal response is carried out (such as an internal investigation). Decisions regarding support will be led by the survivor.

Confidentiality

It is essential that confidentiality is maintained at all stages of the process when dealing with safeguarding concerns. Information relating to the concern and subsequent case management should be shared on a need to know basis only, and should be kept secure at all times.

Glossary of Terms

Child

A person below the age of 18.

Harm

Psychological, physical and any other infringement of an individual's rights.

Psychological harm

Emotional or psychological abuse, including (but not limited to) humiliating and degrading treatment such as bad name calling, constant criticism, belittling, persistent shaming, solitary confinement and isolation.

Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA)

The prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse of affected populations by staff or associated personnel. The term derives from the United Nations Secretary General's Bulletin on Special Measures for Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (ST/SGB/2003/13).

Safeguarding

Safeguarding means protecting peoples' health, wellbeing and human rights, and enabling them to live free from harm, abuse and neglect. There is particular attention paid to preventing and responding to harm from any potential, actual or attempted abuse of power, trust, or vulnerability, especially for sexual purposes.

CANADEM understands safeguarding to mean protecting people, particularly children and at-risk adults, from harm from contact with its staff or programmes. This includes 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. It requires accountable and transparent systems for response, reporting and learning when risks materialise. Those systems must be survivor-centred and also protect those accused until proven guilty.

Sexual abuse

The actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force or under unequal or coercive conditions.

Sexual exploitation

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. This definition includes human trafficking and modern slavery.

Survivor

The person who has been abused or exploited. The term 'survivor' is often used in preference to 'victim' as it implies strength, resilience and the capacity to survive; however, it is the individual's choice how they wish to identify themselves.

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, illness or circumstances; 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.