

# Protecting Environment and Children Everywhere

## PEaCE/ ECPAT Sri Lanka

### RECRUITING POLICIES FOR EMPLOYEES

#### **Purpose:**

The purpose of this recruitment policy is to ensure the safety and protection of children by preventing and addressing instances of sexual abuse within our non-profit organization. This policy aims to outline the strict guidelines and procedures to be followed during the recruitment, selection, and hiring of personnel.

#### **1. Prohibition of Sexual Abuse:**

- Our organization strictly prohibits any form of sexual abuse, exploitation, or inappropriate behaviour towards children.
- Sexual abuse includes, but is not limited to, any sexual conduct, harassment, or exploitation, both physical and non-physical, such as inappropriate touching, exposing children to sexual materials, or engaging in sexual relationships with minors.
- The organization is committed to preventing, detecting, and addressing any instances of sexual abuse committed by its employees, volunteers, or associates.

#### **2. Screening and Certification Requirements:**

- All prospective employees, including full-time, part-time, and temporary staff, must undergo a comprehensive background screening process.
- The background screening process will include, but is not limited to, criminal background checks, reference checks, and verification of professional qualifications.
- In addition to criminal background checks, a thorough investigation of any prior cases related to sexual abuse or exploitation will be conducted, including reviewing the prospective employee's history of working with children or vulnerable populations.
- All employees who have direct contact with children, or who may have access to confidential information about children, are required to be certified in child protection through an accredited training programme.

#### **3. Interview Process:**

- During the interview process, candidates will be asked specific questions relating to their experience, knowledge, and ability to interact appropriately with children.
- The interview panel will include at least one member who has received child protection training.

#### **4. Reference Checks:**

- The organization will contact references provided by the candidate to inquire about their abilities, work ethic, and experience working with children, ensuring a particular focus on detecting any signs of inappropriate behaviour or abuse.
- Reference checks will be confidential and will only be disclosed to relevant individuals involved in the hiring process.

## **5. Reporting Obligations:**

- All employees are required to report any suspicions, concerns, or allegations of sexual abuse or inappropriate behaviour towards children immediately to their supervisor or the executive director.
- The organization shall maintain a strict policy of non-retaliation against any employee who reports such incidents, ensuring confidentiality to the best extent possible.

## **6. Ongoing**

Training and Awareness:

- All employees, including management, must undergo regular training sessions and workshops on child protection and recognizing signs of sexual abuse.
- The organization will provide resources and information on appropriate boundaries, professional conduct, and the reporting process.
- Ongoing awareness campaigns and reminders will be implemented to maintain a culture of vigilance and responsibility towards child protection.
- Response and Investigation Procedures:
  - In case of any reports or suspicions of sexual abuse, the organization will initiate a thorough investigation in accordance with local laws and guidelines.
  - The investigation will be conducted by individuals trained in handling such cases, ensuring confidentiality, fairness, and impartiality.
  - Substantiated cases of sexual abuse will result in immediate termination of the employee involved and reporting to appropriate authorities as required by law.

## **8. Cooperation with Authorities:**

- The organization commits to cooperate fully with any legal investigations related to cases of sexual abuse or exploitation.
- The organization will provide information, evidence, and support as required to hold accountable any individual responsible for such acts.

## **9. Policy Acknowledgement:**

- All employees, volunteers, and associates will be required to read, understand, and sign an acknowledgement form indicating they have received and understand the organization's hiring policy, including the provisions regarding sexual abuse prevention and reporting obligations.
- Failure to comply with the hiring policy, including any instances of sexual abuse or failure to report suspicions, may result in immediate termination or other disciplinary actions, as deemed appropriate by the organization.

## **10. Periodic Policy Review:**

- This recruiting policy will be periodically reviewed and updated to ensure alignment with local laws, regulations, and best practices in child protection.
- The organization will provide opportunities for feedback and suggestions from employees, volunteers, and stakeholders to continuously enhance the effectiveness of this policy.

By implementing and adhering to this recruitment policy, PEaCE demonstrates its commitment to preventing sexual exploitation and abuse of children and creating a safe environment for all children involved in our programmes and activities.