



CODE OF CONDUCT

Effective from 1st July 2011

1. Standards of conduct

The Volunteer Code of Conduct sets the standards of individual behaviour required of all people assigned overseas through the Australian Volunteers for International Development Program.

The code is designed to ensure that all volunteers are aware of their obligations and responsibilities as part of a program funded through the Australian Government. Compliance with the code helps to ensure the:

- maintenance of the excellent reputation enjoyed overseas by Australia's international volunteers, and
- continuing public confidence within Australia of the integrity and efficacy of international volunteering programs.

Adherence to the Australian Volunteers for International Development Program volunteer Code of Conduct is a requirement for all volunteers in line with contractual obligations between the Commonwealth of Australia and Australian Volunteers International.

1.1 Laws of the host country

- I will abide by all the laws, regulations and workplace requirements of the country of assignment.
- I will avoid involvement in politics, and refrain from public comment and /or demonstrations on political, cultural and religious matters.
- I will respect the symbols of nationalism and religious practices of the country of assignment.

1.2 Cultural sensitivity

- I will seek, develop and display understanding and sensitivity of local customs, including those relating to personal behaviour and dress.
- I will respect customs that protect local cultural property.
- I will not use my position as a volunteer to request advantages or favours (including



sexual favours).

- I will refuse any financial or material gifts, or promises of such gifts or other advantages, except for small cultural and customary gifts given in appreciation or mutual respect. Gift examples include small handicrafts, food and beverage, and other small items of decoration.
- I will not make personal donations to my host organisation while on assignment, understanding that doing so may have unforeseen consequences for the organisation or my colleagues.

1.3 Working with the host organisation

- I will abide by the workplace policies of my host organisation overseas, and accept that my first line of responsibility is to my host organisation.
- I will not make any change, or agree to any change being made to the nature of my assignment overseas, without prior agreement from both Australian Volunteers International and my host organisation.
- I will undertake my assignment and professional duties diligently and to the best of my ability in line with appropriate professional standards.
- I will not engage in any paid work and/or business enterprise for personal gain in the host country.
- I will not accept any supplementary payment from a government or any other source, even when intended to cover the performance of any additional duties or activities, while on a volunteer assignment funded through the Australian Volunteers for International Development Program, without core partner approval.
- I will not engage in any unpaid part-time work in addition to my volunteer assignment without prior approval from my host organisation and Australian Volunteers International.
- I will advise Australian Volunteers International at the earliest opportunity of any issue that may affect the outcome of the assignment.
- I accept that if I do not meet in good faith my obligations and the terms of my assignment, I may be liable to refund to Australian Volunteers International all expenses incurred as a result of my participation in the program.
- While I understand Australian Volunteers International negotiates in good faith with overseas host organisations and volunteers, and takes responsibility for matters under its direct control, I accept that all arrangements are subject to change due to unforeseen circumstances.
- I understand that significant changes to the nature of my assignment overseas may be subject to approval by the Australian Government through AusAID.



- I am entitled to 1 week leave for 3 months served, and I will not take leave in excess of the assignment's entitlements except with prior explicit approval of Australian Volunteers International and my host organisation.
- I will not leave the country of my volunteer assignment, unless requested by Australian Volunteers International, or unless prior approval has been provided by Australian Volunteers International and my host organisation.

1.4 Limits to work—Medical and legal practitioners

- I will not act as a medical, allied health, or legal professional without adequate professional indemnity, unless I have obtained written approval from Australian Volunteers International.

1.5 Working with my Australian Volunteers International

- I understand that I have chosen to work with Australian Volunteers International for the length of my assignment, and that my personal information may be shared with other agencies delivering the Australian Volunteers program for safety and security purposes, or in the event I apply for another Australian Volunteers assignment with another core partner.
- I understand that I have professional obligations to treat all agency personnel and in particular, in-country personnel with courtesy and respect at all times.
- I understand that any extension or reduction in the duration of my assignment must be negotiated and agreed to by the host organisation and Australian Volunteers International.
- I will follow all safety and security instructions given by Australian Volunteers International during my assignment, and I will keep my program agency informed of movements away from the location of assignment at all times.

1.6 Assignment reporting and monitoring

- Should any issue arise that may affect my personal wellbeing or the outcome of my assignment, I agree to bring this to the immediate attention of my host organisation and Australian Volunteers International.
- I will participate in regular monitoring checks, meetings and reviews with my Australian Volunteers International and/or with AusAID.
- Should any personal conflict or any issue that may adversely affect my personal circumstances arise during my assignment, I will follow the established program communication protocols, including the grievance procedure in the Australian



Volunteers International volunteer guide book.

- I will keep Australian Volunteers International informed of any change in my residential or work addresses throughout the assignment, and will notify Australian Volunteers International of the dates and locations of any travel I undertake.
- I will complete required monitoring and evaluation reports in a timely manner.
- I will ensure that Australian Volunteers International is notified of any potential donations or grants awarded made to the Host Organisation as a result of my assignment.

1.7 Terms and conditions of payment and allowances for work

- I understand that the living and accommodation allowances paid to me by Australian Volunteers International are only to be used while I am in country working on my assignment. Australian Volunteers International will not be liable to pay any living or accommodation allowance or other financial compensation resulting from unforeseen delays in mobilisation.
- If there is a contribution to my assignment by an Australian Partner Organisation or the host organisation, I understand my allowances will be adjusted accordingly.
- I understand that if I leave my assignment before completion, I may be required to repay Australian Volunteers International any allowances paid in advance of the termination date.
- I understand that program provisions and coverage cease as early as my official assignment completion date. This includes medical and travel insurance, emergency assistance, visas, and in-country support. Should I choose to stay in the country past my official assignment completion date I understand that I am responsible for arranging my own insurance cover, and for any costs associated with changing my return flight and visa.

1.8 Appropriate personal behaviour

- I will refrain from any conduct that may bring into disrepute the Australian Government, AusAID, the Australian Volunteers International Development Program, the host government, my overseas host organisation or Australian Volunteers International (where applicable).
- I will refrain from engaging in any fraudulent or dishonest activity or behaviour.
- I will refrain from possessing or using any drug that is illegal either in Australia or the host country, and I will abide by any regulations of the host country in relation to alcohol and drugs of any description.



- I will avoid any form of behaviour that may be considered discriminatory, including on the basis of nationality, ethnicity, gender, political affiliation, culture, religious belief or activity, age, race, sexual orientation, and mental or physical disability or impairment.

1.9 Child protection

- I acknowledge and accept that Australian Volunteers International abides by laws regarding child exploitation, child pornography and the abuse of children.
- I will abide by the policies of Australian Volunteers International to protect the rights of children in all aspects of my assignment.
- I acknowledge and accept that protection of children is in all cases the overriding consideration.

1.10 Health and wellbeing

- I agree to disclose all known pre-existing health conditions, including mental health conditions, as part of the application process.
- I will accept responsibility for maintaining my health and wellbeing.
- I will exercise all reasonable caution when undertaking any activities that may result in harm or injury to me or others.
- I understand that should AusAID and Australian Volunteers International believe that I am a risk to myself or others, it can take whatever steps necessary to ensure my safety and the safety of those around me.
- I will complete a post-placement medical assessment upon completion of my assignment in accordance with Australian Volunteers International procedures.
- I agree to identify, minimise, and optimise management of health risks through a health management plan involving myself, my treating physician, and Australian Volunteers International.

1.11 Safety and security

- I will follow any reasonable instruction by Australian Volunteers International (or its agent) relating to security, and I understand this may include sharing my contact details with fellow volunteers, host organisation, or program agencies.
- I will ensure that Australian Volunteers International knows where I can be contacted at all times, especially in the event of any security risk or emergency.
- I will register and immediately update my personal details with the Australian diplomatic mission responsible for the country in which I am placed.



- I will monitor and take account of the regular travel advisories issued by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.
- Should I wish to take leave from my assignment, I will:
 - obtain permission from my host organisation
 - obtain permission from Australian Volunteers International, giving dates of departure and return, along with a contact address
 - advise the local Australian diplomatic mission, AusAID post or equivalent.
- I will exercise all reasonable caution when undertaking any activities that may result in harm or injury to me or others, such as wearing a motorcycle helmet, bicycle helmet, life-vest, or relevant safety gear.
- I have read and understood the Country Security Plan supplied by Australian Volunteers International.
- To enable effective insurance coverage, I will follow any reasonable instructions from Australian Volunteers International (or agent), and abide by the terms of the insurance policy.
- I understand that following an evacuation situation, Australian Volunteers International will inform me as to if, and when, I am cleared to return. I acknowledge that I cannot return to the country of my assignment without Australian Volunteers International clearance to return.
- I understand that failure to comply with safety and security instructions may result in termination from the program.

1.12 Representation, research, publication and media

- I will not represent myself as an employee or agent of the Australian Government or of Australian Volunteers International.
- I will not issue public statements in any way related to the activities or interests of the Australian Government or the host country without the prior explicit approval of Australian Volunteers International, who will seek permission from AusAID.
- I will seek the prior approval of Australian Volunteers International before: undertaking any research; issuing statements to the press or other agencies of public information; releasing visual information for publication; submitting articles, books or other material for publication or formal research assessment; or taking part in mass communication activities such as social networking, blogs, film, radio or television productions that are in any way related to my assignment—unless these activities are part of my normal assignment duties.



- Where possible, I will participate in promotional activities organised by Australian Volunteers International or AusAID during and after my assignment.

1.13 Privacy and confidentiality

- I will respect the confidentiality of information received during my assignment relating to my Australian Volunteers participants and host organisations.
- I will not disclose, summarise or publish any restricted government documents or confidential information, including reports, to third parties without the authorisation of my host organisation, and/or without obtaining prior consent from the appropriate national authority.
- I understand Australian Volunteers International will comply with the *Privacy Act 1988* and the Information Privacy Principles when handling any personal, sensitive or health information as defined in section 6 of the *Privacy Act 1988*.

1.14 Grievance and dispute resolution

- Should a grievance arise during my assignment, I will first make all attempts to resolve the situation locally. If this is unsuccessful, I will notify Australian Volunteers International according to the Grievance Policy outlined in the volunteer guide book. After exhausting all these procedures with Australian Volunteers International, I will refer any irreconcilable concerns to the Volunteer Unit, AusAID, Canberra.

1.15 Recognition of risk

- I understand and recognise that there is significant potential health and other hazards (both foreseeable and unforeseeable) associated with participating in volunteer assignments.
- Both through the information provided by Australian Volunteers International and my own efforts, I have obtained enough information to make an informed decision about the risks of participating in this assignment.
- Despite these potential risks, and after considered evaluation of the conditions under which I will be living and working, I have decided to participate in this program.

1.16 Consequences of violations

- Breaches of this code of conduct may require the termination of a volunteer assignment.



2. References for further information, terms and conditions

- Please refer to the volunteer guidebook of Australian Volunteers International for additional terms and conditions and/or further information.



3. Declaration of agreement and acceptance of enforceability of Australian Volunteers International Code of Conduct

Declaration

By signing this declaration, I confirm and accept that:

- I am being placed into a program or project administered by Australian Volunteers International (the 'assignment')
- my conduct during the assignment is governed by the standards defined in this volunteer code of conduct
- I will abide by all the provisions of this code of conduct during the term of the assignment
- my failure to comply with the standards of the volunteer code of conduct may result in termination of my volunteer assignment
- in the event of the early termination from a volunteer assignment or early departure from the assignment, I agree to repay any advance allowances provided to me by Australian Volunteers International
- In the event that Australian Volunteers International cancels the assignment for any breaches of this code of conduct, I will have no claims against the agency or the Commonwealth of Australia in respect to any losses as a result of the end of the assignment
- I am responsible for ensuring that any member of family or other person authorised to accompany me will comply with this code of conduct
- I have read and understood the:
 - assignment terms and conditions agreement for my assignment.
 - guidebook for volunteers of the Australian Volunteers International.
 - specified policies of Australian Volunteers International and the host organisation relevant to my assignment.

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Name in full (please print)

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Signature

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Date