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Volunteer Code of Conduct

Our Commitment

Habitat for Humanity New York City and Westchester County, Inc. ("Habitat") is committed to creating safe, welcoming, and respectful environments for all our stakeholders, volunteers, staff, homeowners, and community members.

By volunteering with Habitat, you agree to follow our Code of Conduct and to act in ways that uphold the dignity, safety, and rights of all people.

Failure to follow this Code of Conduct may result in immediate dismissal from your volunteer role, prohibition from future volunteer opportunities, and potentially civil and or criminal action depending on the circumstances.

1. Respect, Dignity, and Inclusion

All volunteers are expected to treat others with respect, courtesy, and dignity at all times.

Harassment, discrimination, or retaliation of any kind is strictly prohibited. Habitat maintains a zero-tolerance policy for behavior that is humiliating, demeaning, threatening, abusive, or otherwise inappropriate.

This includes but is not limited to harassment or discrimination based on any protected characteristic under applicable law, including but not limited to:

- Age
- Race or traits historically associated with race (including hair texture and protective hairstyles such as braids, locks, and twists)
- Color
- Religion (including religious clothing or grooming practices)
- Gender, gender identity or expression (including transgender identity)
- Sexual orientation
- Ethnicity or ancestry
- National origin
- Disability
- Marital, familial, partnership, or caregiver status
- Height or weight
- Any other protected status under federal, New York State, or New York City law

Habitat does not tolerate harassment by volunteers toward staff, other volunteers, homeowners, community members, customers, or anyone. Retaliation against someone who raises a concern or reports misconduct in good faith is also strictly prohibited.

2. Safeguarding and Protection from Abuse

All volunteers must act in ways that protect children, vulnerable adults, Habitat homeowners, community members staff, and other volunteers.

- Exploitation, abuse, or inappropriate relationships and/or conduct - physical, emotional, or sexual - are prohibited.
- Volunteers must follow all safeguarding rules and expectations set by Habitat for Humanity International and local Habitat leadership.
- View our [safeguarding orientation video](#) in English or [with Spanish subtitles](#) to learn more about what safeguarding is, how to recognize safeguarding violations and how to report them.

3. Health and Safety

Safety is essential to Habitat's work.

- Follow all safety rules and instructions on volunteer sites.
- Do not participate in activities that place yourself or others at risk.
- Report unsafe conditions, injuries, or hazards immediately to a Habitat staff member or site supervisor.

Failure to follow safety rules may result in removal from the site and prohibition from future volunteering.

4. Alcohol, Drugs, and Weapons

To maintain a safe environment:

- Alcohol is **not permitted** on any Habitat volunteer site, even if allowed by local law.
- Illegal drugs and weapons are strictly prohibited on any Habitat property or during volunteer activity.
- Volunteering while intoxicated or impaired from alcohol or drug use is strictly prohibited.

5. Gifts and Financial Integrity

To prevent misunderstandings or harm:

- Volunteers should not give or receive gifts with Habitat homeowners, community members, beneficiaries, or customers without permission from Habitat staff.
- Volunteers must not steal, misuse, or improperly benefit from Habitat funds, materials, tools, or property.

Fraud, theft, or misuse of Habitat resources will result in immediate dismissal and legal action.

6. Privacy and Confidentiality

Volunteers must respect the privacy and dignity of others.

- Do not share confidential or personal information about volunteers, staff, homeowners, or community members.
- Social media use must respect privacy and dignity. Volunteers should not post identifiable information or images of homeowners or beneficiaries without prior approval.

7. Speak Up: Reporting Concerns

Habitat encourages a “**see something, say something**” culture.

If you witness or experience misconduct, harassment, discrimination, safety concerns, or violations of this Code:

- Report concerns to Habitat by emailing: safeguarding@habitatnycwc.org

Raising concerns in good faith will **not** result in retaliation.

8. Consequences for Violations

Habitat reserves the right to take appropriate action if this Code of Conduct is violated.

Consequences may include:

- Immediate removal from a volunteer site
- Dismissal from your volunteer role
- Barring from future volunteer opportunities
- Civil and criminal action

Volunteer Acknowledgment

☐ **I acknowledge that:**

- I have read and understand this Volunteer Code of Conduct
- I have viewed the [safeguarding orientation video](#) in English or [with Spanish subtitles](#) .
- I agree to follow these standards while volunteering with Habitat
- I understand that failure to comply may result in dismissal and exclusion from future volunteer opportunities as well as appropriate civil and criminal action

Volunteer Name: _____

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

If volunteer is under 18 years old:

Parent or Guardian Name: _____

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Name of parent or guardian: _____