

Policy: Code of Conduct (Volunteers)

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Applicable to: Board members and volunteers		Date of Last Review: 04-Jan-2023	

POLICY: Volunteers are expected to comply with all applicable laws, Threads of Life policies and procedures, and to carry out their duties and conduct our relationships with integrity, honesty and fairness. Threads of Life will provide volunteers with rules and guidelines regarding ethical behaviour and will be held responsible for actions they take on behalf of the organization.

RATIONALE: Threads of Life’s Code of Conduct provides rules and guidelines for ethical behaviour based on our organization’s mission, vision and values and reinforces its support for a working environment in which people are respected and its sensitivity to the needs of the community which it serves.

PROCEDURE: Threads of Life’s Code of Conduct

The Board of Directors promotes the highest standards of ethical behaviour. This Code of Conduct has been established to provide the appropriate guidelines.

Mission, Vision and Values

Threads of Life will undertake to ensure employees and volunteers understand our mission, vision and values and abide by their direction and intent while they carry out their duties and conduct their relationships on behalf of the organization.

Our Mission:

Our mission is to help families heal through a community of support and to promote the elimination of life-altering workplace injuries, illnesses and deaths.

Our Vision:

Threads of Life will lead and inspire a culture shift as a result of which work-related injuries, illnesses and deaths are morally, socially and economically unacceptable.

Our Values:

Our family support charity believes in:

- Caring: Caring helps and heals
- Listening: Listening can ease pain and suffering
- Sharing: Sharing our personal losses will lead to healing and preventing future devastating work-related losses
- Respect: Personal experiences of loss and grief need to be honoured and respected
- Health: Health and safety begin in our heads, hearts and hands, in everyday actions



Association for Workplace Tragedy Family Support

- Passion: Passionate individuals can change the world

Personal Integrity

Volunteers shall act with competence, honesty, integrity and fairness while carrying out their obligations for Threads of Life.

Role

The primary role of Threads of Life is to provide a community of support for families living with the outcome of a work-related injury, illness or death. The Board, staff and volunteers will act in the best interests of Threads of Life in fulfilling its mission.

Conflict of Interest

A conflict of interest exists when the organization is used, or perceived to be used, for personal gain or for the benefit of another organization. A conflict of interest occurs whenever our personal interests interfere in any way with the interests of Threads of Life. In order for Threads of Life to carry out its business effectively, it must be assured of its employees', Board of Directors' and volunteers' loyalty. They must therefore refrain from entering into relationships that might impair their judgement as to what is best for the organization. Even relationships that create the appearance of a conflict of interest should be avoided. We cannot avoid these standards by acting through someone else, such as a friend or family member (which includes our spouse, domestic partner, children, parents, in-laws and siblings). There are many different ways in which conflicts of interest arise. For example, personal financial interests, obligations to another company or government entity, or the desire to help a relative or friend are all factors that might lead to a conflict of interest or the appearance of a conflict of interest.

Any Director or volunteer, who has a conflict of interest, or a potential conflict of interest, with any activity or program, shall not serve in that particular activity or program on behalf of Threads of Life. He or she must declare the conflict of interest immediately to his or her Manager or the Executive Director. The Executive Director would report to the Board of Directors; staff would report to the Executive Director; and volunteers would report to their Manager.

Volunteers will inform the Manager or the Executive Director by email or verbally as to the nature of the conflict of interest. It is the responsibility of every Board Member to declare any conflict or perceived conflict of interest at every meeting of the Board of Directors. If any Board Member declares a conflict or perceived conflict of interest on issues discussed, the Board Members would speak to the Chair and remove themselves from the discussion or the vote as appropriate.

If in doubt, volunteers will bring any conflict of interest issue forward to the Executive Director. If the Executive Director cannot resolve the issue, he or she will convene a meeting with three Board Members to resolve the issue.

Confidential or Privileged Information

Threads of Life Directors and volunteers are responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of all privileged or personal information to which they are exposed. Individuals who do not maintain confidentiality could have their volunteer position terminated or face corrective action by the Threads of Life Board of Directors.

Confidential and privileged information includes all information acquired by an individual during any and/or all activities of Threads of Life. It includes but is not limited to:

- Information gathered about donors, participants and employees of any Threads of Life program;
- Organization financial information, report and results;
- Business or strategic plans and

Confidentiality of this information continues indefinitely after the relationship with Threads of Life has ceased.

Volunteers are required to review this policy and sign the Annual Review Documentation, which means:

- You understand that some of the information and the documentation with which you may be working will be confidential, and that it is expected of you not to use any confidential information in a way that might adversely affect the interests of Threads of Life, its volunteers or stakeholders;
- You agree that, except as you may be legally authorized or required, you will not disclose or give any person any information or document that comes to your knowledge, or possession by reason of your participation with Threads of Life; and
- You accept this condition as being part of your responsibility as a volunteer for Threads of Life and failure to comply may result in the termination of your relationship with Threads of Life.

Exceptions to the confidentiality rule:

Information from Threads of Life Directors, staff, volunteers or other participants may be shared with individuals or organizations as specified below under the following conditions:

- According to Canadian law, if an individual has reasonable grounds to suspect that a child, under the age of sixteen, is or may be in the need of protection, the person must promptly report the suspicion and the information upon which it is based, to a children's aid society (*Child Welfare Act*)
- If an individual suspects that a family member may be in danger of seriously harming themselves, or others, the individual may seek advice or consultation that

- could result in breaching confidentiality. This could result in contacting the authorities and/or contacting a third party; and
- If called upon (subpoenaed) to testify in court.
 - Where individuals and/or organizations provide information in response to an arrangement to share contact information, such as:
 - Volunteer Family Guides who would like to share contact information with other Volunteer Family Guides to extend their personal and professional development network,
 - Sharing contact information between a Speakers Bureau client with the volunteer's consent, or
 - Providing a trained Volunteer Family Guide with contact information for a family member who wishes to be connected with a Volunteer Family Guide.

Dress Code:

Maintaining a professional, business-like appearance is very important to the success of Threads of Life. Each volunteer projects the reputation of the organization. Part of this impression depends on each volunteer's choice of dress.

Volunteers are expected to use good judgment and to show courtesy to their co-workers by dressing in a manner that is presentable and appropriate. While attending business meetings, speaking opportunities, trade shows, etc, they should dress in appropriate business attire.

Any questions related to the appropriate dress per event, should be directed to the appropriate manager.

Discrimination and Harassment

Threads of Life is committed to fostering a working environment built on trust and respect for one another. Threads of Life:

- Recognizes the intrinsic dignity and worth of all volunteers and staff;
- Enables all volunteers and staff to work without fear of intimidation, discrimination, or harassment; and
- Encourages open and honest communication.

Threads of Life prohibits all types of unlawful discrimination, including harassment. This specifically includes discrimination based on: race, sex (including pregnancy or childbirth), national or ethnic origin, sexual orientation, colour, marital status, religion, family status, physical or mental disabilities, conviction for which a pardon has been granted, age.

Discrimination and harassment are serious offences and may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal and/or prosecution. Note: Showing undue preference for someone (i.e. favouritism) is just as unethical as discrimination.

Prescription, Over the Counter, Recreational Drug and Alcohol Use

Being under stress, fatigue or the influence of a drug while working or volunteering can pose serious safety and health risks, not only for the volunteer, but to all those who work with or otherwise come into contact with the volunteer.

All Threads of Life volunteers must be aware of the following prohibited behaviours and requirements:

- The manufacture, distribution, possession, use, sale, transfer, purchase, or transport of illegal drugs while on the job poses unacceptable risks for safe, healthful, and efficient operations and will be considered a violation of this policy.
- Reporting to work in an apparent unfit or unsafe condition; and conduct of a similar nature due to the effects of drugs is prohibited.
- No volunteer who has consumed drugs and is still unfit or unsafe shall continue to perform their work duties, including driving a motor vehicle, until the volunteer is fit for work.
- Individuals must ensure that any prescription or non-prescription medication is taken safely.
- Where volunteer reports a medically prescribed treatment or reports that he or she is taking medication, which may impair that individual's ability to perform his or her role, Threads of Life may require the individual to submit a medical note from the treating licensed physician
- Volunteers who are on Threads of Life business or on Threads of Life property must comply with all local, provincial, and federal laws.

Volunteers have the responsibility to ensure that they are in a safe state to work at the start of and throughout the work period. They also have a duty to identify and report safety issues to Threads of Life. Threads of Life realizes that drug and alcohol dependence is considered a disability under the Human Rights Code.

Responsibilities and Signoff

Program Manager's Responsibilities

Threads of Life's Program Managers have a duty to uphold the organization's reputation for integrity, honesty, and ethical conduct. This means:

- Setting an example by complying with the Code of Conduct at all times;

- Ensuring volunteers and employees have a copy of the Code of Conduct policy and that they understand and comply with its provisions;
- Creating and maintaining a work environment that encourages ethical behaviour;
- Fostering an environment of open communication in which problems may be raised and discussed without fear of reprisal;
- Immediately reporting, to the Executive Director, any apparent violation of the Code of Conduct or breach of policy; and
- Taking prompt and decisive disciplinary action when it has been proved that the Code of Conduct has been violated.

Volunteers' Responsibilities

Volunteers of Threads of Life are required to comply with the Code of Conduct and follow all policies and procedures. Breaching the Code of Conduct and violating the organization's policy may result in disciplinary action, as well as civil or criminal prosecution. In addition volunteers must:

- Perform their roles and conduct their business affairs ethically, legally and with the utmost integrity; and
- Seek advice or help when faced with a difficult ethical situation.

Period of Review

Volunteers are expected to review the Code of Conduct once every two years. Any volunteer who has an actual or potential conflict of interest must contact the Executive Director immediately.

REFERENCED

DOCUMENTS:

- TM-HS-03 Workplace Violence & Harassment Prevention Policy
- TM-HR-07 Prescription, Over the Counter, Recreational Drug and Alcohol Use (Volunteer)
- PA-03 Privacy
- Documentation Review - Volunteers ([live link](#))