

Code of Conduct Eye Care Foundation

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Introduction

ECF helps prevent and cures avoidable blindness and visual impairment in developing countries. In our vision everyone has an equal chance to build a future for themselves with clear vision. We want to contribute to a future in which people have the opportunity to develop themselves to their full potential, are able to take care of themselves and do not have to depend on others.

In our work we make no distinction between religion, race, ethnicity, or sexual orientation. People are treated equally. In line with this, we also treat colleagues and partners in an equal and respectful way.

Our Code of Conduct expressly lays out the expectations of ethical behaviour for all the people of ECF. The aim of the code of conduct is to provide individuals with guidance in support of expected conduct.

The basic principles of our Code of Conduct are:

- Our cooperation is based on mutual respect
- We are open and honest in our communication
- We conduct our work in a fair and ethical manner

To achieve this, ECF thinks it is important that:

- Employees will be coached and guided by their supervisors and colleagues in order to perform well, based on ECF's principles
- A good performance is a responsibility of both: employer and employee.
- It is the responsibility of the supervisor to thoroughly go through the Code of Conduct with each employee to secure a proper understanding of the Code, as well as understanding of the consequences of any breach of it.
- All employees have a responsibility to familiarize themselves with the Code of Conduct.

Scope

The Code of Conduct applies for all who work on behalf of ECF, regardless of location, or type of contract. In this context, 'staff' includes persons on a voluntarily assignment, as an employee in the office in Amsterdam or at one of the ECF offices abroad, and volunteers. They all will all be referred to as staff. This does not include consultants executing a temporary assignment and trainees.

General

- ECF staff must not engage in conduct that interferes with ECF operations, discredits ECF or is offensive to co-workers, partners, donors, beneficiaries, or visitors.
- ECF staff is to understand that each country has its own laws and standards of acceptable conduct including dress, manners, morals, politics, use of drugs and alcohol and behaviour.
- ECF staff is to recognize that behaviour, which violates laws and standards, could harm ECF 's reputation and relations with partners. ECF hereto expects all staff to be aware of such laws and standards and adhere to them.

- ECF does not seek to restrict employee’s activities in their private lives. Nevertheless, employees are reminded that also at private time they can in fact be perceived as representatives of ECF. Employees are therefore expected to behave correctly. And, of course, at all times employees must comply with local laws.
- The employee who feels conscientious objection against specific laws of a country and for that reason experiences problems in performing his duties in that country will deliberate with his manager to come to a satisfactory solution.
- ECF staff will show utmost prudence when being politically active and should refrain from participating in risky demonstrations or overt political actions such as picketing. Employees are asked to ensure that their personal activities, views and opinions are not seen as being the official position of ECF. Expatriate staff should not be involved in any political activities, as ECF wants to be regarded as an impartial and non-political organization.
- ECF staff will respect the safety and security guidelines applicable to them and adhere to directions given by their superiors pertaining to safety and security.
- Unauthorized use, possession, sale or distribution of alcohol or drugs while on ECF premises is prohibited. Being under the influence of alcohol or drugs while working for, or officially representing ECF is prohibited.
- Under no circumstances are ECF staff to be in possession of, or handle, weapons, explosives, or ammunition.
- No material possessions are worth risking the life of a ECF staff member. When faced with a demand under threat for ECF property such as a vehicle, computer, or other equipment they must not resist.
- Private use of ECF property is not permitted unless such has officially been agreed upon and properly documented.
- All ECF staff should be aware of the caritative nature of ECF’s income and contribute to correct use, correct spending and sound accountability and transparency

Abuse of Power

Contributing to the health and wellbeing of the population is a privilege and as a result of ongoing high standards ECF continues to enjoy respect amongst our beneficiaries. Abuse of this respect and status should be avoided any time.

- Employees are not allowed to use the power of their position for their own benefit or for the benefit of family members or friends.
- Kickbacks, bribes, or other forms of personal enrichment are not permitted in any circumstances.

Gifts and favours

It may happen that employees of ECF are offered gifts or favours by beneficiaries, sub-contractors, business partners or clients. Gifts or favours are often offered to promote goodwill and cooperation.

It should never be the intention to favour or influence each other in an improper manner. It is therefore not allowed to offer or accept gifts, or favours for yourself, or family members unless:

- It does not conflict with what is common in the business, and it does not have a high economic value.
- It cannot be seen as a form of bribery or influence.
- It does not conflict with laws and regulations.

When you doubt about whether to give or accept gifts or favours, you are kindly asked to contact the manager or the director about it.

Sexual Behavior

- Employees must behave professionally and respectfully in relation to sexual behavior and expressions, considering the international standards and local laws and prohibitions.
- Regardless of local laws or lack of such laws ECF forbids sexual relationships of any type with any person under the age of 18 years. Mistaken belief in the age of a child is not a defense.
- Sexual relationships with people in a subordinated, or depending position, like program beneficiaries, their family members or persons employed by businesses contracted to ECF, are never permitted.
- Employees should refrain from purchasing (or obtaining through other influence) sexual relationships of any form.
- Employees should refrain from making suggestions, subtle references, or temptations of a sexual nature towards colleagues.

Relationships with other employees

Employees are encouraged to maintain open and professional relationships with each other.

Differences in culture, religion and politics should be respected. It is to be expected that friendships will develop between staff, but such relationships must never interfere with ECF objectives.

Within ECF it is not acceptable that relations between ECF staff will affect the hierarchical and professional relations between colleagues in any way, not in a positive way, nor in a negative way. In such circumstances it will be necessary to reassign the supervisory process.

How to treat the target group

ECF's staff will treat people with visual disabilities in a respectful way and will not take advantage of their situation.

Conflicts of interest

Conflict of interest refers to a situation where someone has multiple interests, in such a way that integrity comes at stake. We speak of conflict of interest when someone decides to act in a certain way, or makes a decision, based on his/her personal interest without taking ECF's interest into account. Not only actual conflicts of interest should be avoided, but also any appearance thereof. Employees must refrain from transactions or relationships that could lead to potential conflicts of interest. Once you find that there is alleged, apparent, potential, or actual conflict of interest, the employee must notify their immediate superior, or the director.

Use of ECF's equipment and materials

- Employees must use ECF's assets like vehicles, computers and other material in accordance with the rules and regulations as stipulated the ECF's guidelines and with care and common sense. The use of ECF's assets is based on and limited to the tasks that derive from the job description.
- Employees are not permitted to use institutional knowledge for personal advancement.

Media Relations

- All media contact must be channeled through (cleared by) the ECF's PR & Communication colleagues in Amsterdam.
- Any requests for personal interviews or comments must be referred to the PR & Communication Unit in the first instance. During business trips, all requests for personal interviews and comments must be channeled through and approved by the ECF's PR & Communication Unit in Amsterdam.
- External communication activities in and from program countries need permission by the director of the concerned ECF-office, who will seek guidance and support by the PR & Communication Unit in Amsterdam.
- All communication by internet (weblogs, discussion panels, uploading photo's, video's etc.) showing, naming, or referring to ECF activities need permission of the PR & Communication Unit.

The use of Internet and e-mail

The use of Internet and e-mail is necessary to perform your job well. However, the use of email and Internet can also negatively interfere with the image of ECF, or even cause damage to the digital information and network. Therefore, the employee needs to be prudent while using Internet and e-mail:

- There is not always a clear distinction between private life and work. Employees can work online at home. Private Internet use is allowed if it does not negatively affect the work for ECF. Visiting illegal or offensive websites or sending offensive or inflammatory mail are prohibited.
- Obviously confidential business information should not be placed on the Internet. But also, private information of others should not be placed on the Internet, without asking officially for permission.
- The employees must realize that almost everything they post on the Internet is seen by third parties and may be used. Moreover, for Internet users it is quite easy to find out your identity by linking different data tracks together. As mentioned before, employees are reminded that also at private time (including the time they spend on the Internet) they can be perceived by others a representative of ECF. Employees are therefore expected to behave accordingly.
- When you work at home, or outside the office (for example on tablets, or private computers) you are solely responsible for ensuring that you adequately protect the access to ECF's software and sensitive information, so that no unauthorized person has access to it.
- It is not permitted to send messages that can cause damage to ECF's network, such as sending messages to large numbers of recipients (spamming), sending chain letters, or sending messages that can introduce viruses, Trojans, or spyware.
- Use for your private mail an external webmail service (like Gmail or Hotmail) and not the address of ECF.
- To prevent spam, you may not use the ECF e-mail address for private matters, or leave the ECF e-mail address on the Internet, for other reasons than business related.

- It is only allowed to use file sharing- or streaming services (such as internet radio and movies) when it is necessary for the job.
- The storage capacity on ECF's servers is ECF's property. Storage capacity of data is costs for the company. Therefore, the use of ECF's server for storing private data, such as music, videos, and photos, is not permitted