

# POLICY ON S.E.A.H.

SEXUAL EXPLOITATION, ABUSE, AND HARASSMENT



Gitanjali Foundation



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# Gitanjali Foundation

## Policy on Sexual Exploitation, Abuse, and Harassment (SEAH)

### Overview:

The Policy on Sexual Exploitation, Abuse, and Harassment (SEAH) of Gitanjali Foundation establishes a comprehensive framework to prevent, address, and respond to all forms of sexual misconduct within the organization and in its operations. This policy reflects our commitment to creating a safe and respectful environment for all individuals associated with the foundation.

### 1. Purpose:

#### The purpose of this policy is to:

- Define and prohibit sexual exploitation, abuse, and harassment.
- Establish clear procedures for preventing, reporting, and addressing SEAH incidents.
- Promote a culture of respect, dignity, and zero tolerance for SEAH.
- Ensure compliance with relevant laws and regulations.

### 2. Scope:

#### This policy applies to:

- All employees, volunteers, and interns of Gitanjali Foundation.
- All contractors, suppliers, partners, and stakeholders associated with the foundation.
- All participants, beneficiaries, and communities involved in the foundation's programs and activities.

### 3. Principles:

- Zero Tolerance: Adopt a zero-tolerance approach to all forms of sexual exploitation, abuse, and harassment.
- Respect and Dignity: Ensure that all individuals are treated with respect and dignity.
- Confidentiality: Maintain confidentiality in all SEAH-related matters to protect the privacy of individuals involved.
- Accountability: Hold individuals accountable for their actions and ensure that SEAH incidents are addressed promptly and effectively.
- Support: Provide support and assistance to survivors of SEAH.



#### **4. Definitions:**

- Sexual Exploitation: Any actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power, or trust for sexual purposes, including profiting monetarily, socially, or politically from the sexual exploitation of another.
- Sexual Abuse: The actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force or under unequal or coercive conditions.
- Sexual Harassment: Any unwelcome sexual advance, request for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature that creates a hostile or intimidating environment.
- Survivor: An individual who has experienced sexual exploitation, abuse, or harassment.

#### **5. Policy Statements:**

##### **5.1 Prohibition of SEAH:**

- All forms of sexual exploitation, abuse, and harassment are strictly prohibited.
- Employees, volunteers, and affiliates must not engage in or tolerate SEAH.

##### **5.2 Reporting Mechanisms:**

- Establish confidential and accessible reporting mechanisms for SEAH incidents.
- Encourage individuals to report SEAH incidents without fear of retaliation or reprisal.

##### **5.3 Response and Support:**

- Provide a prompt, effective, and survivor-centered response to SEAH incidents.
- Offer support services, including medical, psychological, and legal assistance, to survivors of SEAH.

##### **5.4 Prevention Measures:**

- Implement proactive measures to prevent SEAH, including awareness-raising, training, and education.
- Promote a culture of respect and zero tolerance for SEAH within the organization and in the communities we serve.



## **6. Preventive Measures:**

### **6.1 Training and Awareness:**

- Provide mandatory training on SEAH prevention and response for all employees, volunteers, and affiliates.
- Conduct awareness campaigns to educate individuals about SEAH and the importance of maintaining a safe and respectful environment.

### **6.2 Code of Conduct:**

- Develop and enforce a Code of Conduct that outlines expected behaviors and standards regarding SEAH.
- Ensure that all employees, volunteers, and affiliates sign and adhere to the Code of Conduct.

### **6.3 Risk Assessment:**

- Conduct regular risk assessments to identify and mitigate potential SEAH risks in programs and activities.
- Implement measures to reduce identified risks and enhance safety.

### **6.4 Safe Recruitment Practices:**

- Implement safe recruitment practices, including background checks and reference checks, to prevent hiring individuals with a history of SEAH.
- Ensure that job advertisements, descriptions, and interviews emphasize the organization's commitment to preventing SEAH.

## **7. Reporting and Response:**

### **7.1 Reporting Mechanisms:**

- Establish multiple reporting channels, including in-person, online, and anonymous options, to facilitate reporting of SEAH incidents.
- Ensure that reporting mechanisms are widely communicated and accessible to all individuals associated with the foundation.

### **7.2 Investigation Procedures:**

- Investigate all reports of SEAH promptly, thoroughly, and impartially.
- Appoint a trained and independent investigation team to handle SEAH cases to ensure fairness and confidentiality.

### **7.3 Disciplinary Action:**

- Take appropriate disciplinary action against individuals found guilty of SEAH, which may include termination of employment, legal action, and reporting to relevant authorities.

- Ensure that disciplinary actions are consistent and proportionate to the severity of the offense.

## **8. Survivor-Centered Approach:**

### **8.1 Survivor Support:**

- Provide comprehensive support services to survivors of SEAH, including medical care, counseling, and legal assistance.
- Respect the rights, dignity, and choices of survivors throughout the reporting and response process.

### **8.2 Confidentiality and Privacy:**

- Maintain strict confidentiality in handling SEAH reports and investigations to protect the privacy of survivors and other involved parties.
- Ensure that information about SEAH incidents is shared only on a need-to-know basis.

### **8.3 Non-Retaliation:**

- Protect individuals who report SEAH incidents or participate in investigations from retaliation or reprisal.
- Implement measures to ensure that survivors and witnesses are not subjected to further harm or intimidation.

## **9. Monitoring and Evaluation:**

### **9.1 Regular Audits:**

- Conduct regular audits to assess compliance with SEAH policies and procedures.
- Use audit findings to strengthen prevention and response measures and address any identified gaps.

### **9.2 Performance Metrics:**

- Develop metrics to monitor the effectiveness of SEAH prevention and response efforts, such as the number of reported cases, resolution times, and survivor satisfaction.
- Use these metrics to evaluate and improve SEAH policies and procedures continuously.

### **9.3 Feedback and Improvement:**

- Seek feedback from employees, volunteers, survivors, and stakeholders on SEAH prevention and response initiatives.
- Use feedback to update and refine SEAH policies and procedures regularly.



## **10. Roles and Responsibilities:**

### **10.1 Board of Trustees:**

- Provide oversight and ensure that SEAH measures are integrated into the organization's strategic objectives and policies.
- Review and approve significant SEAH policies and procedures.

### **10.2 Executive Committee:**

- Implement the SEAH Policy and ensure compliance across all operations and programs.
- Monitor the effectiveness of SEAH measures and report to the Board.

### **10.3 SEAH Officer:**

- Appoint a SEAH Officer to oversee the implementation of the policy, handle reports of SEAH, and conduct investigations.
- Provide regular updates to the Executive Committee on the status of SEAH efforts.

### **10.4 Employees and Volunteers:**

- Uphold the principles of the SEAH Policy in their daily activities and interactions.
- Report any suspected SEAH promptly through the established reporting mechanisms.

## **11. Communication and Awareness:**

### **11.1 Policy Dissemination:**

- Ensure that the SEAH Policy is accessible to all employees, volunteers, and stakeholders.
- Communicate the policy clearly and regularly through training sessions, newsletters, and the organization's website.

### **11.2 Awareness Campaigns:**

- Conduct awareness campaigns to educate employees, volunteers, and stakeholders about the importance of preventing SEAH and maintaining a safe and respectful environment.
- Use various communication channels, such as workshops, seminars, and online platforms, to reach a broad audience.

## **12. Legal and Regulatory Compliance:**

### **12.1 Compliance with Laws:**

- Ensure that the SEAH Policy complies with all relevant local and international laws and regulations.

- Stay informed about changes in SEAH legislation and update the policy accordingly.

### **12.2 Collaboration with Authorities:**

- Cooperate fully with law enforcement and regulatory authorities in the investigation and prosecution of SEAH cases.
- Report incidents of SEAH to relevant authorities as required by law.

### **Conclusion:**

The Policy on Sexual Exploitation, Abuse, and Harassment (SEAH) of Gitanjali Foundation reflects our unwavering commitment to creating a safe, respectful, and inclusive environment for all individuals associated with the organization. By implementing robust preventive measures, establishing clear reporting and response procedures, and fostering a culture of accountability, we aim to eliminate SEAH and uphold the highest standards of conduct in all our activities. Our dedication to preventing and addressing SEAH ensures the trust and confidence of our stakeholders and supports our mission of social upliftment and community development.