



## 5. Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse, Harassment & Discrimination

### **Policy**

Medic Mobile, Inc. (dba Medic) is dedicated to upholding a professional work environment in which all individuals are treated with respect, dignity and where safety, and equal opportunity are promoted.

Medic, and “related parties” (employees, contractors, partners, vendors, and clients) are committed to education, recognition, prevention and reporting, in regards to all forms of sexual exploitation and abuse, harassment, or discrimination. The purpose of this policy is to ensure protection from threats or conduct that involve sexual exploitation and/or abuse, harassment, or discrimination within Medic and in the communities where Medic conducts business; to outline processes to follow if any of these acts occur; and to document our zero tolerance stance on these matters. This policy is in addition to the Child Safeguarding Policy.

Included within this policy are:

- Definitions
  - Standards of Conduct that outline behavioral expectations
  - Six Core Principles Related to Sexual Exploitation and Abuse
  - Training on SEA (sexual exploitation and abuse), and anti-harassment and anti-discrimination
  - Retaliation and confidentiality
  - Reporting and investigative process
  - Zero tolerance and disciplinary action
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## Definitions

The following definitions are as comprehensible as possible, but Medic acknowledges that every situation is unique. They are provided as framework for conduct and to guide conversation and action, but, there is always room for difference in interpretation, which is why Medic encourages conversations on these topics within the organization and communities where work is performed

**Sexual Exploitation:** The United Nations defines sexual exploitation as, “any actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power, or trust, for sexual purposes, including, but not limited to, profiting monetarily, socially or politically from the sexual exploitation of another. Similarly, the term “sexual abuse” means the actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force or under unequal or coercive conditions.”

**Related Parties:** Employees, contractors, partners, vendors, and clients working for or with Medic.

**What is harassment?** For purposes of this policy, harassment is any verbal, non-verbal or physical conduct designed to threaten, intimidate or coerce another person. The following examples of harassment are intended to be guidelines and are not exclusive when determining whether there has been a violation of this policy:

**Verbal harassment** includes slurs, stereotyping, and comments that are offensive or unwelcome regarding a person’s race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, sex, language, political or other opinion, age, marital status, familial status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, genetic information, ethnic or social origin, disability, mental health status, HIV status or status as a veteran.

**Nonverbal harassment** includes distribution, display or discussion of any written or graphic material that ridicules, denigrates, insults, belittles or shows hostility, aversion or disrespect toward an individual or group because of race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, sex, language, political or other opinion, age, marital status, familial status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, genetic information, ethnic or social origin, disability, mental health status, HIV status or status as a veteran.

**Sexual harassment** occurs when unsolicited and unwelcome sexual advance, request for sexual favors, or other verbal, non-verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature:

- Is explicitly or implicitly made a term or condition of employment.
- Is used as a basis for an employment decision.
- Unreasonably interferes with a teammate's work performance or creates an intimidating, hostile or otherwise offensive environment.

Sexual harassment may take different forms. The following examples of sexual harassment are intended to be guidelines and are not exclusive when determining whether there has been a violation of this policy:

- Verbal sexual harassment includes innuendoes, suggestive comments, jokes of a sexual nature, sexual propositions, lewd remarks and threats; requests for any type of sexual favor (this includes repeated, unwelcome requests for dates); and verbal abuse or "kidding" that is oriented toward a prohibitive form of harassment, including that which is sexual in nature and unwelcome.
- Nonverbal sexual harassment includes the distribution, display or discussion of any written or graphic material, including calendars, posters and cartoons that are sexually suggestive or show hostility toward an individual or group because of sex; suggestive or insulting sounds; leering; staring; whistling; obscene gestures; content in letters and notes, facsimiles, e-mail, photos, text messages, tweets and internet postings; or other form of communication that is sexual in nature and offensive.
- Physical sexual harassment includes unwelcome, unwanted physical contact, including touching, tickling, pinching, patting, brushing up against, hugging, cornering, kissing, fondling and forced sexual intercourse or assault.

**Discrimination** means being treated differently or unfairly. Discrimination in employment is illegal when the treatment is based on a personal characteristic or status, such as sex or race, which is protected under anti-discrimination laws.

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## **Standards of Conduct**

Medic and related parties abide by the following standards of conduct and recognize that prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse, harassment, and discrimination occurs through adhering to these standards on *and* off duty. Medic expects that all working

relationships will be business-like and free of bias, prejudice and harassment

## **Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse and Harassment Standards**

- Be particularly alert to suspected cases of SEA within vulnerable populations
- Report any and all suspected incidents or potential signs of SEA (education on signs to look for are reviewed in the PSEA training)
- Never hesitate to report suspicions of SEA because evidence was not collected
- Respect the dignity, wishes and rights of survivors of SEA, including their wishes on whether to report mistreatment
- Seek counsel from the People Operations Manager with questions about whether or how to report suspected cases.

## **Anti-Discrimination Standards**

- Medic and related parties prohibit and will not engage in discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, sex, language, political or other opinion, age, marital status, familial status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, genetic information, ethnic or social origin, disability, mental health status, HIV status or status as a veteran.
  - Medic promotes equal opportunity in employment and promotion opportunities and strives to eliminate discrimination in all employment practices.
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## **Six Core Principles Related to Sexual Exploitation and Abuse**

Medic and related parties commit to abiding by the [Six Core Principles Related to SEA](#) outlined and published by the Inter Agency Standing Committee, which are:

1. "Sexual exploitation and abuse constitute acts of gross misconduct and are therefore grounds for termination of employment.
2. Sexual activity with children (persons under the age of 18) is prohibited regardless of the age of majority or age of consent locally. Mistaken belief regarding the age of a child is not a defense.
3. Exchange of money, employment, goods, or services for sex, including sexual favours or other forms of humiliating, degrading or exploitative behaviour is

prohibited. This includes exchange of assistance that is due to beneficiaries.

4. Any sexual relationship between those providing humanitarian assistance and protection and a person benefiting from such humanitarian assistance and protection that involves improper use of rank or position is prohibited. Such relationships undermine the credibility and integrity of humanitarian aid work.
  5. Where a humanitarian worker develops concerns or suspicions regarding sexual abuse or exploitation by a fellow worker, whether in the same agency or not, he or she must report such concerns via established agency reporting mechanisms.
  6. Humanitarian workers are obliged to create and maintain an environment which prevents sexual exploitation and abuse and promotes the implementation of their code of conduct. Managers at all levels have particular responsibilities to support and develop systems which maintain this environment.”
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## **Training**

### **Anti-harassment and anti-discrimination:**

Individuals employed or contracted by Medic are required to complete training on the topics of anti-harassment and discrimination. Thereafter, employees and contractors complete the training annually. Coordination of training completion is managed and documented by the People Operations office.

### **Preventative Sexual Exploitation and Abuse:**

Individuals employed or contracted by Medic are required to take the Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse training, and complete the PSEA Review Check, to demonstrate knowledge on the topic. Thereafter, employees and contractors complete the training annually. Coordination of training is managed by the People Operations office.

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## **Retaliation & Confidentiality**

No hardship, loss, benefit or penalty may be imposed on a teammate in response to:

- Filing or responding to a report of harassment, discrimination, or sexual exploitation or abuse.
- Appearing as a witness in the investigation of a report.

- Serving as an investigator of a report.

Retaliation or attempted retaliation in response to lodging a report or invoking the report process is a violation of this policy.

During the reporting process, confidentiality of the information received, privacy of the individuals involved and the wishes of the person issuing a report will be protected. The expressed wishes of the reporting person for confidentiality will be considered in the context of the company's legal obligation to act on the charge and the right of the charged party to obtain information. In most cases however, confidentiality will be strictly maintained by the company and those involved in the investigation. In addition, any notes or documents written by or received by the person(s) conducting the investigation will be kept confidential to the extent possible and according to any existing state or federal law.

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## **Reporting and Investigation Procedure**

Individuals who witness or experience actions or behaviors deemed to be sexual exploitation or abuse, harassment, discrimination or retaliation are encouraged to report. Formal action will only be taken against any person under this policy if a written and signed report containing sufficient details to determine if the policy may have been violated is provided.

Medic has established the following procedure for reporting:

1. An individual may initiate the reporting process by filling and submitting a Sexual Exploitation or Abuse, Harassment or Discrimination Claim Form to the People Operations Manager.
2. Upon receiving the Claim Form, the People Operations Manager will notify the CEO and review the report with the company's legal counsel.
3. Within 5 working days of receiving the report, the People Operations Manager will notify the person(s) charged and initiate an investigation.
4. During the investigation, the People Operations Manager, with legal counsel, will interview the person who filed the report, person(s) charged and witness(es) to gather evidence.
5. Within 15 business days of the report being filed, the People Operations Manager or other person conducting the investigation will conclude the investigation and submit a

written report of their findings to the CEO.

6. If it is determined that violation of this policy has occurred, appropriate disciplinary action will be recommended. The appropriate action will depend on the following factors:
  - the severity, frequency and pervasiveness of the conduct
  - prior reports made
  - the quality of the evidence (e.g., first-hand knowledge, credibility).

Within 5 days after the investigation is concluded, the People Operations Manager will meet with the person who filed the report and the person charged separately, notify them of the findings of the investigation, and inform them of the action being recommended.

7. The person who filed and the person(s) charged may submit statements to the People Operations Manager challenging the findings. Any such statement must be submitted no later than 5 working days after the meeting with the People Operations Manager in which the findings of the investigation are discussed. Any challenging statements will be reviewed and taken into consideration.
8. The company's decision will be in writing and will include findings of fact and a statement for or against disciplinary action. If disciplinary action is to be taken, the person charged will be informed of the nature of the discipline and how it will be carried out.

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## **Zero Tolerance and Corrective Measure**

Medic has zero tolerance for any person in any capacity related to our work, our partners, and within our communities that carries out any sexual exploitation or abuse, harassment, or discrimination behavior.

Sexual exploitation and/or abuse of program participants constitute acts of gross misconduct and are grounds for disciplinary action, including termination of employment, contracts and referral to law enforcement.

If you have information regarding possible violations of this policy by Medic's stakeholders or beneficiaries, contact Medic's designated authority: Krishna Jafa, Chief Executive Officer (krishna@medic.org).