



AUSTRALIAN REFUGEE VOLUNTEERS INC

CODE OF CONDUCT

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Australian Refugee Volunteers Incorporated (ARV) is a completely volunteer-run organisation that runs recreational and developmental programs aiming to improve the lives of children from asylum seeker and refugee backgrounds by promoting fun, laughter and relaxation in refugee communities.

Volunteers make an extremely important contribution to ARV. It is essential that volunteers understand and respect the conduct and behaviours that are expected of them when they participate in ARV. The Code of Conduct below sets out these rules and expectations.

It is essential that volunteers respect and follow the below rules and expectations for their own safety, the safety and privacy of the children and the integrity of ARV.

This Code of Conduct applies to all volunteers of ARV.

CODE OF CONDUCT

General

During all ARV-related activities, volunteers shall:

1. Shall contribute positively to achieving the goals and objectives of ARV.
2. Shall act honestly and with integrity and respect at all times, and shall be professional in their actions.
3. Shall, in all business or activities conducted for or on behalf of ARV, place the interests of ARV over their own interests or those of anyone else.
4. Shall observe the provisions of the constitution, policies, and rules of the organisation; and shall always act within the law.
5. Shall not act so as to bring ARV or its mission into disrepute.
6. Shall appreciate and respect that everyone at all levels of ARV is a volunteer, and gives their time generously.
7. Shall be prepared to uphold the duties they agree to and the commitments they make to the organisation.
8. Shall contribute to creating and maintaining an environment that is free from discrimination, bullying and harassment, including by restraining from such behaviours.
9. Shall be punctual at all ARV programs, activities and meetings.
10. Shall not speak to lawyers or the media about or on behalf of ARV except with express and prior approval of the ARV Committee.
11. Shall maintain a child-safe environment for children and young people, and shall report to ARV management and/or the Committee any concerns they have regarding the safety or



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well-being of any volunteer or client, particularly any child safety concerns. Volunteers shall not take any action that jeopardises the safety of clients or their families, volunteers or other members of the public.

12. Shall discuss any ethical concerns with the ARV Committee.
13. Shall report and declare to ARV management and the Committee any actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest in their role with ARV, so that they can be managed appropriately. For example, if the volunteer is, in a separate capacity, a teacher, social worker, lawyer, or related or other role working with ARV's clients or their families, this should be declared, as should any actual, potential or perceived conflicts relating to the management and administrative activities of ARV.
14. Shall immediately disclose to the ARV Committee any criminal charges laid by police against them that are relevant to their role at ARV, or any finding of a court in relation to those charges and any penalty imposed.
15. Shall respect and uphold the apolitical nature of ARV by not advocating political views while at ARV-related activities, and by not engaging in or participating in political or advocacy work or activities as representatives of ARV.

Programs and client contact

During all ARV programs and during any and all contact with the children involved in the programs and their families, ARV volunteers must:

1. Treat clients with dignity, and safeguard and promote the client's capacity to free choice, and shall respect and value their ideas and opinions.
2. Act as positive role models in their conduct with children and young people.
3. Be involved only in activities that are directly connected with their duties as volunteers, and not to organise activities without permission and knowledge of ARV.
4. Promote the values and purpose of ARV by not engaging in any activity that may undermine or compromise it.
5. Comply with any and all safety or conduct instructions issued by ARV management, including complying with all of ARV's safety policies and procedures.
6. Respect and comply with ARV's *Two's Policy*, which requires that at least two ARV volunteers must be with clients at all times - so an ARV volunteer shall never be the sole volunteer with any client or clients at any time.
7. Not develop a 'special' relationship with a specific child or young person for their own needs and shall not show favouritism through the provision of gifts or inappropriate attention.



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8. Not smoke, smell of smoke, drink or be under the influence of drugs, alcohol or any other prohibited substance during an ARV program.
9. Not use inappropriate language or engage in open discussions of a mature or adult nature in the presence of children.
10. Not shame, humiliate, oppress, belittle or degrade children or young people.
11. Not have contact with children that are clients of ARV, or with their families or parents, outside of organised, approved ARV purposes. This includes contact with clients after you or they cease involvement with ARV, unless you have written permission from the ARV Committee.
12. Be sensitive to the different family, social, cultural and religious backgrounds of children, families and parents and respect the fact that issues of gender and modesty may be particularly relevant to children and adults from certain societies. Respect a child's, parent's or adult's right to maintain their own religious and spiritual affiliation, or to choose not to have a religious or spiritual affiliation. Volunteers will not proselytise.
13. Ensure that they take all necessary steps to uphold, and not undermine, the privacy of every stakeholder (including children) with whom ARV engages, in accordance with privacy laws. Without any limitation to the Confidentiality Deed volunteers have entered into with ARV, volunteers must not say anything to anyone outside of ARV that may identify a particular child, family members or guardians, including their name, age, gender, country of origin, address, phone number, religion, languages spoken, residence type, health information, visa status or the particulars of their circumstances or locations.
14. Not enter the homes of children that are clients of ARV, or of their families, without clear invitation from a present adult.
15. Not give money or any other items of value to ARV's clients or their families without consultation with and approval from ARV management.
16. Maintain appropriate physical, psychological and emotional boundaries with children and families. Volunteers shall not initiate unnecessary physical contact with a child or young person, or do things of a personal nature for them that they can do for themselves. Volunteers shall not engage in romantic or sexual activity with any client ARV works with or with any of their family or friends.
17. Not take or distribute photographs or videos of children, parents or adults without express approval from the ARV Committee. If a volunteer takes a photo on their own phone or camera of a client or their artwork at the request of the client, the photo and any distribution must be approved by a member of the Program Team, and the copy then deleted from the volunteer's device. Approval is not required for photos taken on a client's phone or camera at the request of that client.



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18. Not give legal advice to children, parents or adults, including advice about visa applications or court appeals.

AGREEMENT

All volunteers agree to comply with the ARV Code of Conduct. ARV reserves the right to amend this Code of Conduct at its discretion, and will notify volunteers and members of amendments. If volunteers continue to participate in volunteer work with ARV following such an amendment, volunteers will be deemed to have agreed to and accepted the amended Code of Conduct.

BREACHES OF THIS POLICY

All ARV volunteers shall appreciate that their involvement in ARV and its programs is at the discretion of ARV management and the Committee and can be withdrawn at any time (including during a program) in the event of misconduct, such as non-compliance with this Code of Conduct or ARV's other policies.

If a person believes that the behaviour of any ARV volunteer (including management, Program Coordinators and Committee volunteers) breaches this Code of Conduct or an ARV policy or is otherwise unethical, they must report it to the President/s or another member of the ARV Committee.

Matters to report include:

- Behaviour relevant to ARV that violates any law, or is corrupt conduct
- Mismanagement of resources or fraudulent behaviour
- Behaviour that creates a danger for clients, volunteers, any other person, or to the safety of the physical working environment
- Behaviour that could bring the reputation of ARV into disrepute, or cause damage to its reputation, credibility and/or viability
- Behaviour that is contrary to this or any other ARV policy or procedure in any way.

REPORTING ISSUES, CONCERNS, CONFLICTS, ETC

The ARV Committee consists of the President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Ordinary Committee Member(s).

To report circumstances or discuss concerns with the Committee in relation to this Code of Conduct, please contact president@arvolunteers.org, vicepresident@arvolunteers.org and/or secretary@arvolunteers.org.

Concerns or conflicts that relate to specific teams can also be reported to the Program Coordinator or Manager of the relevant team if appropriate and if the reporter is comfortable doing so.



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CODE OF CONDUCT POLICY SIGN OFF FORM

I, confirm that I have read and understood the ARV Code of Conduct Policy and will abide by it. I understand that any alleged breach of the Code of Conduct Policy may see the procedures outlined in the code of conduct and/or other appropriate policies invoked against me.

I understand this may result in disciplinary action being taken.

Name: _____ **Signature:** _____

Date: _____

Once signed, please return this page to the ARV Recruitment Team. This will be placed on our online database.