

Bliss for the Needy Foundation (BFN) Safeguarding Policy

Policy Details	
Name of Policy	Bliss for the Needy Foundation Safeguarding Policy
Owner of Policy	Executive Assistant
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safeguarding policy October 2023

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1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to protect people, including children, adults at risk and beneficiaries of assistance, from any harm that may be caused due to their coming into contact with Bliss for the Needy Foundation. This includes harm arising from:

- The conduct of staff or personnel associated with BFN
- The design and implementation of BFN's programmes and activities

The policy lays out the commitments made by BFN, and informs staff and associated personnel of their responsibilities in relation to safeguarding.

This policy does not cover:

- Sexual harassment in the workplace – this is dealt with under BFN's Anti Bullying and Harassment Policy
- Safeguarding concerns in the wider community not perpetrated by BFN or associated personnel

2. What is safeguarding?

Safeguarding means protecting people, including children and at risk adults, from harm that arises from coming into contact with our staff or programs.

3. Scope

- All permanent and temporary staff contracted by BFN
- Consultants
- Volunteers
- Contractors
- Program visitors including donors/funders, journalists, celebrities and politicians
- Partner organizations (NGOs, CSOs etc)

4. Policy Statement

BFN believes that everyone we come into contact with, regardless of age, gender identity, disability, sexual orientation or ethnic origin has the right to be protected from all forms of harm, abuse, neglect and exploitation. BFN will not tolerate abuse and exploitation by staff or associated personnel.

This policy will address the following areas of safeguarding [as appropriate]: child safeguarding, adult safeguarding, and protection from sexual exploitation and abuse. These key areas of safeguarding may have different policies and procedures associated with them.

BFN commits to addressing safeguarding throughout its work, through the three pillars of prevention, reporting and response.

5. Prevention

Bliss for the Needy Foundation responsibilities

BFN will:

- Ensure all staff have access to, are familiar with, and know their responsibilities within this policy
- Design and undertake all its programs and activities in a way that protects people from any risk of harm that may arise from their coming into contact with BFN. This includes the way in which information about individuals in our programmes is gathered and communicated
- Implement stringent safeguarding procedures when recruiting, managing and deploying staff and associated personnel
- Ensure staff receive training on safeguarding at a level that commensurates with their role in the organization
- Follow up on reports of safeguarding concerns promptly and according to due process

Staff responsibilities

Child safeguarding

BFN staff and associated personnel must not:

- Engage in sexual activity with anyone under the age of 18
- Sexually abuse or exploit children
- Subject a child to physical, emotional or psychological abuse, or neglect
- Engage in any commercially exploitative activities with children including child labour or trafficking

Adult safeguarding

BFN staff and associated personnel must not:

- Sexually abuse or exploit adults at risk
- Subject an adult at risk to physical, emotional or psychological abuse, or neglect

6. Bliss for the Needy Foundation Safeguarding Standards

Standard One: Leadership, Accountability and Governance

Bliss for the Needy Foundation recognizes its duty of care to ensure the safety, dignity, and protection of all beneficiaries, including children and adults at risk. The Foundation will put in place all reasonable safeguarding measures and assign clear safeguarding responsibilities across the organization to ensure continuous oversight and accountability. Safeguarding will be integrated into leadership and governance structures, with senior management responsible for monitoring safeguarding risks and ensuring compliance with organizational standards. The Foundation will ensure that safeguarding is embedded across all programmes and operations and aligned with relevant national laws and cultural contexts.

Leadership will maintain active oversight of safeguarding practices, including regular review of risks, reporting mechanisms, and organizational responses.

Standard Two: Building a Safe Organizational Culture

Bliss for the Needy Foundation is committed to fostering a safe, inclusive, and respectful organizational culture where safeguarding is prioritized at all levels. Leadership and management will promote an environment where staff and associated personnel feel safe to raise concerns, challenge inappropriate behavior, and address power imbalances without fear of retaliation. The Foundation will actively promote equality, diversity, and inclusion, recognizing their importance in preventing harm and safeguarding vulnerable individuals. Management will reflect on and strengthen behaviors that support transparency, accountability, and a culture of safety.

Standard Three: Training and Safeguarding Awareness

Bliss for the Needy Foundation will ensure that all staff and associated personnel understand their safeguarding responsibilities. Safeguarding standards and expectations will be communicated in clear, accessible formats and, where necessary, adapted to local languages and contexts. All personnel will receive mandatory safeguarding induction before engaging with beneficiaries.

Including specific training on:

- Child safeguarding
- Adult safeguarding
- Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA)
- Sexual harassment prevention

Refresher trainings will be conducted regularly to reinforce knowledge and ensure continued compliance. Safeguarding awareness activities will also be integrated into program implementation and community engagement.

Standard Four: Human Resources and Safe Recruitment Practices

Bliss for the Needy Foundation acknowledges that safeguarding risks can arise within organisations and is committed to embedding safeguarding throughout the employment cycle. The Foundation will implement safe recruitment practices to ensure that all staff, volunteers, and associated personnel are selected based on their alignment with organizational values and commitment to safeguarding.

All individuals engaged by the Foundation, including staff, volunteers, consultants, contractors, and partners, will:

- Be informed of their safeguarding responsibilities
- Be required to adhere to safeguarding standards and codes of conduct
- Demonstrate the knowledge and behavior necessary to protect beneficiaries

Safeguarding requirements will be integrated into recruitment, onboarding, performance management, and disciplinary processes.

Standard Five: Safeguarding of Beneficiaries

Bliss for the Needy Foundation is committed to ensuring that all beneficiaries are protected from harm.

All beneficiaries have the right to:

- Be treated with dignity, respect, and fairness
- Receive assistance free from exploitation, abuse, or discrimination
- Access safe and confidential reporting mechanisms

The Foundation will take all reasonable steps to minimize risks to beneficiaries in program design and

implementation, with particular attention to children and vulnerable adults.

standard six: Code of Conduct for Staff and Associated Personnel

Staff and associated personnel must:

- Maintain professional boundaries at all times
- Act in the best interest of beneficiaries
- Avoid any behaviour that could be perceived as exploitative or abusive
- Comply with all safeguarding policies and procedures
- Immediately report any safeguarding concerns

Standard seven: Enabling reports

BFN will ensure that safe, appropriate, accessible means of reporting safeguarding concerns are made available to staff and the communities we work with.

Any staff reporting concerns or complaints through formal whistleblowing channels (or if they request it) will be protected by BFN's Disclosure of Malpractice in the Workplace (Whistleblowing) Policy.

BFN will also accept complaints from external sources such as members of the public, partners and official bodies.

How to report a safeguarding concern

Staff members who have a complaint or concern relating to safeguarding should report it immediately to their Safeguarding Focal Point [as appropriate] or unit head. If the staff member does not feel comfortable reporting to their Safeguarding Focal Point or unit head for example if they feel that the report will not be taken seriously, or if that person is implicated in the concern) they may report to any other appropriate staff member. For example, this could be the team leader or a member of the Administrative Team.

Safeguarding reporting contact detail: programs@blissforthe needy.org

Standard Eight: Response

BFN will follow up safeguarding reports and concerns according to policy and procedure, and legal and statutory obligations

BFN will ensure prompt, fair, and confidential investigations

BFN will apply appropriate disciplinary measures to staff found in breach of policy.

BFN will offer support to survivors of harm caused by staff or associated personnel, regardless of whether a formal internal response is carried out (such as an internal investigation). Decisions regarding support will be led by the survivor.

Reporting to authorities

In every case in which a criminal offence appears to have been committed the default position should be for immediate referral to the police or other competent authorities for consideration of criminal action. However, consideration must be given to the national context within which the allegations have arisen, and a survivor centered approach applied. A Do No Harm risk assessment must always be carried out and the findings should inform the decision-making process on whether to report to the authorities. The country context mapping should inform the risk assessment and the survivor's wishes

must also be considered before deciding on whether or not to report. Any decision to not report allegations which constitute a criminal offence (e.g. sexual abuse) to police or other competent authorities must be documented in the risk assessment, with clear reasons for not doing so. Decisions not to report criminal issues to the relevant authorities must be recorded on the global safeguarding register and the Founder must be alerted to this decision.

Reporting to regulators

It is a requirement to report all serious safeguarding concerns to the regulatory body in the relevant Country. It is the responsibility of the Safeguarding Lead to ensure that the report is made.

Reporting to donors

Reporting requirements of donors should be clearly documented in agreements with donors and reports should be made in line with timelines specified in a confidential manner.

Record keeping

All information relating to safeguarding case management should be recorded carefully and comprehensively. This is to ensure accurate documentation of the incident. Information that both corroborates and contradicts the allegation should be recorded. All information gathered, as well as decisions taken and the reasons for them, should be clearly outlined in the case management process and included in final investigation reports. All case management data should be anonymized and securely archived after 10 years.

7. Confidentiality

It is essential that confidentiality is maintained at all stages of the process when dealing with safeguarding concerns. Information relating to the concern and subsequent case management should be shared on a need to know basis only, and should be kept secure at all times.

8. Appendices

Appendix one: Glossary of Terms

Beneficiary of Assistance

Someone who directly receives goods or services from BFN's program. Note that misuse of power can also apply to the wider community that the NGO serves, and also can include exploitation by giving the perception of being in a position of power.

Child

A person below the age of 18

Harm

Psychological, physical and any other infringement of an individual's rights

Psychological harm

Emotional or psychological abuse, including (but not limited to) humiliating and degrading treatment such as bad name calling, constant criticism, belittling, persistent shaming, solitary confinement and isolation

Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA)

The term used by the humanitarian and development community to refer to the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse of affected populations by staff or associated personnel. The term derives from the United Nations Secretary General's Bulletin on Special Measures for Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (ST/SGB/2003/13)

Safeguarding

Safeguarding means taking all reasonable steps to prevent harm, particularly sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment from occurring; to protect people, especially vulnerable adults and children, from that harm; and to respond appropriately when harm does occur.

Sexual abuse

The term 'sexual abuse' means the actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force or under unequal or coercive conditions.

Sexual exploitation

The term 'sexual exploitation' means 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. This definition includes human trafficking and modern slavery.

Survivor

The person who has been abused or exploited. The term 'survivor' is often used in preference to 'victim' as it implies strength, resilience and the capacity to survive, however it is the individual's choice how they wish to identify themselves.

Adult at risk

Sometimes also referred to as vulnerable adult. A person who is or may be in need of care by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness; and who is or may be unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation.

Appendix two: Reporting Flowchart

BFN Safeguarding Reporting and Response Procedure Flowchart

