

1. CODE OF CONDUCT & ETHICAL GUIDELINES

7.1 Introduction

ACORD is committed to maintaining a hospitable and supportive working environment for all staff members, and expects them to act in a manner consistent with the organisation's core values while carrying out their responsibilities.

ACORD will not tolerate verbal, written or physical conduct from an individual member of staff that harasses, discriminates, disturbs or affects the professional performance of other members of staff or creates an aggressive, hostile or threatening environment. All staff, including volunteers, must maintain an enabling working environment free from intimidation, harassment and disturbance. Every staff member and every manager in particular, is held accountable and responsible for preventing any form of harassment.

ACORD staff are not allowed to deliberately undertake any action that will undermine the organisation. Each staff member is expected to sign a statement upon recruitment confirming that they have read and understood ACORD'S code of conduct. **(Appendix II)**

7.2 ACORD Values: Translation into the Workplace

To advance ACORD'S mission and vision, all staffs are guided by our core value of social justice and demonstrate the following core values while accomplishing their job responsibilities:

1. Carry out their work with integrity and courage; integrity includes values of honesty, consistency and accountability;
2. Respect other colleagues, recognise their contribution and act in a manner consistent with organisational, social and moral values; our partners and beneficiaries should be treated with respect and dignity;
3. Seek excellence in what we do continuously challenge ourselves to achieve the highest level of performance;

4. Respect and celebrate diversity within the organisation: demonstrate inclusive behaviour, operate effectively in a multi-cultural environment, encourage reflection and learning.

Each member of staff will have the freedom to express his/her views or opinion without victimisation. Such views, however, should be expressed at the right time and place and to the right person in a civilised manner using the right channel and procedures. General staff meetings and departmental meetings are venues and places where views and opinions can be heard and debated.

All those values will lead to an environment of trust and openness strengthened by a strong team spirit.

7.3 Ethical Guidelines

7.3.1 ACORD 'S Image

While conducting ACORD'S business and fostering relationships, you are expected to:

- Comply with all laws;
- Be fair with respect to the rights, interests and responsibilities of others;
- Protect Organisation's reputation at all times through responsible conduct;
- Appropriately address actual or potential situations of conflicts of interest.

All staff should guard against irresponsible behaviours that undermine the credibility and mandate of the organisation.

7.3.2 Name, Logo and Trademark

The ACORD name, logo and trademark may only be used in activities and circumstances sanctioned by management and in the appropriate form.

7.3.4 Compliance with Laws and Internal Regulations

All staff are expected to comply with all laws and regulations applicable to you and ACORD during your term of service. You will have to observe the terms and conditions referred to in the relevant human resources manuals and performing effectively the duties of the job for which you have been employed.

It is your responsibility to know and understand the law directly applicable to you and your job.

7.3.4 Disclosure of staff information

Information will only be disclosed subject to government authority requirements or statutory or management requirements.

ACORD will hold full data records on staff members up to three years after separation from service, thereafter a shorter record of employment details will be kept for archive purposes.

7.3.5 Medical Examination

ACORD shall recommend staff members to undertake legally required vaccination and prophylaxis to maintain a good level of health. It is the staff member's responsibility to ensure that he/she has taken all recommended vaccinations and renewed them after a specific period of time as per medical regulations.

7.3.6 Normal working hours

All staff are requested to work 40 hours per week minimum excluding recognized lunch breaks. It is expected that full-time staff will/shall not engage in other employment.

If staff members are absent from their normal place of work for any reason, they must inform the Line Manager as soon as practically possible of the reason and expected length of absence. Staff absent from work unless based on official and/or recognized leave schedule, the days may be deducted from the staff members' annual leave.

7.3.7 Time off as lieu of payment

ACORD does not pay cash in lieu of overtime. In instances where staff members worked extra hours, the relevant Line Managers will grant compensatory time off in lieu.

The staff member should organize him/herself to take the days off during the following month. Otherwise, he/she will automatically lose these days.

Regular overtime may be an indication of workload and may be an indication of the need for reviewing the staff member's job description.

7.3.8 Confidentiality of information

All staff shall exercise discretion in all matters pertaining to ACORD official business. This is particularly true for documents marked "confidential". In making public or press statements the staff member shall be limited by the non-political nature of the organisation and shall therefore not associate ACORD with the expression of any political or other views without prior authorisation.

Information known to the staff member by reason of an official position, and which has not been made public, shall not be communicated to any person not connected with ACORD, nor shall such information at any time be used to the staff member private advantage. These obligations do not cease upon termination of employment unless and until prior authorisation has been given by the Country Director of ACORD in Uganda.

7.3.9 Instruction from External sources

A staff member is expected to be loyal to the principles and objectives of ACORD and in the performance of his duties with ACORD; no staff member shall accept instructions from any other authority outside ACORD unless the possibilities of such instructions have been fore seen in his/her conditions of employment

The acceptance of gifts or other benefits from sources outside ACORD while employed by the organization shall be considered as conduct incompatible with the status of a staff member.

7.3.10 Discrimination and Harassment

ACORD expressly prohibits and will not tolerate any form of discrimination, harassment or bullying.

Following are definitions that will assist each staff member in understanding and adhering to this code of conduct:

- Discrimination means exclusion of, treatment or action against an individual based on race, colour, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, language, marital status, national origin, disability or HIV/AIDS status. Discrimination includes harassment.
- Harassment is a form of discrimination. Harassment means any unwelcome comment or behaviour that is offensive, demeaning, humiliating, derogatory, or any other inappropriate behaviour towards an individual or group of people that fails to respect the dignity of an individual within the scope of his/her employment. Examples of harassment and bullying are detailed in ACORD's policy on Harassment.

7.3.11 Assets and Funds

Each staff member is responsible for the proper management of ACORD's assets, funds or other property entrusted to him/her. ACORD'S equipment and property, including files, documents and software, are provided for ACORD work.

Therefore staff members are expected to treat ACORD'S property with the same care and respect as they would do to their own, and are requested to return ACORD's property in good condition prior to their separation from the organisation. Any damage or loss of ACORD property should be reported promptly to his/her

supervisor; it may imply salary deduction depending on the circumstances under which the damage occurred.

7.3.12 Procurement

All staff should not select suppliers of goods or services for any reason other than their ability to fulfil the organisation's needs. You may not personally accept any goods or services or other forms of compensation or favours from a supplier for less than market value, other than as the usual contribution to ACORD.

Fees, commissions, kickbacks, or any form of bribes intended to induce or reward favourable decisions and governmental actions, are unacceptable and prohibited. No staff may, in violation of any law, pay or offer to pay, or give anything of value to a donor, governmental entity, or political party.

7.3.13 Conflict of interest

ACORD staff must scrupulously avoid any conflict between their individual interests and the interests of the organisation. If your interests, or that of any member of your family, are – or appear to be – conflicting with ACORD's interests, you must fully disclose the actual or apparent conflict to your Line Manager. This includes, without restrictions, any direct or indirect financial or other interests in, or in relation with, any individual or organisation that proposes to enter into any transaction with ACORD for sale, purchase, and lease or rental property or to render or employ services, personal or otherwise.

You should provide your Line Manager with a written statement outlining the situation and measures to be taken to avoid what could be or appear to be any potential conflict of interest. Further, you must withdraw from any participation in ACORD's decisions in relation to the actual or apparent conflict of interest, and take appropriate steps to solve any conflict.

This requirement should not be construed as preventing staff member from stating his or her position regarding the matter, nor

from answering his or her supervisor's pertinent questions, if the staff member personal knowledge may be of assistance to ACORD in reaching its decision.

A disinterested person or committee may be appointed to review a situation involving conflicts of interest if appropriate or necessary.

As staff member you should not participate in the recruitment process of a family member. In such cases, you are requested to disclose your affiliation and to delegate this responsibility to another colleague.

7.3.14 Work Prepared by Staff Members is Property Of ACORD

Unless obviously intended for external publication, ACORD'S work may not be released or published without prior approval from the Country Director. All external publications will be subject to review prior to distribution. You should discuss outside requests for information with your manager and other appropriate ACORD staff to ensure that ACORD'S rights in, or to, such work are protected.

ACORD encourages you to write and publish articles about programmes and projects with which you are familiar. However, when a staff member prepares a short publication or translation about an ACORD programme or project, written consent of the employee's manager must be obtained. Any major publication requires the Executive Director's or Regional Coordinators/Country Director's prior consent.

7.3.15 Attitude in the Workplace

Substance abuse will not be tolerated in the workplace. The Staff is prohibited from working while intoxicated or while under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs.

It is not allowed to smoke within ACORD offices. Gambling in organization premises is not permitted.

Supervision: Sexual relationships or family relationships between supervisors and supervisees are not healthy in the working environment. If such case happens, the concerned staff member is requested to disclose their status. Upon disclosure, the decision to transfer shall be envisaged.

7.3.16 Reporting accident

If you suffer a work related injury or illness, report it to your Line Manager or to the administration unit as soon as possible. Failure to do so may jeopardise future benefits.

7.4 Violation of ACORD's Code of Conduct

It is the policy of ACORD to maintain a productive and safe work environment, to ensure compliance with public laws, and protect the rights and well-being of all employees.

Any ACORD staff found to have violated this code of conduct may be subjected to appropriate disciplinary action up to and including termination.

7.5 Protection of ACORD property and Interests

7.5.1 General Protection of ACORD's property and reputation

All staff members are expected to serve the organization diligently, faithfully and at all times to protect ACORD's reputation. They will at all times conduct themselves in such a manner as is not likely to cause or is calculated to damage ACORD's property and reputation.

7.5.2 Engagement in politics

Staff members will not engage in any political or other activity which would tend to associate ACORD in the public mind with a particularly defined political, religious or other faction, party or organization.

While staff members are not required to give up their national sentiments or political and religious convictions, they shall at times

bear in mind the reserve and tact incumbent upon them by reason of their status.

7.5.3 Loss/damage of ACORD property

Where loss or damage to ACORD's property occurs including loss of money, through negligence or malicious act or omission on the part of the staff member, s/he will be required to meet the whole or part of costs of such loss / damage as determined by ACORD. The staff member will not be held responsible for such loss/ damage where reasonable precautions have been taken by him/ her.

7.5.4 Motor vehicles and motor cycle use

Costs of maintenance and servicing of all vehicles and motorcycles are to be met by ACORD, where these are provided to staff for performance of their duties.

7.5.5.1 Valid driving permit

Only those members of staff who hold a valid driving permit license and are authorized by the Country Director/ his delegate are permitted to drive or ride ACORD's vehicles and motorcycles respectively.

7.5.5.2 Wearing of Crash helmets and seat belts

The wearing of crash helmets by all staff using motorcycles is mandatory; failure to do so may nullify any obligation on behalf of ACORD to pay medical costs or terminal benefits in such cases where the rider is injured and unable to resume work. The use of seat belts in all ACORD vehicles is mandatory.

7.5.5.3 Drinking alcohol while driving or riding

Driving an ACORD vehicle or motorcycle whilst intoxicated is strictly forbidden and results in disciplinary action irrespective of whether or not the vehicle or motorcycle has been involved in an accident

7.5.5.4 Private use of office vehicle and motorcycles

7.5.5.4.1 Conditions for private use

At the discretion of the Line Manager with approval of Country Director, staff may occasionally use ACORD vehicles for reasonable private use (but not outside Uganda) as long as prior permission is sought and that the private use of the vehicle/ motorcycle does not interfere with ACORD's business. Under no conditions can private use of an ACORD vehicle be for commercial purpose or for any activity that may bring the name of ACORD into disrepute. Any private usage must be properly recorded in the vehicle/ motorcycle log book and the costs of this mileage reimbursed to ACORD at a rate determined by management.

Where the driver is authorized to use the vehicle/motorcycle for transport from his/her place of residence to his/her place of work the condition does not apply.

7.5.5.4.2 Accidents while vehicle is in private use

If an ACORD vehicle or motorcycle is involved in an accident whilst being used in a manner contrary to paragraphs 7.5.5.4.2, the driver shall be liable for all repair costs and claims that result there from. Otherwise, ACORD undertakes the repair and damages made.

7.5.5 Property Rights

ACORD shall have the rights to all property rights including but not limited to patents, copy rights and trademarks, in material which bears a direct relation to or is made in consequence of the work performed under contract with ACORD unless written release of such property rights is granted by the Executive Director.

