

HFHA CHILD PROTECTION POLICY AND PROCEDURES

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1. Introduction

HFHA recognises and is committed to the principles enshrined in Article 19 of the *UN Convention on the Rights of the Child* that all children, wherever they may live and whatever their circumstances, have the right to be protected, nurtured and free from all forms of violence, abuse, neglect, maltreatment and exploitation.

HFHA's Child Protection Policy is guided by the principles enshrined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and Department Foreign Affairs and Trade's (DFAT) Child Protection Policy (2017).

HFHA's Child Protection Policy and Appendices are reviewed every two years and re-ratified by HFHA's Board of Directors. HFHA's Child Protection Policy is reviewed more regularly if required to comply with any changes to the DFAT Child Protection Policy, the Australian Council for International Development (ACFID) Code, or Commonwealth Law.

This policy should be read in conjunction with **HFHA's Child Labour Policy** which outlines our commitment to supporting programs which protect the health and safety of children, and **HFHI's Policy of Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse in Humanitarian Crises** which outlines specific provisions for managing child protection risks in humanitarian response contexts.

2. Definition of Terms

Child: In keeping with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, HFHA defines a child as a person under the age of 18 years.

Abuse: There are several forms of child abuse, all of which have the potential to have a significant impact on a child's development and well-being. They include:

- **Physical Abuse**

Physical abuse occurs when a person purposefully injures or threatens to injure a child or young person. This abuse may include slapping, punching, shaking, kicking, burning, shoving or grabbing. Physical injury may take the form of bruises, cuts, burns or fractures. It is not always the case that the physical injuries will be visible.

- **Emotional Abuse**

Emotional abuse occurs when persistent ill treatment on a child affects their self-esteem. This may include name calling, rejection, threatening, intimidating or any other acts which can affect the child's physical and emotional growth, and self-esteem.

- **Neglect**

Neglect occurs when a child's basic needs have consistently not been met to the extent that it has a detrimental effect on the child's health and personal development. These basic needs include food, clothing, shelter and supervision.

- **Sexual Abuse**

Sexual abuse occurs when there has been any (or likely) sexual exploitation of a child by an

adult. Sexual abuse includes any actual, attempted or threatened sexual activity involving children, including intercourse, fondling, oral sex, exhibitionism and exposing the child to pornography.

- **Commercial Sexual Exploitation (CSEC)**

CSEC occurs when a child is sexually abused or exploited in return for cash or any other goods or services. Examples of CSEC include children in prostitution, children involved as subjects in child pornography and child sex tourism.

Volunteer: Includes National Office volunteers, interns, National Board of Directors and Global Village volunteers (HFHA's international volunteering program). Volunteers under the years of 18, must also adhere to the Code of Conduct.

Stakeholder: Includes National Board Directors, Committee Members, Staff (fulltime, part-time, casual), consultants, contractors, interns, volunteers, agents and partners including Habitat for Humanity National Offices (NOs).

Complaint: Includes any expression or communication that suggests that there may have been a breach of this policy, including a breach of HFHA's Code of Conduct.

3. Policy Statement

HFHA strives to be a child safe organisation and to reduce the risk of child abuse in all aspects of HFHA's operations.

HFHA does not tolerate child abuse and will take all necessary measures to reduce the risk of child abuse. This risk will be minimised by employing a number of safeguards, including:

- Defining child abuse in its various forms
- Upholding HFHA's Code of Conduct
- Ensuring appropriate recruitment, selection and screening of all HFHA stakeholders
- Increasing awareness of child protection issues amongst HFHA stakeholders, including staff, volunteers and overseas partners
- Assigning an HFHA staff member as Child Protection Officer
- Establishing clear procedures for dealing with child abuse allegations and policy breaches
- Reviewing child protection policy standards on a regular basis
- Undertaking child protection risk assessments for all projects which include working with children

In addition, HFHA will encourage, respond to and support initiatives that:

- Affirm that all children in all circumstances have the right to feel and be safe and to live free from harm, exploitation and abuse.
- Keep the health and safety of children paramount at all times.
- Ensure that personal dignity and respect for children and young people is maintained through all projects, programs and departments.
- Work both directly and indirectly to reduce the risks children face, both from outside and within the family.

These activities will be assessed throughout the monitoring and evaluation of projects.

4. Policy in Practice

HFHA requires all HFHA stakeholders, including its directors, staff, volunteers, partners and agents to understand and act in accordance with the Child Protection Policy at all times.

HFHA will ensure the rights of the child are held paramount at all times. If an allegation of child abuse or breach of HFHA's Child Protection Policy has been made, HFHA will take steps to fully investigate the matter. Further information on this process is outlined in section 19 and 20 of this document.

4.1 Confidentiality

HFHA recognises the importance of confidentiality in regards to reporting and investigating child protection allegations, and that a breach in confidentiality can have negative effects on the child, their family, the complainant and the alleged offender. In order to protect the interests of the child, their confidentiality will be respected at all times. HFHA will not reveal the name or personal details of those alleged to anyone in or outside the organisation other than to those in charge of the investigation.

4.2 Code of Conduct

HFHA's Child Protection Code of Conduct is designed to minimise the risk of child abuse allegations, policy breaches and serves as a guide for all HFHA stakeholders to conduct themselves in a manner which in turn reduces their own risk of any allegations made against them. On commencement of their association with HFHA, all stakeholders are required to read and commit to HFHA's Child Protection Code of Conduct (Appendix 1). All HFHA stakeholders are expected to be aware of the Code of Conduct and adhere to this at all times during their involvement with HFHA.

4.3 Recruitment

To uphold the principles of Child Protection, the following steps are taken during HFHA's recruitment processes:

- ***Interview and Selection Process***

The requirement of a National Criminal History Check is mentioned during selection processes. For positions that involved direct contact with children or child related projects; specific questions about child safety or situations working directly with children, may be asked as part of the interview process.

- ***Reference checks***

All potential employees undergo at least two comprehensive reference and character checks prior to being offered any position. Reference checks are to be documented and filed accordingly. For positions that involved direct contact with children or child related projects, specific questions regarding the applicant's suitability to work directly with children may be asked as part of verbal reference checks

- ***Criminal Background Checks***

National Criminal History Record Checks (NCHRC) or equivalent, (e.g. Australian Working with Children Check); are undertaken for all staff and other HFHA representatives who are in direct

contact with children or children's information. HFHA reserves the right to not hire staff, or engage with volunteers with a prior conviction directly or indirectly related to child abuse.

All Court Disclosures are required to be assessed, irrespective of the offence and their potential Child Protection risk. See Appendix II for more information.

- a) **HFHA Staff and National Office Volunteers:** HFHA staff (including fulltime, part-time, casual employees, contractors, consultants and interns) and National Office Volunteers will undertake a Criminal History Check as part of the recruitment process. Employment with HFHA is subject to the result of the NCHRC. Once an employee has commenced working with HFHA, NCHRCs will need to *be re-submitted every two years*.
- b) **Global Village Volunteers:** Global Village volunteers over the age of 18 will be required to undertake a Criminal History Check as part of volunteer preparation process. These checks are conducted at the volunteers' expense and processed before the volunteer's Global Village trip. HFHA are able to conduct the NCHRC on the volunteer's behalf through a NCHRC provider. As of January 2017, a NCHRC needs to be completed before every Global Village Build (if volunteer completes two builds within 12 months of their NCHRC check, a new NCHRC does not need to be completed). If the volunteer provides an Australian Working with Children Check, it needs to be validated with the relevant state authority by HFHA before every volunteer build. HFHA will keep the NCHRC on file for three years.

Global Village Volunteers aged less than 18 years at the time of their build are not required to complete a NCHRC. However, Global Village volunteers under 18 years are required to adhere to the Code of Conduct and Child Protection Policy. HFHA also provides a Child Protection Briefing for Children and Young People (under 18 years). The briefing reiterates that the volunteer should uphold the Child Protection Policy, and that as children/young people themselves they too should feel safe at all times whilst participating in the program and know how to report incidents.

4.4 Child Protection Awareness and Training

HFHA recognises the importance of ensuring all stakeholders are aware of child protection issues and their responsibility to uphold the rights of the child at all times.

As part of the induction process for all new HFHA staff members, they receive a copy of HFHA's Child Protection Policy and are briefed on HFHA's Child Protection Policy and procedures.

Annual staff training (or more frequently to introduce any policy changes) is provided by the Child Protection Officer to ensure that:

- a) Staff understand what Child Protection is, understand the HFHA Child Protection Policy and Code of Conduct, why they are both important and how it impacts their work.
- b) Staff understand the reporting procedure and consequences if there is an issue where the Child Protection Policy or Code of Conduct is breached.
- c) Staff have an opportunity to raise any questions, challenges and apprehensions they may have in implementing the Child Protection policy and procedures.
- d) Staff are aware of any changes to the HFHA Child Protection Policy or Code of Conduct.

HFHA National Board Directors are briefed on HFHA's Child Protection Policy and procedures as part

of the Board induction process with the Chair of the Board.

4.5 Australian Child Protection Laws & Regulations

Each state in Australia follows certain processes when investigating or responding to allegations or suspicions of child abuse. Any allegations or suspicions resulting from HFHA activities in Australia will be referred to the relevant state authority by the CEO and CPO.

4.6 International and Local (in field country) Child Protection Laws

All HFHA representatives and stakeholders have a legal obligation to adhere to International and Local (in field country) Child Protection Laws whilst representing HFHA. This obligation is part of the Child Protection Code of Conduct.

4.7 Child Protection Officer

The CEO appoints a Child Protection Officer (CPO) (and an acting CPO in their absence) who is responsible for:

- Ensuring Child Protection Policy and procedures are up to date and relevant
- Monitoring organisation-wide compliance with the Child Protection Policy and procedures
- Coordinating staff induction and trainings/briefings on HFHA Child Protection Policy and Procedures.
- Together with the CEO, jointly responding to any allegations of child abuse, neglect or any other action which directly contradicts HFHA's Child Protection Policy.

4.8 Risk Mitigation

To ensure that HFHA remains committed to implementing the Child Protection Policy, risk management strategies are applied across the organisation. These include:

- Planned activities and programs consider the rights of children and their safety, and every project's risk management plan includes analysis of child protection risks and plans for their mitigation. Management of these risks is monitored through regular project reporting.
- Wherever children are involved in an activity, at least two adult staff members are present at all times, and where possible, open plan spaces are used for activities involving children.
- All HFHA stakeholders are informed about HFHA's Child Protection policy and procedures.
- The Child Protection Policy and Code of Conduct are enforced at all times.
- Child Protection risks are included as a standing item in the Organisation's Risk Register.

4.9 Child Protection and our Overseas Partners

HFHA works with partners to address child protection in our joint development programming and projects. HFHA supports its Partners to understand and comply with Child Protection Policies through:

- Providing guidance on risk identification and minimum requirements for Child Protection (Appendix VII)
- Assistance with their own Child Protection Policy development
- Annual monitoring of policy compliance by HFHA's International Program Team during monitoring trips (refer to Appendix V and VI for monitoring checklist and tools) to ensure partners and secondary partners meet minimum requirements for Child Protection

- Capacity building support for policy implementation as needed.
- Including Child Protection as a cross-cutting theme in overseas project design.

As part of our Partner's Child Protection Policy, HFHA encourages each Partner to put in place a Local Reporting Procedure to include local contacts and referral list of networks.

HFHA has an obligation to report to DFAT any notifications of child abuse and exploitation, code of conduct breaches and policy non-compliance in DFAT funded activities or projects. This includes any incidents from secondary partners. As outlined in our Partnership Agreements, HFHA expects Partner Organisations to alert HFHA of any such incidents or reports immediately, so that these reports can be referred to DFAT.

4.10 Marketing and Communications

HFHA takes steps to ensure the appropriate use of children's images (including photographs, videos, DVDs etc.) in all its marketing activities and communications. All HFHA staff are briefed and receive consent forms to use when collecting content on Global Village builds or project visits. Further information on the appropriate use of stories and photos are in HFHA's Use of Stories and Photos Policy. Steps we have taken to ensure the appropriate use of children's images include the following:

- a) Any image of a child shall not be printed, scanned or distributed without consent from the child's parents/guardians.
- b) All children should be appropriately dressed in images and concern for their dignity and respect will remain paramount at all times.
- c) An image should not be taken which depict children in a submissive or sexually suggestive manner.
- d) An image should not disclose details which could enable the child to be identified.
- e) An image of a child should portray a truthful account of their situation.
- f) No information will be published which will identify the exact location of a child e.g. surname, first name and village name may be changed to protect children's identify; and geo-tagging of photos should be turned off.

4.11 Child Protection and our Global Village Program

Global Village is HFHA's international volunteering program and as it involves members of the public visiting, building with and interacting with people in our project communities. Various procedures are in place to mitigate any risks to children.

- a) **Pre-departure Screening and Awareness Raising**
 - All volunteers (over 18 years old) complete an application form and are interviewed to gauge if the volunteer is a good fit for the program.
 - All volunteers (over 18 years old) complete a NCHRC or provide an Australian Working with Children Check. Applications are not approved until adequate evidence is provided.
 - All volunteers must read and commit to HFHA's Child Protection Policy, which includes HFHA's Code of Conduct, the behavioral guidelines for all HFHA representatives, as well as HFHA's Use of Stories and Photos Policy.
 - All volunteers are provided with a range of pre-departure trainings and briefings which

outline their obligations around child protection including; the Team Member Manual (provided to volunteers up to six months before build departure) and pre-departure briefings (between 1-2 months before build departure).

b) During the Build Trip

- Global Village Team Leaders (voluntary leader of the other volunteers) are required to ensure their team is compliant with HFHA Policies at all times. If at any time a team member does not comply with HFHA policies, Team Leaders are required to inform both the local host coordinator and the HFHA Global Village team immediately.
- All Global Village volunteers are only allowed in project communities with Habitat staff at designated times. They are not left alone with children or families and volunteer activities are not undertaken directly with children. The nature of the program mitigates the risk of participants grooming a child and their family. Global Village volunteers work on our build sites with local construction staff and alongside the beneficiary family.
- Advice on collection of content (including stories and photos) is outlined in the Use of Stories and Photos policy. Where possible, HFHA Global Village staff monitor what photos volunteers are sharing through social media platforms. HFHA Global Village staff also encourages volunteers to use specific hashtags and tagging on social media whilst on their build, which assists with this monitoring.

c) Post-Build

- A debrief call with Team Leaders and post-build surveys to Team Members capture any concerns or issues, such as Child Protection Policy breaches that have not be escalated during the build week.

4.12 Child Protection Policy and Code of Conduct Breaches

A breach occurs when a stakeholder's behaviour contradicts the principles outlined in the Child Protection Policy or the Code of Conduct, but does not constitute child abuse, as described in the definitions (see definitions in Section 1). A complaint of a breach of the Child Protection Policy and the Code of Conduct by any HFHA stakeholder, must be reported to the CPO as soon as possible.

4.13 Child Abuse Complaint

There is an ethical, moral and legal obligation that all incidents of physical, sexual or emotional abuse are reported (see definitions in Section 1 Introduction). Any complaint of any form of child abuse must be reported to the CPO immediately. For allegations connected with DFAT funded projects, any suspected or alleged case of child exploitation, abuse or policy non-compliance must be reported immediately to childwelfare@dfat.gov.au

4.14 Investigation of Complaints

- 1) Any complaint is to be reported to the CPO who will immediately inform the CEO and Chair of the Board. Wherever possible this should be done using the Reporting Form for Suspected Child Abuse or Child Protection Policy Breach (Appendix IV). For all complaints of breaches, the CPO will make an initial assessment of the severity of the breach and the urgency of action. In the event that the alleged perpetrator is the CEO, the CPO will notify the Chair of the HFHA Board of Directors directly. Any relevant donors or third parties (such as DFAT) will be informed as required by agreement with them, where a breach involves an activity which is supported by such a donor or third party.

- 2) The CEO will appoint a team to conduct a formal investigation into the complaint. The investigation team may include HFHA staff (such as Managers) or members of the HFHA Board of Directors. The investigation team will treat all complaints seriously. The investigation will be handled professionally, in confidence and in a timely manner. Procedural fairness will be applied and all decisions made will be in the best interests of the child. HFHA will ensure that the person who raises the complaint is not required to express their suspicion to the person implicated. Individuals who report a suspected breach are not responsible for investigating their concern.
- 3) If the complaint is assessed as being a potential criminal offence, the CEO is required to refer the case onto relevant state, federal, or in the case of National Offices, in-country law enforcement authorities.
- 4) HFHA's investigation should not interfere with any steps being taken by appropriate authorities. Ordinarily this will mean that the HFHA investigation will not proceed until the investigation by authorities is concluded.
- 5) If the alleged perpetrator is an HFHA employee, the CEO has the right to stand them down on full pay (if appropriate), until an investigation has been completed. If the alleged perpetrator is associated with HFHA in a volunteer capacity, they must cease HFHA activities until the investigation has been completed. If the allegations are from previous involvement with HFHA, the alleged perpetrator is not able to reengage with HFHA until the investigation has been completed.
- 6) If the breach concerns a HFHA stakeholder overseas or one of our overseas partners; HFHA will work with the relevant overseas partner and local Habitat office to investigate the matter and to manage the allegation. If it involves a HFHA stakeholder on a Global Village team, HFHA would work with the Host Coordinator, Team Leader and other team members (when required) to investigate the issue.
- 7) The team that conducts the investigation will provide a written report to the CEO setting out what the investigation has discovered and recommendations of action to address the matters raised by the investigation.
- 8) Once an outcome has been determined by the CEO, the people involved will be informed including (where appropriate) the child, family, and alleged perpetrator. Anyone else actively involved will be informed on a need to know basis consistent with confidentiality requirements.
- 9) All necessary steps will be taken after the investigation has been completed to address the outcome. This may include:
 - Compensation for a child harmed
 - Reinstatement of a staff member
 - Necessary actions to address any damaged reputation or confusion amongst HFHA staff and stakeholders
 - Dismissal of the perpetrator
 - Disciplining of a staff member
 - Steps to end engagement of a volunteer with HFHA
 - Requiring any associated organization such as an Affiliate to carry out appropriate steps including those set out above.

HFHA will keep a record of all complaints and the investigation and outcomes of those complaints. This record should be appropriately kept so as to protect confidentiality.

NB: Habitat for Humanity International has also provided a mechanism for raising in good faith any suspected violations of the laws or of Habitat for Humanity's policies. MySafeWorkPlace (MSWP) is a

hotline and website provided by a third party service. This system can be used when the reporter wishes to remain anonymous.

Reports can be made online or via telephone 24 hours a day, 7 days a week:

- Within the United States, call toll-free 1-800-461-9330
- Outside the United States, call collect 1-720-514-4400
- Online at <https://www.mysafeworkplace.com/SplashPages/habitat/habitat.html>

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2. Habitat for Humanity International. Child Labour Policy
3. Habitat for Humanity Vietnam (July 2007) Child Labour and Protection Policy. DRAFT
4. United Nations (1990) Convention on the Rights of the Child (UN CRC)
5. International Labour Organisation (1973) Convention No. 138 (ratified 2003)
6. International Labour Organisation (1999) Convention No. 182 (ratified 2000)
7. DFAT (2017) Child Protection Policy
8. ChildWise (2006) Child Protection Strategy outline
9. NSW Ombudsman (2004) Child Protection in the workplace: Responding to allegations against employees.
10. DFAT Child Protection Code of Conduct 2013, Attachment 2 of DFAT Child Protection Policy 2013

Appendix I: Habitat for Humanity Australia's Child Protection Code of Conduct

As a HFHA representative, I **WILL**:

- Treat all children and young people with respect at all times, regardless of culture, creed, gender, colour, language, political or other opinion, nationality or ethnicity, disability or any other difference.
- Ensure that I am fully aware of HFHA's Child Protection Policy, principles and procedures.
- Promote a safe environment where children (and young people, parents and families) feel safe, empowered and able to communicate openly.
- Act professionally and maintain appropriate boundaries at all times.
- Avoid circumstances where my behaviour may be misinterpreted as hostile, suggestive, inappropriate or neglectful.
- Always ensure that a minimum of two adults are present when with a child. If it is not possible to have another adult present, ensure that I am at least visible to others.
- Act swiftly and ensure that any perceived risk to a child is immediately reported via the procedures listed.
- Immediately report concerns or allegations of Policy and Code of Conduct non-compliance, child exploitation or abuse; to HFHA senior management, Child Protection Officer or build team leader, regardless of whether this has resulted in the harm of a child.
- Immediately disclose all charges, convictions and other outcomes of an offence, which occurred before or occurs during my association with HFHA.
- Keep all reported cases and allegations (proven or otherwise) confidential at all times.
- Adhere to international or local (in field country) child protection laws
- Comply with all relevant Australian and local legislation, including labour laws in relation to child labour.

As an HFHA representative, I **WILL NOT**:

- Engage in any behaviour (including use of language or physical) with a child which is, or could be interpreted as inappropriate, offensive, discriminatory or suggestive.
- Engage in any unwarranted or inappropriate touching of a child.
- Engage in any form of sexual intercourse or sexual activity with a child or any persons under the age of 18 years, regardless of the age of consent.
- Spend time alone with a child or children in their home or community.
- Invite unaccompanied child or children – including inviting a child to visit my home, hotel accommodation or office alone, or take children alone in my car (except in emergency situations, or if they are at immediate risk of injury or in physical danger).
- Undertake or participate in any activities with children present which are illegal.
- Hire children as domestic or any other form of labour.
- Engage in special treatment of a child e.g. spending inappropriate special time with

the child, inappropriately giving gifts, showing special favours to them but not other children, allowing the child to overstep rules.

- Use physical punishment on children
- Engage in testing of boundaries with a child e.g. undressing in front of the child, talking about sex, 'accidental' touching, for example, of the genitals.
- Misuse photographs for the purpose of exploiting children
- Exchange personal contact details with children and have ongoing communication with them after my visit to the community with Habitat for Humanity.
- Visit or return to HFHA communities/families I have previously visited, without the facilitation of Habitat for Humanity.
- Give gifts or special favours to a particular child or family member. This can appear to be grooming and shifting the power dynamic between you and the child and their family.

Children in Stories and Photos

I will ensure the appropriate use of children's images in my emails, donor updates and communications. As such:

- Obtain informed consent from the child and parent or guardian of the child before photographing or filming a child. As part of this I must explain how the photograph or film will be used.
- All children should be appropriately dressed in images and concern for their dignity and respect will remain paramount at all times.
- An image should not be taken which could depict the child in a sexually suggestive manner.
- An image should not in any way include information which will identify the child.
- An image of a child should portray a truthful account of their situation.
- I will protect the identity and location of a child by not reporting their full names and exact location. HFHA requires you to not publish surnames and village names when you communicate stories or display photos of children or adults.
- Assess and endeavor to comply with local traditions or restrictions for reproducing personal images before acquire consent to photograph or film a child or adult.
- I will have GPS tracking turned off when taking pictures/video of children, so that when they are uploaded to social media the photo will not contain data that can be used to identify the location of the child.
- I will not add location mapping to any photos shared through Instagram, Facebook, Snapchat, Twitter and any other social media platforms.
- Use any computers, mobile phones, video cameras, cameras or social media appropriately and never to exploit or harass children or access child exploitation material through any medium.
- Ensure file labels, Meta data or text descriptions do not reveal identifying information about a child when sending images electronically or publishing images in any form.

I have reviewed the HFHA Child Protection Code of Conduct and I agree to adhere to these standards

throughout my association with HFHA. I understand that the onus is on me as a person associated with HFHA, to use common sense and avoid actions or behaviours that could be construed as child exploitation and abuse.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Signature: _____

Name of Witness: _____

Date: _____

Signature of Witness: _____

Appendix II: National Criminal History Record Checks

State and Federal Police conduct Criminal Background Checks.

Habitat for Humanity Australia is able to conduct police checks via an appropriately accredited provider. As at 1 July 2011 HFHA has an agreement in place with Personnel Risk Management Group Pty Ltd (PRM).

PRM is an accredited user of CrimTrac which provides National Criminal History Record Checking Services (NCHRC Services) in cooperation with the Australian Police Services. By using PRM's online service HFHA is able to:

- Input applications via a unique and secure web log-in
- View results online
- Print certificates when required
- Obtain copies of any disclosable outcomes (police records) to nominated authorised officer

The majority of checks are completed within one business day unless (a) the check reveals a conviction or (b) someone with a similar name to the applicant has a conviction and the check is then manually processed **by each state police force** which can take approximately one to four weeks.

Applicants must complete an application and consent form and provide certified copy of 100 points of ID to HFHA to process their application. HFHA will keep the NCHRC on file for three years.

HFHA are able to conduct the NCHRC on the volunteer's behalf through a NCHRC provider. A NCHRC needs to be completed before every Global Village Build (if volunteer completes two builds within 12 months of their NCHRC, a new NCHRC does not need to be completed). Australian Working with Children Checks can be provided in lieu of a NCHRC. A certified copy of the Australian Working with Children Check card needs to be provided and validated with the relevant state authority before every volunteer build or engagement with HFHA.

If police checks are not attainable (particularly in instances where people from other countries are volunteering with HFHA and a NCHRC equivalent is not available in their country) a Statutory Declaration needs to be signed and disclose any child abuse or exploitation offences.

HFHA has a process for reviewing and assessing National Criminal History Check Court Disclosures; see below for process and related form. **All Court Disclosures are required to be assessed using this form, irrespective of the offence and their potential Child Protection risk.**

Assessment Procedure for National Criminal History Check Disclosures

Habitat for Humanity Australia (HFHA) has a process for reviewing and assessing National Criminal History Check Court Disclosures. In the event of disclosure of criminal record, this process determines whether it is appropriate for the individual with a Disclosable court outcome to continue their involvement with HFHA (for example participate in Global Village Program, HFHA Board directorship, office volunteering, employment, etc.). HFHA will assess the relevance of a person's criminal history to the inherent requirements of the position based on the condition outlined below. Having a criminal record does not automatically preclude an individual from participating in activities with HFHA. HFHA recognises that National Criminal History Checks alone are not a rigorous or full assessment of suitability for a role and HFHA will undertake a comprehensive assessment on a case by case basis of an individuals' involvement in the event of a National Criminal History Check Court Disclosure.

Name:
Position Applied for: <i>(e.g. Global Village Volunteer, Committee Member)</i>
Details of Criminal History:
Date of Offence:
Seriousness of the conviction/s or offence/s and its relevance to the job in question: -
Whether in relation to the offence there was a finding of guilt but without conviction, which indicates a less serious view of the offence by the courts:
The age of the applicant when the offences occurred: -
Length of time since the offence occurred: -
Whether the applicant has a pattern of offences: -
The circumstances in which the offence took place, for example if it was an offence that took place in a work, domestic or personal context: -
Whether the applicant's circumstances have changed since the offence was committed (for example, past drug use): -

The attitude of the job applicant to their previous offending behaviour: -
Character, work and professional references: -
Other relevant mitigating circumstances: -

Action Taken: **Approved or not approved** application for position of **(insert position)**

HFHA is determined that the inherent requirements of the activity (**list requirements of activities or association with HFHA**), i.e. *participating in a Global Village Build* include:

- *Travel overseas to a developing country*
- *Fundraise a donation to the Global Village Programme*
- *Be part of a team*
- *Build in a community*

We decided that the nature of the offence **does or does not** impact the inherent requirements of the activity.

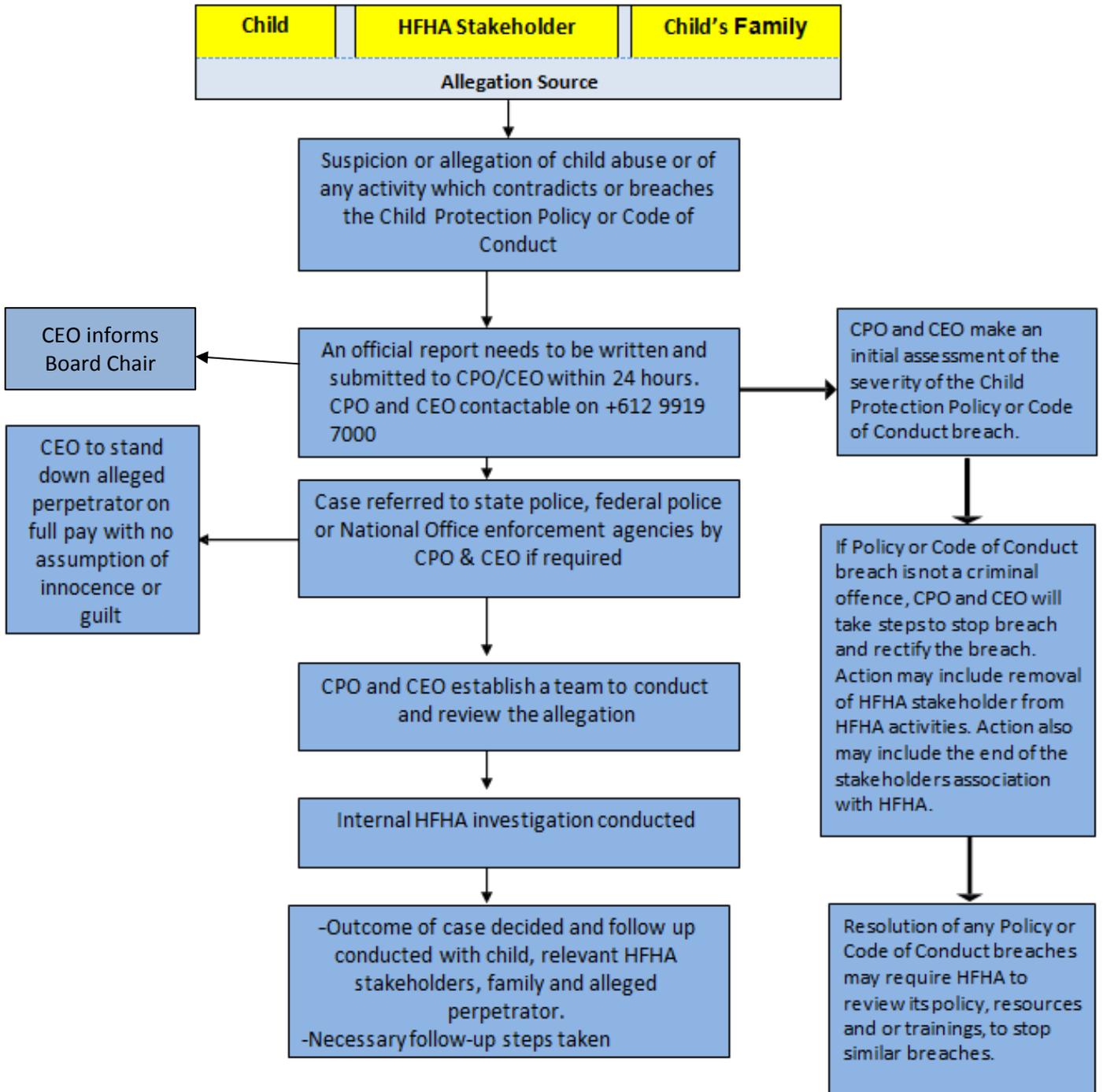
We would therefore like to **accept or deny** (full name of person) position on the (name of build/committee or activity).

Signature of CEO or their representative:

Signature of Child Protection Officer:

Signature of Relevant Functional Manager:

Appendix III: Process of Handling & Responding to Accusations of Child Abuse



Appendix IV: Reporting Form for Suspected Child Abuse Breaches

HFHA REPORTING FORM FOR SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE and Child Protection Policy breaches

- This form is to be fully completed **as soon as possible** after becoming aware of a potential breach in the child protection policy.
- Once completed, send this report to the Habitat for Humanity Australia CPO and CEO. Phone 02 9919 7000 and email complaints@habitat.org.au
- Until further directions have been passed on by the CPO & CEO, ensure that all the information listed below remains **CONFIDENTIAL**. It is important that confidentiality is maintained when making a report (by reporting only to the designated person). Any breach in confidentiality can have negative effects on the child, their family, the complainant and the alleged offender.
- It is important to note that those who report suspected Child Abuse or Child Protection Policy or Code of Conduct breaches are not required to investigate their concern.
- If you do not have all the information necessary to complete this form. Please only complete the sections based on the knowledge you have.
- All reports and concerns will be treated seriously, handled professionally, in confidence and in a timely manner. Course of justice will be applied and all decisions made will be in the best interests of the child.
- An alternate reporting mechanism is also available called MySafeWorkPlace (MSWP). MSWP is a hotline and website provided by a third party service. This system can be used when the reporter wishes to remain anonymous. Reports can be made online or via telephone 24 hours a day, 7 days a week:
 - Within the United States, call toll-free 1-800-461-9330
 - Outside the United States, call collect 1-720-514-4400
 - Online at <https://www.mysafeworkplace.com/SplashPages/habitat/habitat.html>

Part One: About You

Name:

Your role or association with Habitat for Humanity Australia:

Details of any other organisation involved:

Your relationship to the child or young person concerned:

Part Two: About the Child(ren)/Young Person(s)

Name(s):

Sex:
Age:
Address:
Who does this young person(s) live with?

Your Concerns
How did your concern arise? Was any form of abuse observed or suspected? Was any breach observed or suspected?
Was an allegation made by the child? Did the child or someone else disclose abuse to you? Who disclosed the policy breach? Date, time and place of any incident(s):
Describe the nature of your concern/allegation:
Observations made by you of the child's state (mental, physical, emotional) or observations made by you of the policy breach:
If you spoke with the child(ren) concerned, write down exactly what the child said, and what you said:
Any other relevant information?
Were other children either involved in the incident or aware of it?

Who else have you discussed or reported this incident to? When and where did this occur?

List any action that has been taken so far:

- *I declare that, to the best of my knowledge, the information listed above is true and accurate.*
- *I understand that it is my duty at all times to ensure that the rights of children are held paramount.*
- *I understand the serious implications in falsely accusing or reporting a HFHA stakeholder of actual or suspected Child abuse.*

Completed by: _____

Date: _____

Signature: _____

Appendix V: Child Protection – Policy Implementation Checklist

To be completed annually during a monitoring visit

Q	QUESTIONS TO ASK	YES/NO	COMMENTS
1.	Are all staff familiar with the child protection policy? Have all staff signed the Code of Conduct?		
2.	Have partner staff signed the Code of Conduct?		
3.	Is there a procedure in place for recording, investigating and acting against child abuse allegations?		
4.	Are thorough reference checks conducted for new staff? Any criminal history checks?		
5.	Is the child protection policy reviewed frequently? (Please refer to most recent policy review checklist)		
6.	Have there been any staff trainings on child protection issues?		
7.	Are steps taken to ensure the appropriate use of children's images in all marketing activities and communications? -Ensuring children are appropriately dressed -Ensuring no images are taken of children which could be viewed in a sexually suggestive manner -Ensuring that images truthfully reflect their situation -Obtaining child/guardian permission to take/use the photos		
8.	Are there reporting mechanisms in place for monitoring child rights and child protection issues at project level?		

Who is the current Child Protection Officer/Focal Point at the NO? _____

Actions for follow up

Action Required	Person Responsible	Resources Needed	Completion Date

Check Completed by: _____

Date: _____

Appendix VI: Child Protection Policy Checklist

This checklist has been developed by Habitat for Humanity Australia as a tool for partner organisations to develop their Child Protection policy and supporting guidelines and procedures. It has been adapted from Save The Children's Child Protection Policy Checklist (2011).

The purpose of a Child Protection Policy is to provide a statement of an organisation's commitment to best practice in child protection. A Child Protection Policy:

- Demonstrates commitment to keeping children safe from harm and abuse
- Educates everyone about child abuse and the rights of children
- Provides a practical guide to the protection of children from abuse within the organisation
- Supports staff and volunteers to work safely and positively with children.

The following checklist ensures that an organisation's child protection policy meets the minimum standards for ACFID and DFAT Accreditation.

When to use this tool

The following tool should be used as part of the review cycle for Habitat for Humanity Australia's Child Protection policy, every two to five years. Habitat for Humanity Australia should use this tool in assessing the quality of our partner organisation's Child Protection policies and procedures. It should be updated to reflect changes in the ACFID or DFAT Child Protection Policies and changes in child protection legislation.

Habitat for Humanity Australia Child Protection Policy Checklist Tool

Check information	
Policy Title	
Partner Organisation	
Date of check	
Check conducted by:	
Name	
Position	
Name	
Position	
Due date for agreed actions	

Item	Description Or Example	In Place	Partially In Place	Not In Place	Action Required To Meet Standard
Title	Example: [Organisation] Child Protection Policy or Child Safe policy or Child Safe and Friendly Environment Policy				
Aim/Objective/Vision	A clear statement that sets out the main objectives of the policy including information about the organisation’s philosophy regarding child protection				
Scope	Example: The Policy applies to staff, volunteers, visitors etc.				
Definitions	Include a definition of a child and the organisation’s				

Item	Description Or Example	In Place	Partially In Place	Not In Place	Action Required To Meet Standard
	understanding and definition of child abuse, child rights and child protection				
Code Of Conduct	<p>The Code should set out the appropriate boundaries and professional standards for working safely and respectfully with children and young people; The DFAT CP Policy provides a sample Code of Conduct. This must be signed by all personnel implementing DFAT-funded activities.</p> <p>The Code of Conduct should meet the universal child protection standards but also be culturally relevant. It can be translated.</p>				
Complaints Process	The Policy should include a documented child protection complaints management procedure for staff, volunteers, partners, children and parents to raise concerns for the safety or wellbeing of children.				
Child Safe Recruitment Procedures	<p>These should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-employment screening procedures such as criminal record and verbal reference checks, targeted interview questions for staff and volunteers who will be working with children • A commitment that the organisation will not permit personnel to work with children if they pose an unacceptable risk to children’s safety or wellbeing • A provision in all employment contracts that the organisation has the right to dismiss or transfer to other duties personnel who breach the child protection code of conduct. 				

Item	Description Or Example	In Place	Partially In Place	Not In Place	Action Required To Meet Standard
Child Protection Training	Regular provision of child protection training				
Policy Review	Provision for policy review every two to five years				
DFAT Compliance	A statement should be included that says the organisation must comply with all child protection requirements stated in DFAT's funding agreements				
Child Protection/Safe Focal Point	The Policy can make an appointment for a person within the organisation who can act as a child protection contact point.				
Child Protection Risk Strategy	The Policy or accompanying Guidelines can include a Child Protection Risk matrix or steps to identifying and managing child protection risks across all activities of the organisation.				
Child/Youth feedback and Child/Youth Participant strategies	Child feedback forms and child/youth strategies developed or used by the organisation can be included				
Positive Discipline	Positive discipline or safe behavioural management techniques can be included to guide staff working with children or providing support to parents.				
Safe internet, social media and email use	Safe internet and social media procedures can be included when staff or children/young people are using the organisations' computers or communicating with staff and children or young people via email, social media or SMS				
Relevant laws, child protection authorities and local reporting and referral details	Attach relevant laws such as child protection, mandatory reporting, child protection authority contact numbers and local reporting/referral contact details.				

Appendix VII: Child Protection Guidelines for Implementing Partners

Managing Child Protection Risks on Habitat for Humanity Projects

Why Child Protection?

Managing child protection risks effectively is critical to safeguarding the children and families who we work with, protecting our staff and volunteers, and protecting the reputation of Habitat for Humanity. Child protection risks need to be assessed as part of standard risk management processes at design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation stages – and managed throughout the lifecycle of an activity. Child Protection should be considered at the project level, as well as at the organisational level.

Habitat for Humanity is a child-focused organisation

A common perception in HFH is that we are not a “child-focused organisation” and therefore are not required to consider Child Protection. In fact, any organisation that works with families in communities where there are vulnerable children can be considered as working with children. HFH also engages children directly in program activities through programs such as youth build.

HFH’s programs include several potentially high risk areas to children, including construction activities and sending volunteers into communities through the GV program.

Understanding risk in your context

[DFAT’s Child Protection Risk Assessment](#)¹ can help you to identify the overall child protection risk of your context by helping you to analyse:

1. The level of working with or contact with children in your programs.
2. Child protection controls you already have in place and the strength of these.

Through these steps, you can start to identify possible gaps in your existing child protection policies and systems and plan to address these.

Examples of common child protection risks in HFH programs

The below table includes some common potential risks from HFH programs. This list is intended as a reference to help you identify risks and possible actions to mitigate them. The list is not comprehensive, and you should consider at the start of each project or activity, what specific risks need to be considered and managed.

Project Activity	Potential Risks	Risk Mitigation
Construction activities	Children playing on construction site exposed to onsite hazards including tools or hazardous materials.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Briefing to home partners and labourers at start of construction, and monitoring by project staff. Fence off dangerous build sites where possible.
	Children hired as labourers by local contractors	Brief contractors prior to signing contracts on HFH stance against child labour, and monitoring by project staff.
	Children playing in area where construction materials delivered	Try to schedule deliveries during school hours and keep children away from the area where materials are being unloaded.
Training activity with child participants	Child left alone with trainer	Ensure all trainers working with children (whether they be HFH staff, local partners staff or community volunteers) have undergone internal child protection screening processes.
Staff/Volunteers have opportunity to spend time alone with children (Children may include project beneficiaries, community members, child GV volunteers eg youth build, school builds)	Child abuse perpetrated by a volunteer or staff member	<p>Prior to employment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All staff are screened through reference checks and police checks (where possible). All staff are inducted on Child Protection and sign Code of Conduct. <p>Prior to GV volunteers visiting site:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All volunteers screened through police checks (sending country). Volunteers briefed on CP Policy and sign Code of Conduct (sending country). <p>During GV build/volunteer visit:</p>

Volunteers provide gifts to individual children	Gift giving provides opportunity for grooming of children for future abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GV Hosting staff and Team Leader remind volunteers of expectations under Code of Conduct as part of briefing. • GV Hosting staff and Team Leader monitor behaviour of volunteers throughout build and take action immediately to address any of code of conduct breaches that occur, including reporting to GV Managers in hosting and sending NOs.
Staff/Volunteers have access to personal information about children	Volunteers return to visit child/family	
Stories and photos taken by volunteers and staff of children	Inappropriately clothed children included in photos	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All staff and volunteers are briefed on Use of Stories and Photos Policy (or similar). • Communications staff ensure photos/stories comply with these standards prior to publication, including ensuring appropriate consent is in place. • Volunteer photos are monitored by GV sending staff through social media feeds during and post build and volunteers are asked to remove any inappropriate photos. • Geo-tagging switched off when taking photos to ensure locations cannot be easily identified.
	Personal information of children made publicly available	
	Children's photos/information published without parent or guardian's permission	

Minimum Child Protection Compliance for HFHA Funded Projects

HFHA requires NOs we work with to maintain certain minimum standards to be eligible to receive HFHA funding. HFHA also requires NOs to meet client protection standards which extend to children under SOE 6.1.6ⁱⁱ. These should be considered as industry standard, and all NOs are encouraged to have these systems in place across their organisation, regardless of funding source.

Child Protection Policy

1. The NO has a current Child Protection Policy and Code of Conduct (NB, NOs are encouraged to develop their own contextually relevant policies, but can use HFHA's Policy while their own policy is under development).
2. The Policy includes a clear process for recording, investigating and acting against child abuse allegations. This includes that any suspected or alleged abuse in an HFHA supported project is reported to HFHA immediately (NB other institutional donors may have similar requirements).
3. The Policy includes provision for regular review (recommended every 2 years).

There are many online resources available to support organisations to develop/review Child Protection Policies. A useful starting point is [this guideline from ACFID](#).

The Child Protection Policy should reflect the following actions which are required to be implemented by each NO:

Child Protection Focal Point

4. Each NO has a staff member who is assigned the role of Child Protection Focal Point (generally an HR staff member) whose role it is to ensure implementation and review of the Child Protection Policy and to act as primary contact for any allegations made.

Staff Training and Recruitment

5. Recruitment processes include some screening of candidates for Child Protection (depending on what's possible locally this could include police checks, reference checks, and questions during interview). Implementation and results of these processes should be documented by HR.
6. All new staff are inducted on Child Protection and sign the Code of Conduct on starting.
7. All staff receive annual refresher training on Child Protection.

Many child-focused NGOs are able to support implementation of local training if you don't have existing staff with this capacity. HFHA has also developed training materials which are available [on sharepoint](#).

Local Partners

8. All implementing partners are required to comply with the NO's Child Protection Policy as part of agreements signed.
9. Signed Code of Conducts are provided for all implementing partner staff working on HFH funded projects.

Project Implementation

10. Each project's risk management plan includes child protection risks relevant to the project and plans to mitigate them.
11. Child protection risks are monitored by project staff as part of regular project risk monitoring and reporting.

ⁱ Also available at: <http://dfat.gov.au/about-us/publications/Pages/child-protection-policy.aspx>

ⁱⁱ The NO has established an Ethics Covenant and Code of Conduct to which each of its staff members, directors, and volunteers agrees to adhere, including conduct related to the protection of people in the communities in which we work from sexual abuse, corruption, exploitation, and other human rights violations. If working in communities through implementing partners or sub-contractors, the NO requires that those organizations similarly bind the conduct of their personnel.