

## **International Lawyers Project (ILP) Safeguarding Policy**

### **Introduction**

1. ILP is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all those who come into contact with our charity and beneficiaries of assistance, particularly vulnerable people including children and adults at risk. This policy outlines our approach to safeguarding. While we do not usually work directly with vulnerable people, we recognise our responsibility to ensure that our operations and partnerships do not put vulnerable people at risk.

### **Scope**

2. This policy applies to all Board members, staff, consultants and volunteers representing ILP.
3. This policy seeks to protect all those who come into contact with ILP, including:
  - a. our beneficiaries;
  - b. our staff;
  - c. our consultants;
  - d. our volunteers;
  - e. our project partners; and
  - f. anyone else with whom we work or who may be affected by our work.

### **Definitions**

4. The following definitions will be used in this policy:
  - a. Safeguarding: protecting people's health, wellbeing and human rights, enabling them to live free from harm, abuse, and neglect;
  - b. Harm, abuse and neglect may include any of the following (non-exhaustive list):
    - i. sexual harassment, abuse and exploitation;
    - ii. the charity's culture, where that may allow poor behaviour and poor accountability;
    - iii. people abusing a position of trust or authority;
    - iv. bullying or harassment;
    - v. breaches of a health and safety policy, regulations or requirements;
    - vi. discrimination on any of the grounds in the UK's Equality Act 2010 or applicable national or international law;
    - vii. data breaches, including those under the UK's General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR);
    - viii. domestic abuse;
    - ix. self-neglect;
    - x. physical or emotional abuse;
    - xi. extremism and radicalisation;
    - xii. forced or child marriage;
    - xiii. modern slavery and human trafficking;
    - xiv. female genital mutilation;

- c. Vulnerable person/people: child(ren) or adult(s) at risk;
- d. Child(ren): anyone under the age of 18;
- e. Adult(s) at risk: an adult who is or appears to be unable to take care of or protect themselves against harm, exploitation, abuse or neglect.

### **Our Commitment**

- 5. ILP is committed to:
  - a. ensuring that the activities of our staff and Board members do not put vulnerable individuals at risk;
  - b. promoting best practices in safeguarding among our staff and Board members;
  - c. advising our volunteers and project partners of the terms of this policy and our Code of Ethics and the expectation of compliance;
  - d. responding promptly and appropriately to any safeguarding concerns that arise.

### **Projects and Partnerships**

- 6. Prior to working with any volunteer or project partner we will:
  - a. conduct thorough due diligence to ensure alignment with this policy, including considering the safeguarding policies and practices applying to the volunteer or partner;
  - b. consider whether the nature of the project requires UK Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) (or equivalent) checks to be carried out and discuss the same with the proposed volunteer/project partner;
  - c. carry out this due diligence as part of ILP's general due diligence when working with partners.
- 7. ILP reserves the right to terminate a volunteer or partner's involvement with a project where it considers that volunteer or partner to be in breach of their safeguarding responsibilities or where a DBS (or equivalent) check is refused.

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

- 8. The following are responsible for safeguarding within ILP:
  - a. Board of Trustees: ultimate responsibility for safeguarding;
  - b. Executive Director: responsible for ensuring proper implementation of this policy;
  - c. Safeguarding Officer: the Operations Manager has day-to-day responsibility for implementing this policy, including communicating the policy to all staff, ensuring all staff are suitably trained and supported, the initial handling of any safeguarding concerns under the direction of the Executive Director, and maintain the Safeguarding Register;
  - d. All staff are responsible for familiarising themselves with this policy, communicating the policy and the **Code of Ethics** to all project partners and volunteers, and reporting any safeguarding concerns as set out below.

## Reporting Concerns

9. Any safeguarding concerns should be reported immediately to the Safeguarding Officer by email to [operations@internationallawyersproject.org](mailto:operations@internationallawyersproject.org) or by telephone to +44 (0) 7767 102694.
10. If the concern involves criminal activity or immediate risk of harm, the local police or other suitable authority should be contacted directly.
11. ILP will maintain confidentiality and protect the identity of anyone reporting concerns in good faith save as may be required for the safety of any individual or under the laws of England and Wales (including under any decision of a UK Court, tribunal or pursuant to any UK statutory regulator's powers).
12. Where any third party has concerns about ILP activities that are not of a safeguarding nature they are advised to consult ILP's **External Complaints Policy**, which is available on its [website](#).

## Safeguarding Register

13. A safeguarding register is maintained by the Safeguarding Officer, which must be used to report any safeguarding incidences.

## Responding to Concerns

14. All concerns will be taken seriously, investigated promptly by or under the direction of the Executive Director and, where appropriate, referred to statutory bodies, emergency services and/or other relevant authorities. All Board members and staff shall support and comply with any such investigations.
15. ILP will cooperate fully with any external investigations by statutory bodies. All Board members and staff shall support and comply with any such investigations.
16. Following an investigation, ILP will take such action as it considers appropriate, which may include suspending or terminating partnerships.
17. Details of any investigation, referrals and actions shall be recorded in the Safeguarding Register.

## Safe Recruitment, Background Checks and Training

18. ILP conducts appropriate background checks on all staff, and to ensure identity, suitability and right to work. However, because ILP does not work directly with vulnerable people, Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) checks are not routinely conducted.
19. In the case of high-risk projects, DBS checks may be required of ILP staff, volunteers and project partners at the discretion of the Executive Director. This may include a requirement for checks via any legitimate equivalent to DBS in the country where a project is based. If the Executive Director requires such checks to be carried out, the consent and co-operation of volunteers and project partners will be required failing which they will be unable to work on the said project.
20. All staff will receive safeguarding training appropriate to their role.
21. Safeguarding will be included in induction and ongoing training processes for new staff.

### **Code of Ethics and ILP Policy Framework**

22. ILP has a comprehensive policy framework which all staff are expected to be familiar with and to comply. Such policies include **Risk, Equity, Diversity & Inclusion, Staff Wellbeing, Whistleblowing, Grievance** and **External Complaints Policies**. Regular training is provided to ensure staff remain up to date with ILP policies.
23. All Board members, staff, partners and volunteers must adhere to ILP's **Code of Ethics** which includes:
  - a. Acting honestly, truthfully and with integrity in all of our work;
  - b. Acting responsibly and respectfully toward the communities in which we work and whom we serve; and
  - c. Treating all individuals with respect and dignity.

### **Data Protection and Information Sharing**

24. ILP will handle all personal information in line with data protection legislation and our **Data Protection Policy**.
25. Such personal information, details of any investigations and the contents of the Safeguarding Register shall remain confidential and will not be released to any third party save as may be required for the safety of any individual or under the laws of England and Wales (including under any decision of a UK Court, tribunal or pursuant to any UK statutory regulator's powers).

### **Risk Assessment**

26. ILP will conduct regular risk assessments of our activities, projects and partnerships to identify potential safeguarding risks and implement appropriate mitigation measures. High risk activities, projects and partnerships shall be referred to the Executive Director who shall record them in the Risk Register and shall take such action as is deemed appropriate, which may include terminating a project or partnership.

### **Review**

27. This policy will be reviewed annually or more frequently if required by changes in legislation or best practice guidelines.

**December 2024**