



## **UNION AID CODE OF CONDUCT**

### **1. SCOPE AND APPLICABILITY**

Code of conduct is a statement and description of required behaviors, responsibilities, and actions expected from employees of UA and vendors. UA code of conduct focuses on professional, legal, ethical and social behaviors and is applicable to all employees as individuals and as organization in their social or work life, providing guidance on how to act in cases of doubt and/or confusion. To meet this commitment, UA has issued this code of conduct applicable to all employees across all departments and sub offices and aligned employee conduct with the organizational values and ethics that reinforce UA's vision, mission, values, procedures and policies.

This code of conduct is not exhaustive and may not anticipate every situation which may morally, ethically, professionally, legally compromise the employee or UA's interests. In this regard UA expects its employees to use their common sense and sound judgment. However, compliance with this Code is a mandatory obligation owed by all employees to each other and to UA. Breach of this Code or any requirements mentioned in this manual will result in disciplinary action and may lead up to and including summarily dismissal or other appropriate disciplinary actions.

### **2. CODE OF CONDUCT POLICIES**

#### **2.1 EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES**

UA as an organization is committed to equality of opportunity and inclusion. Equal opportunity policy ensures that there is no discrimination in the recruitment, retention, training and development of staff on the basis of gender, marital status, religion and belief, political opinion, race, age, disability, socio-economic or cultural background, on the basis of having or not having dependents, or any other. Efforts shall be made that men and women staff members have equal access to opportunities at all levels of the organization through ensuring gender sensitive selection processes for appointments, promotion and training. UA will ensure to increase the proportion of women staff members at all levels where they are under-represented. Until gender balance is achieved at all levels, affirmative action will be taken at all levels (Official/Employee), priority will be given to women candidates when they are equally qualified in a gender imbalanced environment.

#### **2.2 HARASSMENT AT WORK**

Harassment of employees in the workplace based on characteristics protected by Afghanistan law and/or including but not limited to sex, race, color, ethnicity, caste, ancestry, religion, age, disability or marital status is counter to the mission of UA and such violation is to be treated as disciplinary matter and/or provisions given in law of the land. It is UA's policy to prohibit harassment of any of its employees by anyone, including any supervisor, co-worker, vendor, client or customer. For the purposes of this policy, "workplace" also includes organization sponsored social events, work related travel or similar situations connected with employment.

UA take allegations of harassment seriously, respond promptly to complaints and do not tolerate retaliation against individuals alleging or cooperating with an investigation of harassment. Where it is determined that inappropriate conduct has occurred, UA act promptly to eliminate the conduct and impose corrective action as necessary up to and including termination of

employees responsible for such acts and sever relationships with vendors, clients or customers if required.

### **2.3 SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

UA fully complies with the **Government Acts related to Protection against Harassment of Women at Workplace**. Sexual Harassment is defined as any unwelcome sexual advance, request for sexual favors or other verbal or written communication or physical conduct of a sexual nature or sexually demeaning attitudes, causing interference with work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment, or the attempt to punish the complainant for refusal to comply to such a request or is made a condition for employment, is unacceptable behavior in the workplace, including any interaction or situation that is linked to official work or official activity outside the office. All such acts are a violation of UA policies.

UA's policies prohibits any behavior on the part of an UA employee which constitutes any form of sexual misconduct, including sexual harassment, sexual exploitation, and sexual violence towards any other staff member, client, beneficiary, or other individual participating in a UA activity. Retaliation for reports of sexual misconduct is strictly prohibited and will not be tolerated; Sexual misconduct and/or retaliation of any kind will result in termination of employment. For the purposes of this policy, (UA) employees include international staff, national staff, volunteers, interns' consultants, temporary employees, field staff or temporary contractors. UA is committed to providing a work environment that is free of discrimination and unlawful harassment. Actions, words, jokes, or comments based on an individual's sex, race ethnicity, age, religion, or any other legally protected characteristics are not acceptable. As an example, sexual conduct (both overt and subtle) is a form of employee misconduct that is demeaning to another person, undermines the integrity of the employment relationship, and is strictly prohibited.

Reporting methods and mechanisms and circumstances under which harassment cases are to be dealt with are explained in detail under **Section H, Chapter XXV- Disciplinary Policy and Procedures** of this manual.

### **2.4. ABUSE AND VIOLENCE**

UA is committed to providing a safe work environment. Any form of violence, threats of violence, intimidation of others or attempts to instill fear in others will not be tolerated. The possession of a weapon in the workplace, or while conducting UA's work, menacing behavior or "stalking" is all prohibited actions. Violations of this policy may lead to disciplinary action up to and including termination and the involvement of appropriate law enforcement authorities. Any person who exhibits such behavior may be removed from the work site for investigation purposes immediately. UA will attempt to resolve the complaint within a reasonable period of time while preserving the confidentiality to report situations that may have a risk of violence.

UA requires all of its employees to abstain/refrain from any sort of Child abuse which could be physical, sexual, and emotional and in neglect forms. Child labor as per law is strictly prohibited.

### **2.5. APOLITICAL, NON-SECTARIAN POLICY**

UA is a non-sectarian, apolitical, non-profit oriented organization without regard to sectarian or political considerations in areas where it works. It is, therefore, necessary for all UA employees, both individually and collectively, to abstain from any activity that may be perceived as aligning them or UA for or against a sectarian or political cause, issue or faction.

Adherence to this policy is one of UA's major strengths; it underpins much of our effectiveness and is a condition for assignment to any UA position. Employees at all levels are required to comply with this policy in order to preserve and enhance this organization's reputation and effectiveness.

Individuals may, of course, speak out as individuals on matters of personal concern, and this policy in no way abrogates that right. Care must be taken, however, to assure that such statements are neither made, nor are likely to be interpreted as being made, on behalf of UA.

In politically sensitive situations, Employees must be acutely aware of how their words and actions impact those around them, as whatever they say or do, will very likely be interpreted as reflecting UA's position. Each employee must, therefore, exercise prudence, common sense and sensitivity in assessing any situation carefully before speaking out in sensitive situations.

Employees at any level may never engage in politically sensitive action without advance approval from CEO/ED. When employees at all levels believe a situation so compelling that it warrants UA as an organization making a public statement, the ED/CEO will approve that public statement first.

## **2.6. ALCOHOL AND DRUGS POLICY**

UA maintains a work environment free from the harmful effects of alcohol and drugs. In recognition of the serious consequences to UA, all its employees are subject to the following:

Any employee who unlawfully manufactures, distributes, dispenses, possesses, uses or is impaired by a controlled/prohibited substance or who manufactures, distributes, dispenses, possesses, uses or is impaired by alcohol on the job, whether on or off UA property, will be subject to discipline, up to and including immediate termination.

All employees, as a condition of employment, are required to notify HR or HOD of any criminal drug statute conviction for a violation involving a controlled/prohibited substance, as per laws of Afghanistan, occurring on the job immediately on such conviction.

UA reserves sole right to conduct a drug test of any employee suspected of violation of this policy.

## **2.7. CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY**

UA's policy requires that each be free of any personal interest that could influence his or her judgment or action in the conduct of organizational business or affect his or her responsibility to UA. An employee must not only avoid situations that give rise or could give rise to a conflict of interest, but also situations that create the appearance of a conflict of interest.

This policy is not intended to detail every situation that could give rise to a conflict of interest. A person with ordinary good judgment should know whether or not a particular activity involves an actual or potential conflict. Where there is a doubt, the matter should be brought to the attention of the CEO/ED or BOD as appropriate who will take actions accordingly.

No employee may serve as a director, officer, employee, partner, consultant, agent or representative of an organization not affiliated with UA if the potential for a conflict of interest exists. In general, a conflict of interest can arise if:

1. It is likely that the performance of a person's duties as a UA employee or governing body member could be prejudicially influenced by that person's other interests (private, personal

or professional), or that a reasonable person would believe that the person could be so influenced; or

2. A person's participation as an employee of a UA or a governing body member could be prejudicially influenced by the interests of organization that the person is representing, or that a reasonable person would believe that the person could be so influenced.

## **2.8 INVOLVEMENT WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS**

All employees and governing body members must declare in advance, any relationship with persons, organizations, firms or companies, which have dealings with UA. They must also declare in advance if: a) they are directors or partners in a organization, firm or company, which propose to have any dealing with UA; b) if their immediate family members (spouse, parent, child, brother and sister) hold directorship or partnership in organizations, which propose to have any dealing with the UA and c) if to their knowledge, a member of their immediate family has any financial interest in any matter being considered by UA. Individuals who fail to make declaration of a conflict of interests as explained above are liable to account to UA for any profit made or benefit received from or in respect of the failure or violation.

No employee or their family member may have, directly or indirectly, a significant financial/employment or other interest in, involvement with or obligation to, any organization which does or seeks to do business with UA, unless the interest or obligation has been fully disclosed in writing to the employee's line manager, CEO/ED or governing body and it has been determined that the employee's duties for UA will not require him to make decisions or take actions that could be influenced by such interest, involvement or obligation. A "family member", for purposes of this policy, includes a close relative (by blood or marriage) and also any person living in the same household with the employee.

## **2.9 OUTSIDE WORK**

A conflict of interest may also exist when an employee engages in an independent business venture or performs work or services for another organization to the extent that the activity prevents the employee from devoting the time and effort to the organization, required by his or her position. In such cases, the written approval either of CEO/ED must be obtained in the case of all full-time employees in such situations.

## **2.10 GIFT AND ENTERTAINMENT**

No employee or member of his/her family may accept, directly or indirectly, any gift, entertainment or favor from an individual, private or public organization that stand to benefit from an action of UA except for promotional materials type gifts and entertainment, meals and social invitations that are in keeping with good working ethics and that obligate neither the recipient nor UA. For example, if a vendor offers free or reduced services or goods to an employee or to a member of an employee's family in exchange for a contract with UA, this is considered a conflict of interest and must be immediately reported.

Payment of personal/official transportation, hotel room or other living and traveling expenses must not be accepted or permitted, except when travel and participation are as part of a group hosted by a supplier or customer representative, is work related and is promptly reported to management.

No employee or member of his/her family may accept directly or indirectly any gift neither in kind nor in cash, from a current or potential UA beneficiary. An ordinary meal is acceptable only when it is customary and obligates neither the recipient nor UA. If there is any doubt as to whether it is

proper or not proper to accept a gift, travel, entertainment, etc., respective line manager should be consulted.

### **2.11 MISUSE OF PROPRIETARY INFORMATION**

Information (e.g. future plans, competitive bids/proposal for funding, sponsorships, employee lists, etc.) obtained as a result of employment that is not generally available to the public, may not be communicated to any individual(s) or organizations outside UA till two years after retirement/separation from the services of UA.

### **2.12 MISAPPROPRIATION OF BUSINESS**

A conflict of interest may also exist when an employee, without the knowledge and consent of the UA Management, appropriates to himself or herself, or to another person or organization, the benefit of an arrangement of a business venture, opportunity, or potential that the employee learns about or develops in the course of employment and that is related to any current or prospective undertaking of UA.

### **2.13 RESOLVING QUESTIONABLE SITUATIONS**

Any employee who is, or thinks he may be, confronted with a conflict of interest situation should immediately request a determination from HR Department and /or CEO/ED as to whether, based on full disclosure and consideration of all relevant facts and circumstances, such a situation in fact exists, and if so, what steps should be taken to correct or avoid the situation.

**I am aware of the fact that any breach of this Code of Conduct may lead to disciplinary action, dismissal or even legal action and that intentionally false accusations and reports are seen as a breach of the Code of Conduct and will be subject to disciplinary action.**