



Safeguarding Policy

Policy	Date of approval by IHA board of directors	Date of next policy review
Safeguarding Policy	February 2025	February 2026
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1. Introduction

InterEuropean Human Aid Association (hereafter referred to as IHA) is a grassroots organisation providing humanitarian aid and assistance, in the form of material, psychosocial and integrational support, to asylum seekers, refugees and other people in need across Europe with a specific focus on Northern Greece. IHA's warehouse provides material assistance to asylum seekers, refugees and other people in need through the provision of essential relief supplies through its network of partners across the region. IHA's community centre in Lagadikia is a space for learning, community building and cultural exchange. Its goals are to provide material assistance as well as support the psychosocial wellbeing of the centre's visitors, encourage integration and social inclusion, and foster relationships between new and already-established communities.

Safeguarding is taking all reasonable steps to prevent harm, particularly sexual exploitation, abuse, and harassment from occurring; to protect people from that harm; and to respond appropriately when harm does occur. We understand it to mean protecting people, including the children and adults IHA supports, from harm that arises from coming into contact with our staff or our work.

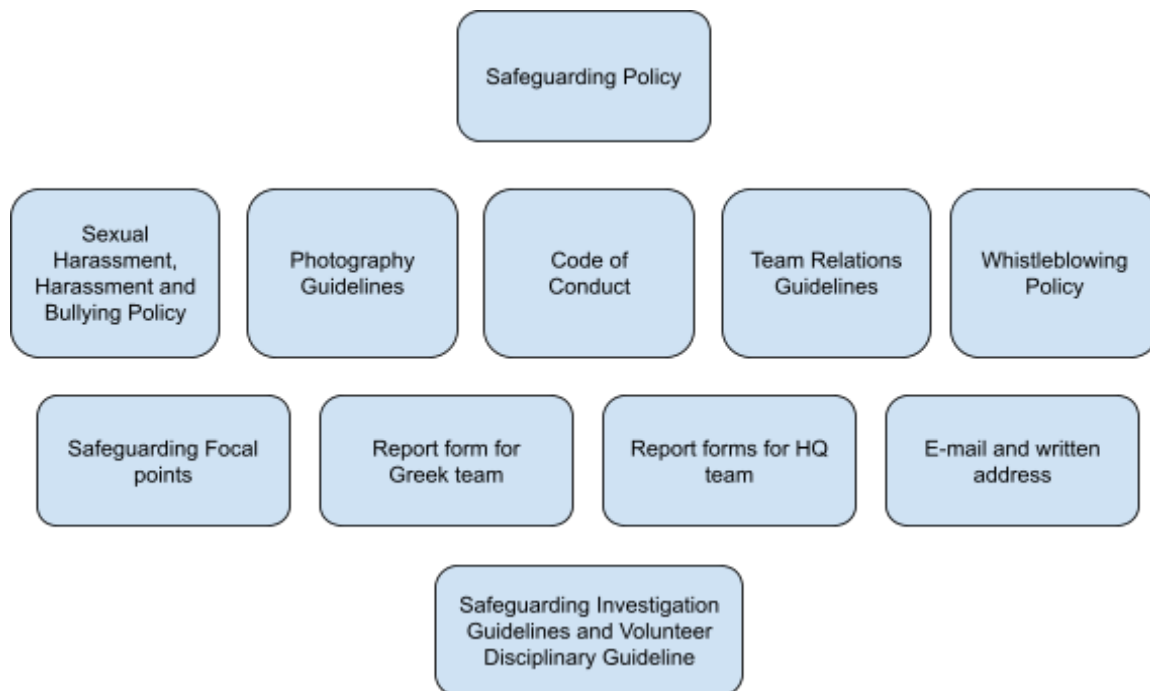
Safeguarding applies consistently and without exception across our programmes, partners, staff and volunteers. It requires proactively identifying, preventing, and guarding against all risks of harm, exploitation and abuse and having mature, accountable, and transparent systems for response, reporting, and learning when risks materialise. Those systems must be survivor-centred and also protect those accused until investigations have been completed and decisions made by IHA or external parties instructed by IHA. Safeguarding puts service-users and affected persons at the centre of all IHA's work.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to lay out the commitments made by IHA and to inform staff, volunteers, members and associated personnel of their responsibilities in relation to safeguarding, with an aim to protect service-users from any harm that may be caused due to their coming into contact with IHA. This includes harm arising from:

- The conduct of staff, volunteers, members and personnel associated with IHA
- The design and implementation of IHA's programmes and activities

This document is to be considered alongside the below policies and documents from IHA – which together form the Safeguarding framework. These policies feed into multiple reporting mechanisms which create safeguarding referrals. If a reported incident requires an investigation, it is guided by the Safeguarding Investigation Guidelines.



3. Scope

All staff contracted by IHA as well as associated personnel whilst engaged with work or visits related to IHA including but not limited to: consultants; volunteers; contractors; members; programme visitors.

4. Policy Statement

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

5. Definitions

Service-users, visitors, people IHA works to support, people IHA supports: Someone who receives any form of support from IHA or participates in any activity related to IHA's programmes.

Child: A person below the age of 18.

Child exploitation: Refers to the use of children for someone else's advantage, gratification or profit often resulting in unjust, cruel, and harmful treatment of the child. These activities are to the detriment of the child's physical or mental health, education, moral or social-emotional development. It includes situations of manipulation, misuse, abuse, victimisation, oppression, or ill-treatment.

Child maltreatment: The abuse and neglect that occurs to children under 18 years of age. It includes all types of physical and/or emotional ill-treatment, sexual abuse, neglect, negligence and commercial or other exploitation, which results in actual or potential harm to the child's health, survival, development, or dignity in the context of a relationship of responsibility, trust, or power.

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

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

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

Sexual exploitation: The term 'sexual exploitation' means any actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power, or trust, for sexual purposes, including, but not limited to, profiting monetarily, socially, or politically from the sexual exploitation of another. This definition includes human trafficking and modern slavery.

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

6. Prevention

Below is an overview of the measures that IHA takes to prevent harm, abuse or exploitation occurring as a result of its activities.

6.1. Safer recruitment

IHA is committed to safer recruitment selection and evaluation of potential staff and volunteers. IHA requires all staff and volunteers to undertake a criminal record or other background check. IHA will ensure that these are carried out as part of its commitment to safer recruitment and safeguarding. No member of staff or other representative may undertake activities in relation to IHA until an appropriate background check (which may include a criminal record check, as appropriate) has been completed with satisfactory results. Background check can also be carried out through communication with referees listed in the candidate's application (reference check).

In the case that IHA becomes aware that any staff member, volunteer or other associated personnel may pose a risk to IHA's work or service-users, IHA will comply with the legislation and relevant guidance in respect of referring that representative to the relevant authorities if appropriate and reserve the right to cancel, suspend or terminate volunteer contracts based upon unsatisfactory findings.

6.2. Safeguarding training

Staff, volunteers and other associated personnel will receive a thorough induction covering all aspects of IHA's safeguarding policies and reporting mechanisms. All staff, volunteers, members and other associated personnel, including visitors, will sign and receive training on the Code of Conduct and safeguarding at a level commensurate with their role in the organisation.

Staff with specific safeguarding responsibilities will be trained, informed, encouraged to be approachable and will respond to issues in a professional and timely manner.

The Safeguarding Policy will be reviewed at least annually by the Safeguarding Lead in collaboration with the board of directors. After each review, changes will be communicated transparently across all levels of the organisation.

6.3. Staff responsibilities

All IHA staff and volunteers must:

- Sign and adhere to the Code of Conduct relevant to the individuals interaction with the organisation - this contains clear guidance on behaviours and expectations. Available here in the [Code of Conduct folder](#) with translation in necessary languages.
- View and adhere to the Photography guidelines document available here [Photography Guidelines](#).
- Design and undertake all its programmes and activities in a way that protects people from any risk of harm that may arise from their coming into contact with our organisation. This includes the way in which information about individuals in our programmes is gathered and communicated.
- Contribute to creating and maintaining an environment that prevents safeguarding violations and promotes the implementation of the Safeguarding Policy.
- Report any concerns or suspicions regarding safeguarding violations by an IHA staff member, volunteer or associated personnel to the appropriate staff member (see reporting structure below).
- Follow up on reports of safeguarding concerns promptly and according to due process and in line with their responsibility level.

6.4 Relationship Guidelines

IHA recognises that due to close proximities of working, it is possible that relationships may develop. Whilst IHA does not forbid all relationships, there are clear guidelines in place as a result of the unequal power imbalance created by structural oppressions of differing groups of individuals, which may negatively impact certain people within relationships.

As such IHA has a guidance document for team relationships which can be accessed here [Team Relations Guidelines](#).

This guidance is to be followed by everyone during their time working with, visiting or representing IHA.

6.5 Sexual Harassment, Harrassment and Bullying Policy

IHA recognises that sexual harassment is a manifestation of power relationships and often occurs within unequal relationships in the workplace, for example between manager or coordinator and employee or volunteer. All sexual harassment is prohibited whether it takes place within IHA premises or outside, including at private social events, trips, training sessions or meetings. All complaints of sexual harassment will be taken seriously and treated with respect and in confidence. No one will be victimised for making such a complaint.

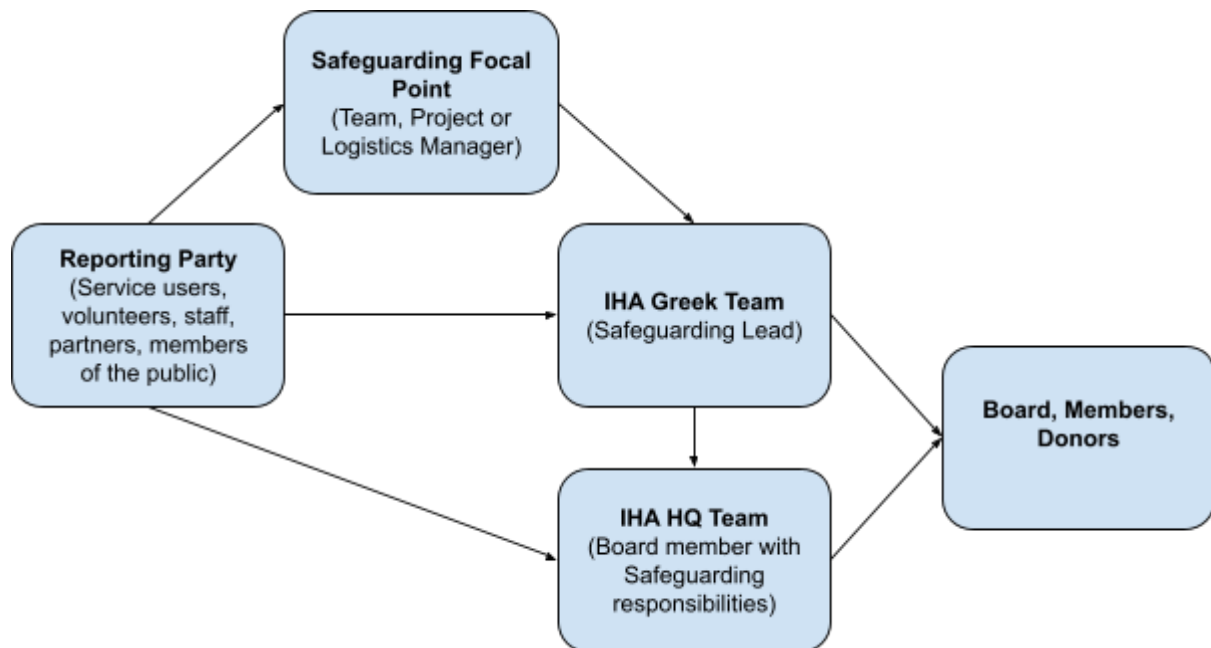
There is a separate [Sexual Harassment, Harassment and Bullying Policy](#) available here with more details.

7. Reporting and responding to concerns

IHA ensures that safe, appropriate, accessible means of reporting safeguarding concerns are made available to staff and the communities we work with. We will also accept complaints from external sources such as members of the public, partners, and official bodies.

7.1 Reporting a safeguarding concern

IHA staff and volunteers, partners and other associated personnel, service-users and members of the public who have a complaint or concern relating to safeguarding should report it immediately as per the below reporting framework.



If comfortable, reporting parties can first report to a Safeguarding Focal Point (in person or via message/phone). There will then be a form completed jointly or on behalf of the reporting party which is forwarded on to the Safeguarding lead (Programme Manager) [Incident Report to IHA Greek Branch](#).

The reporting party can also complete this form themselves if they do not want to report their concerns via a Safeguarding Focal Point.

Safeguarding Focal Points are bound to send all concerns on to the Safeguarding Lead regardless of their content (unless specifically requested to report to the board directly). Safeguarding focal points are not the ones to investigate safeguarding concerns but may be involved in helping to implement disciplinary measures or programme changes as a result of a concern.

If the reporting party for any reason wishes for their report to remain confidential from IHA's Greece team, they can use the [Incident Report to IHA HQ](#) to report an incident or concern to the Board Member with safeguarding responsibilities. In such cases, their report will be treated confidentially on a need to know basis, no matter the position within the organisation of Greece-based staff members or IHA representatives.

These forms are available on the website (www.iha.help/about) and as QR codes available in the community centre and the volunteer houses and are available in a variety of languages.

7.2 Response

IHA will follow up safeguarding reports and concerns in a timely manner, and in accordance with Greek and/or German legal and statutory obligations. IHA will apply appropriate disciplinary measures to staff, members and volunteers found in breach of the safeguarding policy. Disciplinary action will be taken in line with [IHA Representative Disciplinary Guidelines](#)

Confidentiality will be maintained at all stages of the process when dealing with safeguarding concerns. Information relating to the concern and subsequent case management should be shared on a need-to-know basis only and should be kept secure at all times.

Reporting parties who have followed the above reporting structures and are unsatisfied with the organisation's response should follow IHA's [Whistleblowing policy](#).