



Code of Conduct of forumZFD

Introduction and Purpose

In keeping with its mission and values, Forum Civil Peace Service (forumZFD) is committed to maintaining the highest degree of ethical conduct amongst all its staff. The Code of Conduct (CoC) is based on our common values and principles as set out in the organisation's Articles of Association and Mission Statement.

The objective of the Code of Conduct is to create a common understanding of forumZFD's principles and rules of conduct amongst all staff, thereby promoting consistent standards of behaviour. It lays out the principles and rules for our ethical, social and legal conduct. It is designed for the guidance and protection of all persons employed by and working with forumZFD by setting out what is considered acceptable professional and ethical behaviour.

The Code is designed to act as a guideline but does not cover every possible situation staff may face. Any situation in which staff members may be in doubt about issues covered under the Code ought to be discussed with their recognized confidential reporting lines, such as the line manager, the General Equal Treatment Act (AGG)¹ contact persons, works council or the Representation of Interest (RI).

Scope

This Code of Conduct applies to all contracted staff regardless of their type of contract, the scope of their responsibilities and the location of employment. The Code is applicable to national and international staff, full and part time employees, temporary personnel, leased employees, as well as volunteers, interns, consultants and freelancers, employed by and working with Forum Civil Peace Service.

For the purpose of this document, the persons specified above are hereinafter referred to as "staff".

Members of the Association's bodies (Supervisory Board and Executive Board) of forumZFD, as well as the management of the forumZFD liability company (GmbH) and the forumZFD foundation's Executive Board must adhere to the Code of Conduct.

The Code of Conduct applies worldwide.

Whilst recognising that local laws and cultures differ considerably, forumZFD is an International Non-Governmental Organisation, and therefore the Code of Conduct is developed from international standards. forumZFD staff are obliged to uphold local law wherever they operate. Where the local law establishes stricter obligations than those mentioned in the Code of Conduct, the local law prevails.

¹ The General Equal Treatment Act (AGG) is a German law which is intended to prevent and eliminate discrimination on grounds of racial or ethnic origin, gender, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual identity. In order to achieve this goal, persons protected by the law are entitled to legal claims against employers and private individuals if they violate the statutory prohibitions of discrimination against them.

The Code applies while staff is on duty and shall also be complied with outside of the workplace and outside working hours if a connection can be established between staff and forumZFD's work.

In individual cases, the Code of Conduct can be supplemented by additions that are necessary due to a local context. These additions must be listed as annexes and submitted to the Executive Board before adoption.

Implementation

The Code of Conduct forms part of all contracts of employment or conditions of fee-based services. The Code of Conduct is given to and explained to all staff before they begin their assignment.

All staff must confirm in writing, that they have read and understood the Code of Conduct, that they will comply with all the rules of conduct, and that they acknowledge that compliance with this Code of Conduct is a condition for their employment or assignment.

Human Resources is responsible for ensuring that the Code of Conduct is implemented, monitored and evaluated regularly. It is up to the management level of forumZFD to set an example by conducting themselves with integrity. In the head office, managers need to make sure their staff understood and signed the CoC, in the programs, this task comes to the country and regional directors.

The Code of Conduct is a public document. All partners of forumZFD should be informed about our Code of Conduct when agreeing to a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU).

The Code of Conduct

Principles of Conduct for Forum Civil Peace Service (forumZFD)

1. Committed to peace and non-violence

I will ensure that my conduct is consistent with forumZFD's values. I will respect human rights and human dignity and act under the basic premise of non-violence.

Through my actions and attitudes, I will uphold the principles of gender equality, inclusivity, social justice and solidarity. I am aware that violence and war are not compatible with these values and will therefore not engage in any activity or kind of behaviour that uses those means.

I will make my best efforts to protect the environment and work in a sustainable manner.

Promotion of constructive non-violent conflict transformation

As an employee of forumZFD, I am committed to the practice of non-violent conflict transformation. I will refrain from any form of violence against human beings and nature and also be aware of the subtle forms of violence in social relationships, the use of language and behaviour. I consider conflicts to be not only a risk of disruption, but part of a learning process and an opportunity for positive change. In line with forumZFD's goals and principles, I endeavour to deal with internal conflicts constructively.

Working with partners

Sustainable peace structures must be developed and supported by the actors in conflict areas themselves. Therefore, I will work together with local partners and actors in an equal and fair manner, based on mutual trust.

2. How I treat people

Principle of non-discrimination

As an employee of forumZFD, I am committed to upholding the value of diversity and non-discrimination in all my work duties. I will respect everybody's equal rights with a special focus on vulnerable and trauma-sensitive groups. I will contribute to a professional working environment characterized by mutual respect, integrity, dignity, diversity and non-discrimination. I will refrain from supporting all possible forms of discriminating power structures.

I will ensure that my relationships and behaviour are not exploitative or abusive in any way.

I will respect all peoples' rights, including children's rights.

I will work with people in a sensitive and non-discriminating manner in terms of ethnicity, social origin, skin colour, nationality, religion or world view, dress code, union activity, culture, education, marital status, special needs, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, or other distinguishing characteristics.

I will abstain from any and all kinds of discrimination as well as harassment and bullying or directing inappropriate, violent or insulting language at others.

Respect of Culture and Custom

I aim to understand and will respect the cultural norms in those places where forumZFD works and of the colleagues and communities I am working with— as long as they do not violate human rights or lead to discrimination against parts of the population.

3. Anti-Harassment and Anti-Racism

forumZFD does not tolerate any form of harassment.

Harassment refers to any unwanted conduct that occurs with the purpose or effect of violating the dignity of a person, and of creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment.

ForumZFD considers harassment that is related to ethnicity, social origin, skin colour, nationality, religion or world view, dress code, union activity, culture, education, marital status, special needs, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, or other distinguishing characteristics a form of discrimination.

I will not commit any act or form of harassment and engage in any behaviour, deliberate or otherwise, that makes the recipient feel persecuted, vulnerable or powerless.

I will not engage in any form of sexual harassment, sexual abuse or sexual exploitation, and will not tolerate it from colleagues if I see this form of behaviour taking place.

Sexual harassment is defined as any behaviour of a sexual nature that affects the dignity of the person, which is considered as unwanted, unacceptable, inappropriate or offensive to and by the recipient, or that creates an intimidating, hostile, unstable or offensive work environment. It could be physical, verbal and non-verbal. It may include, but is not limited to, unwanted physical contact or unwelcome advances or requests of a sexual nature.

4. Integrity and reputation of forumZFD

Protect the integrity and reputation of the organisation

I uphold the integrity and reputation of forumZFD by ensuring that my conduct is non-damaging to values and principles of operation of forumZFD laid out in the mission statement.

Public and media relations

I will respect the public relations code and the social media guidelines of forumZFD when dealing with media and external communication on forumZFD's behalf. I will consider Do-No-Harm and Conflict-Sensitivity in all communication.

First and foremost, I will not disseminate any content or comments that could jeopardise the reputation and all-partisanship of forumZFD's work or cause harm to staff, partner organisations or communities in any way.

I will always handle information and statements on partners, colleagues, funding bodies and donors with care. Internal matters are subject to confidentiality and are not to be made public.

I am aware of and take into account that, particularly in conflict situations, private statements and social media postings can be associated with the organisation.

5. Dealing with Conflicts of Interest

Conflicts can arise between my personal interests and forumZFD's interests or those of our partners and target groups in relation to my work. I will be transparent about potential conflicts of interests and immediately notify and discuss them with my line manager. I will resolve them in a manner that is verifiable by and understandable to all parties involved.

I will be attentive towards situations in which personal interests could be clearly contrary to the interests of forumZFD. In case of any doubt, I will discuss this with my respective line manager.

I will be highly sensitive about my own position within power structures. and I will not abuse it in any way in the context of my work, within forumZFD as a whole, as well as with regards to my partners and the context of my work.

6. Confidentiality / Use of data and knowledge / Use of resources

I will use discretion when handling sensitive or confidential information during and also after my employment with forumZFD. I will secure access to all forumZFD information and accounting systems and will protect all data that is relevant to the work of forumZFD.

Sensitive information may include, but is not limited to, personal data, information about partners, information that has explicitly been marked as confidential, financial data, contracts and strategy documents. When in doubt of what is sensitive information, I will consult my line manager before sharing it.

I will collect, use and process information, especially personal data, confidentially and only as permitted by law and as required for the work of forumZFD.

I will appropriately account for all of forumZFD's money and property (e.g. vehicles, office equipment, forumZFD-provided accommodation, computers including the use of internet, email and intranet).

I will use the organization's resources in a responsible manner, taking into consideration such criteria as relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and environmental sustainability.

I will not use the work equipment provided by forumZFD for activities that violate the law or the Code of Conduct of forumZFD. This includes any and all types of harassment, intimidation, and degradation, as well as viewing, storing, processing, transmitting, and duplicating discriminatory or pornographic files.

7. Giving and accepting gifts / Fraud, corruption and nepotism

I will contribute to an organizational culture of trust and fairness and will actively oppose corruption².

Therefore, I will not engage in any form of corruption. I will not offer, promise, give or accept any bribes, including gifts or other advantages in exchange for personal or professional benefits.

Where the giving and acceptance of gifts is a standard local practice, I will ensure that gifts are within the limits of reasonable judgements and not exceeding the amount of 30€. In any other case I will seek permission from the line manager, who is also responsible for deciding whether the gift needs to be handed over to forumZFD.

I will not exchange offers of employment, employment, goods or services for sex or sexual favours, nor any other forms of humiliating, degrading or exploitative behaviour.

I will handle the engagement of staff, the procurement of goods, and the provision of access to services with due care and in a transparent manner.

I will not use fraud, nepotism or embezzlement to gain personal or professional advantage. I will report any suspicion of fraud, nepotism or corruption through the established internal reporting system already mentioned.

² Corruption is defined here "as the abuse of entrusted power for private gain" (Source: Transparency International. <https://www.transparency.org/en/what-is-corruption>)

8. Use of weapons

I will under no circumstances be in possession of, or handle, weapons, explosives or ammunition.

I will not use armed guards unless permission to do so is granted by the Board Member Programs and Qualification.

I will ensure that I am not perceived as being identified in any way with military or other security forces.

I will not support, to the best of my knowledge, violent activities directly or indirectly at any time.

I will follow the Safety and Security Guidelines of forumZFD and the Local Security Plan of my work context.

9. Alcohol, drug, illegal substances abuse

I will not work under the influence of illegal substances. I will not operate vehicles under the influence of alcohol or any other drug. The possession, distribution and consumption of illegal substances at the workplace or on the job is prohibited.

Reporting Violations of the Code of Conduct

forumZFD encourages its staff to report any suspected violation of this Code of Conduct. The objective of reporting and following up on possible violations is to uphold the values laid out in the Code of Conduct in order to create and maintain a common understanding of forumZFD's principles and organizational culture.

Reports of violations can take place by following the internal reporting procedure. A detailed description can be found in the Annex document.

References

- Mission statement forumZFD
- Forum Civil Peace Service – Articles of association
- Guidelines: Financial responsibility, signature authority, absence cover (internal document)
- Safety and Security Risk Management Policy (SSRMP) (internal document)
- Social media guidelines for forumZFD employees in Germany and overseas (internal document)
- Code for public relations work of Forum Ziviler Friedensdienst e. V. (forumZFD) (internal document)
- Work agreement: regulation on the representation of interests of employees in the programs of forumZFD abroad (internal document)
- Procedure for complaints under the General Equal Treatment Act - Information for employees (internal document)
- Internal Reporting of Violations of the Code of Conduct of forumZFD (internal document)