

Mercy Hands for Humanitarian Aid

Field Office

Policy and Code of Conduct

1- Preamble

Mercy Hands for Humanitarian Aid (Mercy Hands) is an Iraqi NGO with a Headquarters located in Baghdad and a representation and regional management office in Erbil. Mercy Hands implements projects in many governorates in Iraq with teams based in those governorates. Sometimes Mercy Hands sets up an office to host its staff in the governorate; this office is referred to as Field Office. This document describes how we conduct work in the governorates and establishes boundaries, guidelines, and best practices for acceptable behavior inside the Field Office and outside.

2- Guidelines

2.1 According to the need and fund availability, Mercy Hands may set up one or more Field Offices per governorate.

2.2 Setting up and closing any Field Office is a decision made only by the Executive Director.

2.3 The Executive Director assigns a Focal Point in every governorate in which there is a Field Office.

2.3.1 The job title of the Focal Point differs, depending on the size and nature of the operation, number of Field Offices, etc. Examples of job title of the Focal Point are: Head of Mission, Office Manager.

2.3.2 The Focal Point reports directly to the Executive Director. To fulfill their responsibilities, the Focal Point must coordinate at the highest level with the Executive Administration as well as with the Project Managers and their supervisors.

2.3.3 The Focal Point is authorized to supervise all projects in their governorate. The Focal Point can directly instruct any project team member in their governorate on issues not

related to their projects; however, s/he cannot directly intervene in these projects or make decisions on behalf of the Project Managers or their supervisors without coordinating with them first.

2.3.4 The Focal Point is authorized to represent Mercy Hands with external parties, make agreements and sign contracts, MoU, etc. However, policies and standard operating procedures (SOPs) must be observed during the process.

- Any purchase of services or goods must follow the procurement policy and be approved by the Director of Procurement.

- Any rental of property must be approved by the Director of Logistics and Security Department.

- Any recruitment of staff must follow the Human Resources Policy and be approved by the HR Director.

- Any agreement, Memorandum of Understanding, or contract with a governmental agency, donor, or NGO must be first approved by the General Coordinator or the Executive Director.

The approvals must be documented and the original contracts, MoUs, agreements, etc. must be sent to the Executive Secretary at the Headquarters for archiving. A copy of the original documents must be kept at the Field Office in an organized matter and in a secured place.

2.3.5 Any outgoing official letter or document issued by the Field Office in the governorate must hold the signature of the Executive Director and stamp of the organization.

2.3.6 A copy of any incoming official letter received from an external entity must be sent to the Executive Secretary at the Headquarters for archiving.

2.3.7 The Focal Point is responsible for:

- a. Supervising all projects and teams in their governorate;
- b. Representing Mercy Hands Executive Director with the local authorities;
- c. Coordinating with the Executive Director, Project Managers, Program Directors, and General Coordinator to ensure Mercy Hands actively participate in relevant coordination groups and meetings in the governorate;
- d. Closely monitoring staff attendance; arrange to deliver the daily attendance sheet to the HR Department at the Headquarters;

- a. Ensuring that all staff conduct themselves in a professional manner - inside the office and outside - and that they respect local laws and customs;
- a. Enforcing the implementation of Mercy Hands' policies and procedures;
- b. Enforcing the implementation of Mercy Hands' internal control mechanisms
- e. Assessing the security situation and advise the Executive Director as well as Project Managers and their supervisors accordingly;
- f. Work with the Assets Manager for optimal management and usage of Mercy Hands' assets across the projects in the governorate;
- g. Report any suspected fraud, embezzlement, theft, waste, sexual abuse and exploitation, etc. to the Executive Director or Director of Ethics and Compliance; fully cooperate with any investigation conducted by the Headquarters.
- h. Advising Project Managers in the governorate and their supervisors on the implementation of their projects;
- i. Advising the Executive Director on the overall operation and work strategy of Mercy Hands in the governorate;
- j. Act as a mediator to resolve interpersonal and intergroup conflicts in the governorate;
- k. Assisting Project Managers and their supervisors in recruiting and orienting new staff;
- l. Searching for funding opportunities and applying for them.

2.4 Depending on the size and nature of the operation, the Executive Director may assign more senior administration and program management staff at the Field Office;

2.5 The Project Managers in the governorate, their supervisors, and the Executive Administration should regularly and efficiently update the Focal Point on their work in the governorate.

2.6 Any Field Office shall at minimum keep the following records:

- Fixed Assets Inventory
- Visitors Sign-in Sheet
- Staff Attendance Sheet
- Outgoing and Incoming Official Letters Record.

2.7 The Focal Point of the governorate will work closely with the Project Managers and their supervisors to cover the cost of the Field Office through externally funded projects;

2.8 If a resolution is taken to close a Field Office, the Executive Director will delegate a committee to: fulfill all remaining Field Office obligations, gather and transport all documents and administrative records to the Headquarters, and process the fixed assets.

3- Code of Conduct

3.1 The staff of the Field Offices shall abide by Mercy Hands' Code of Conduct (annex 1). Every staff member must read and sign two copies of Mercy Hands' Code of Conduct, one copy given to the staff member and the other one is archived in the Employee's Personal File;

3.2 In addition to the Code of Conduct, the staff shall abide by Mercy Hands' Bylaws, Staff Rules, Policies, Board Resolutions, and Executive Administration Directives;

3.3 Additionally, the field staff, i.e. staff who have direct contact with people (beneficiaries, local authorities, etc.) must comply with the following imperatives:

1- Do not give promises or false hopes

If you are not 100% sure that the person(s) you are talking to will receive Mercy Hands' assistance or be included in the activities of your program then make it very clear to them that they may not be included or selected. When talking with people about providing assistance, avoid saying things like "inshallah" or "Allah kareem".

2- Before you discuss work make sure you clearly and amply introduce Mercy Hands, your program, and your role in it.

Whether they are beneficiaries or officials, you must clearly and without any ambiguity introduce yourself and Mercy Hands to them, before you talk business with them. Highlight the following facts when you introduce Mercy Hands: 1) It is a local Non-Governmental Organization; 2) It has limited funding; therefore, it cannot provide assistance to all those who need it; 3) The limited funding is earmarked, meaning it is designated to a specific group of people and for a specific purpose.

3- Clearly state that the decision to select them to benefit from Mercy Hands' services is not up to you or even up to Mercy Hands, but it depends on many different factors.

Never ever give the impression that you or Mercy Hands have the absolute power to include people in the services provided by Mercy Hands. Explain to them that first they have to meet

certain selection criteria and even after they meet the selection criteria, if too many people meet the selection criteria then Mercy Hands with the donor and the local authorities together will select the most vulnerable of all people who meet the selection criteria.

3.3 Working hours and holidays at the Field Office is the same like the Headquarters working hours and holidays, unless otherwise stated by the HR Department.

3.4 It is not allowed for an external party to use the office or to host an external party at the office without the prior approval of the Executive Director.

ANNEX – 1 –

Code of Conduct

Mercy Hands (MH) is an Iraqi non-governmental organization and as such it follows the example Code of Conduct adopted by many international humanitarian stakeholders – donors and international organizations.

Example: The Code of Conduct for NGOs in Disaster Relief; please check videos available on YouTube in Arabic or English.

As MH staff, you represent MH both during and outside working hours. To ensure a high level of work ethics, all MH staff, including our contractors, service providers, volunteers, and interns should commit to follow these principles of good conduct and behavior (which include but are not limited to):

- Work with honesty, integrity, respect, tolerance, equality, mutual understanding, support and acceptance, and recognize MH as one big team.
- Prioritize the security and safety of MH staff and beneficiaries.
- Do not discriminate against any individual, regardless of gender, race, religion, or culture and respect human rights(***MH is a multi- cultural, multi-religious, and multi-ethnic work environment and MH considers this a huge point of strength***).
- Abide by Iraqi and local laws at all times and respect local culture.
- Do not use narcotics or alcohol during working hours.
- Alcohol and narcotics are prohibited in work place.
- Respect confidentiality of staff and beneficiaries, and do not disclose sensitive information.
- Bullying, aggressive language, using physical force, threatening, sexual abuse, and spreading rumors are prohibited at any time.
- Avoid reviewing political, religious and social opinions within work society unless it's for work purposes.
- Respectfully express opinions, disagreements, and grievances.
- Show proper respect to MH chain of command, unless it would cause harm or contradict with other principles stated in this code of conduct.
- Uniforms and outfits should be suitable for work place and work conditions.

- Respect MH property.
- Immediately report any sexual, physical, or verbal abuse and/or harassment.
- Refuse to give or receive bribes.
- Immediately report any fraudulent activity, theft, or misuse of MH assets.

I, _____, commit to follow the principles of this Code of Conduct throughout my involvement with MH. I understand that transgressions will be addressed according to the consequences outlined in the MH Grievance Policy.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

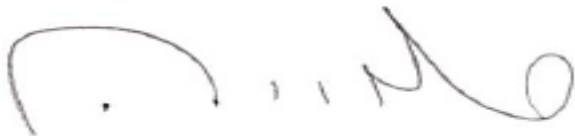
The signatory should sign two copies of this page: one that will remain with MH and another copy for him/herself.

To report **violations to this code of conduct as well as to report grievances**, please contact
- Sura Al Zahid – Executive Secretary, by email (sura.alzahid@mercyhands.org) or by phone (+964 7817 359 194).

To report **fraud, corruption, or criminal activity**, contact the Executive Director, Khaldoon Al-Moosawi, by email (director@mercyhands.org) or phone (+1 405 501 7835).

Last updated: November 2023

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