



## **Child and Vulnerable Person Safeguarding Policy**

### **- Carpathian Foundation-Hungary –**

### **- 2021 –**

#### **I. Introduction:**

*Mission of the Carpathian Foundation-Hungary (CFHU) is to improve the quality of lives of people and communities living in the Carpathian region, and to preserve and utilize the social, economic, ethnic, cultural and environmental values of the region and to foster its sustainable development.*

*The Carpathian Foundation-Hungary has many programs, interventions to improve the quality of lives of people living in poverty and especially the quality of lives of marginalized children and youngsters, and vulnerable adult, and groups, especially members of marginalized Roma communities.*

*Since its establishment CFHU has built fair, and correct partnerships and relationships with its donors, supporters, and its stakeholders, beneficiaries, grantees based on mutual respect and CFHU is strongly dedicated to guarantee their equal treatment, rights. CFHU has a responsibility to promote welfare of children and youngsters, and vulnerable adults or groups and it makes every possible effort to keep them safe from abuse and exploitation. We are committed to operate and work in a way that protects them.*

The purpose of this policy is to protect children, youngsters and vulnerable adults or groups who receive CFHU's services (beneficiaries, participants of events, programs, grantees, etc. of the Foundation) and to provide staff, associates, experts (both internal and external), volunteers and scholars a guide on our approach to safeguarding children and vulnerable adults or groups.

This policy is an imperative guideline for the Foundation thus it makes every colleagues, board members, experts (both internal and external), volunteers and scholars to be aware of it and consider its principles to be compulsory to them.

This policy is shared with our Grantees and Partners as well, whom we encourage to develop own policies and apply procedures for safeguarding children and vulnerable adults. As a minimum requirement in those grant programs where children and vulnerable adults are directly

involved/targeted, grantees are requested to at least accept the Safeguarding policy of CFHU (with a signed declaration as the annex of their grant contract, or it must be a sub-point of their grant contract).

This policy should be read alongside our other policies and procedures on Code of Ethics and Organizational and Operational Rules and Regulations.

The policy is publicly available on the website of the Foundation.

This child protection policy adheres to the following Acts:

Act XXXI of 1997 (Hungarian Child Protection Act):

'The Child Protection Act (CPA) ensures children's rights to "physical, intellectual, emotional and moral development" (Article 6 (1)), "to be protected from circumstances that hinder his or her development" (Article 6 (2)) and "to be protected from ... abuse, including physical, sexual and emotional violence" and it states that "children cannot be exposed to torture, physical punishment and other forms of brutal, inhumane and humiliating punishment or treatment" (Article 6 (5)).

The child is endangered if his or her "physical, intellectual, emotional and moral development is obstructed or hindered" (Article 5 (n)).

In this case there is counselling for the family or the child is placed "under protection" if voluntarily the family cannot make the necessary changes. In case there is no improvement, this can lead to removal from family. Also, if the child is severely endangered, that is, "he or she is abused or neglected in such a way that their life is endangered, or their physical, intellectual, emotional and moral development may be significantly and irreparably harmed," then the child is immediately and temporarily removed from their family.

The authorities that can order and execute the temporary removal ("temporary placement"): notary, guardianship office, police, police for foreigners, refugee authority, prosecutor's office, court, head of a prison. The guardianship offices will decide on long-term solution after the temporary placement, based on a thorough examination of the case: if the danger is no longer present in the family, the child can return to the family; if the endangerment is still present in the family, the child will go to step-parents or a children's home. FGM is not mentioned in the law or in guidelines on child abuse.'

## **II. Main principles:**

This policy is based on the following principles:

- All children, and vulnerable adults have equal rights to protection;
- We apply zero tolerance of any kinds of violence of children, youngsters and vulnerable adults;
- We apply, and promote high ethical standards, transparency, openness through our activities, and in our safeguarding;

- We provide appropriate support to all our staff and stakeholders (especially to children, and vulnerable adults) in safeguarding;
- We believe that all staff has equal responsibility to identify those in needs and immediately act on any suspicion or disclosure to prevent any violence or harm and all staff has a responsibility to report concerns to the designated person with safeguarding.

*This policy aims:*

- To safeguard children, young people and vulnerable adults who participate in CFHU's programs and projects;
- To ensure that CFHU provides a safe environment for the children, youth and vulnerable adults involved into its programs in accordance with the law and regulatory guidance;
- To widely demonstrate the Foundation's commitment to child and vulnerable adults safeguarding;
- To provide all staff with the necessary information in order to meet their safeguarding responsibilities;
- To adopt safeguarding guidelines through procedures and a code of conduct for staff, volunteers and other involved parties, and ensure proper reporting channels in all types of CFHU programs that guarantee that the right of stakeholders (children, parents, staff) is heard;
- To record and store information professionally and securely, to share information about safeguarding children, their families, staff and volunteers.

This policy is designed to support all staff, volunteers, interns, grantees and associates in their commitment to protect children and vulnerable adults from abuse or exploitation. It aims to protect staff and associates by setting clear boundaries for their work. It applies to staff, volunteers and management of CFHU, and to any contracted personnel providing support services to families and members, and to those providing support services to staff. We are committed to review our policy regularly.

**III. Main definitions including types of abuse**

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), "child abuse" or "maltreatment" constitutes "all forms of physical and/or emotional ill-treatment, sexual abuse, neglect or negligent treatment or commercial or other exploitation, resulting 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".

Abuse of vulnerable adults can constitute the physical, psychological, emotional, financial or sexual maltreatment or neglect of a vulnerable adult by another person. The abuse may be a single act or repeated over a period of time; it may take one form or a multiple of forms. The lack of appropriate action can also be a form of abuse.

*A child*

"A child" is anyone under the age of 18 years. This definition is in line with the United Nations (UN) Convention on the Rights of the Child.

#### *A vulnerable adult*

"A vulnerable adult" refers to a person aged 18 or older who, by reason of mental or other disability, age, illness, disadvantaged socioeconomic conditions (such as low level of education, poverty, poor housing conditions, and lack of regular income) or by belonging to an ethnic, national, religious or sexual minority, is or may be unable to take care of him or herself, or unable/are in disadvantage to protect him or herself against 'significant harm' or 'exploitation'.

#### **Abuse**

There are four major categories of child abuse: neglect, physical abuse, psychological/emotional abuse, and child sexual abuse. (But there are several other forms of abuse and violence such as peer violence, online abuse, harassment, grooming, financial abuse, indirect abuse, isolation (social abuse), etc. The different forms of violence usually occur jointly).

##### **1. Neglect**

Neglect is sometimes called the 'passive' form of abuse, in that it relates to the failure to carry out some key aspect of the care and protection of the child, which results in significant impairment of the child's health or development, including a failure to thrive emotionally and socially.

##### **2. Physical abuse**

The actual or likely physical injury to a child, or failure to prevent physical injury or suffering to a child.

##### **3. Psychological/Emotional Abuse**

The actual or likely adverse effect on the emotional and behavioral development of a child, caused by persistent or severe emotional ill-treatment or rejection.

##### **4. Child Sexual Abuse**

The actual or likely sexual exploitation of a child. This includes rape, incest and all forms of sexual activity involving children, including pornography.

It is clear from the above definitions that abuse can be caused by both actions and omissions, and can take place both within the context of the family and in the context of other agencies and carers.

The different form of abuses can be observed combined and complexly. For better understanding please see Annex 2. Recognizing Signs of Abuse.

#### ***Child and Vulnerable Adult Safeguarding***

"Child and Vulnerable Adult Safeguarding" is a broad term to describe philosophies, policies, standards, guidelines and procedures to protect children and vulnerable adults from both

intentional and unintentional harm. In the current context, it applies particularly to the duty of Carpathian Foundation-Hungary and individuals associated with Carpathian Foundation-Hungary towards children and vulnerable adults in their care.

#### **IV. Code of Conduct**

The following forms a Code of Conduct for CFHU's staff, board, interns and volunteers. Failure to follow this code leads to the withdrawal of volunteer status or disciplinary action for staff.

1. It is crucial for all staff, volunteers and other associates in contact with children and vulnerable adults to:

- Be aware of situations which may present risks and manage these situations,
- Plan and organize the work and the workplace in order to minimize risks,
- Be visible to others when working with children whenever possible,
- Create and maintain a non-defensive attitude and an open culture in which to discuss any issues or concerns,
- Foster a culture of mutual accountability, so that any potentially abusive behavior can be challenged,
- Respect each child's boundaries and help them to develop their own sense of their rights, as well as helping them to know what they can do if they feel that there is a problem.

2. In general, it is prohibited for staff, interns and volunteers (unless they are parents, family or guardians) to:

- Spend excessive time alone with children or vulnerable adults away from others,
- Take children or vulnerable adults to their own home, especially where they will be alone with them,
- Have a child/children or vulnerable adults to stay overnight with them unsupervised,
- Sleep in the same room or bed as a child/children or vulnerable adult without any other adults (staff, or other associates).

3. Volunteers and staff must never:

- Develop sexual relationships with children or vulnerable adults,
- Develop relationships with children or vulnerable adults which could, in any way, be deemed exploitative or abusive,
- Act in ways that may be abusive or may place a child or vulnerable adult at risk of abuse,
- Engage in actions or behavior that could be construed as poor practice or potentially abusive.

Volunteers and staff should never:

- Use language, make suggestions, or offer advice which is inappropriate, offensive, or abusive,
- Behave in a manner which is inappropriate or sexually provocative towards a child or vulnerable adult,
- Condone or participate in any behavior which is illegal, abusive, or exposes the child or vulnerable adult to danger,
- Act in ways intended to shame, humiliate, belittle, or degrade.

#### **V. Responsibility and Safeguarding Management**

Generally, all adults owe a general duty of care to children with whom they work. Any person (staff, volunteers, interns, scholars, board members, contracted persons, etc.) who suspects that a child or a vulnerable adult is being abused, or is at risk of abuse, has a responsibility to report their concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) or to the Deputy Safeguarding Officer at CFHU in case the CEO is affected or not available.

CFHU appoints the CEO as Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) as a responsible person for safeguarding. In the absence of the CEO (and in case she is affected), the Chairman of the Board is the Deputy Safeguarding Officer.

The Designated Safeguarding Officer is the person to contact if staff, volunteers, parents or any other associates or stakeholders have an issue or concern about any aspect of a child's and vulnerable adult's safety and welfare.

The Designated Safeguarding Officer is responsible for:

- ensuring that all partners, grantees and stakeholders of CFHU are informed about its Safeguarding Policy and requesting them to adapt similar ones in their operations.
- recording all reports on alleged abuse,
- investigating the reported alleged abuse and involve parents, police and/or other relevant officials if needed,
- discharging the reported staff, volunteer, intern, etc. if abuse is proved,
- ensuring safe recruitment of staff and volunteer,
- ensuring raised awareness among staff and volunteers and training staff,

The Designated Safeguarding Officer ensures that

- Reporting procedures are followed, supports the staff member, volunteers, etc. in reporting the concern and liaises with Police and/or other affected officials as appropriate about suspected or actual cases of abuse.
- this policy is reviewed with regards to its compliance with the existing laws, and operation and internal policies of the Foundation at least annually (any associate can initiate the supervision by the CEO),

- the procedures set by this policy are properly applied (monitors and evaluates it at least in every three years) and adjust it to arising needs, circumstances.

The Chairman of the Board is actively involved into the monitoring and annual review of this policy, as in the case of all policies and internal codes and manuals of the Foundation, the Supervisory Board audits it annually and based on the recommendations of the Supervisory Board and its own review the Board of Directors approves it annually.

### **Special responsibilities related to media**

The rights and dignity of children and vulnerable adults must be respected at all times and the best interests of children and vulnerable adults maintained as the paramount concern of the communications.

First of all, only those photos and videos can be used by CFHU for marketing, PR and fundraising purposes for which the participating children and their parents and/or vulnerable adults provided permission in writing.

CFHU only purchases photos or images where the consent/permission of using those is evident.

It is important to highlight that all photos, images, videos used by CFHU must be in line with the principle that children and vulnerable adults cannot be portrayed in vulnerable situation or a way it might hurt his/her dignity.

CFHU also pays special attention when photos, videos are taken by professional photographers, representatives of media at its events. In these cases, we ensure

- that these professionals are informed about the details, requirements and their process is in line with our safeguarding policy,
- that photographers and filmmakers are not allowed to spend time with or have access to children without supervision,
- Children, parents must be informed about how the film and photograph will be used and their consent for this is obtained.
- In order to protect the confidentiality and privacy of the children, CFHU must be notified as to how the photographer or filmmaker intends to use the images or stories.

CFHU reserves the right to refuse use if it is felt that these are not acting in accordance with its Safeguarding Policy.

### **VI. Recruitment of staff, volunteers, interns**

During recruitment process of staff, volunteers and interns we at CFHU pay special attention to properly screen the candidates in order to minimize risk of abuse of children and vulnerable adults we work with.

### **New employee, volunteers, interns**

CFHU applies many practices to ensure proper recruitment of new staff, volunteers, and intern. The followings are being in practice/ or have been in practice since this policy is effective:

- when announcing advertisements for new positions we state that candidates must be fully aware of or compliant with our Safeguarding Policy (by placing the link of this policy into the advertisement);
- in positions where employees, volunteers have direct or indirect contact with children and/or vulnerable adults we request the candidates to provide us with a Certificate of No Criminal Record and two written references from previous employers, teachers, mentors about effective and non-problematic experience with these target groups;
- during job interviews we have a discussion about our Safeguarding Policy with the potential candidates and we apply specific (but non discriminative) questions to assess the candidates' appropriateness.

### **Awareness and training**

After its approval all current staff members, contracted volunteers and interns must read this policy and attend a group session led by the CEO. All of them are requested to sign a letter of confirmation stating they are all aware of its importance and they will conduct their work according to it.

Prior to commence work all new employees, volunteers and interns will also be requested to sign a declaration (as an annex of their employment, or volunteer contracts) confirming that they all are aware of its importance and that they will conduct their work in accordance with its principles.

Staff will be trained right after the approval of this policy and minimum in every 3 years of their employment as an awareness raising. The training will focus on the followings (mainly by examples, practices): types of abuse, signs of abuse, how to recognize abuse, how to react with the affected persons, what to do, who to report to, who to involve, legal environment, etc.

CFHU is dedicated to improve its internal knowledge and practices with regards to how to train its staff, volunteers, interns, board members about safeguarding in order to minimize risks of those children and vulnerable adults we work with and for.

The Board of Directors and the Supervisory Board declares its full understanding and support this policy by its regular review and annual approval.



## **VII. Confidentiality**

CFHU keeps all child/vulnerable adult protection records confidential, allowing disclosure only to those who need the information in order to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and vulnerable adults.

CFHU cooperates with police and other child protection/rights protection organizations/officials to ensure that all relevant information is shared for the purposes of investigation.

## **VIII. Reporting (process and procedures)**

Any person (staff, volunteers, interns, scholars, board members, contracted persons, beneficiaries, etc.) taking part at activities of CFHU who suspects that a child or a vulnerable adult is being abused, or is at risk of abuse, has a responsibility to report their concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) at CFHU. Staff, volunteers, interns, scholars, etc. must report all suspects immediately or the latest in 24 hours.

The following examples would constitute reasonable grounds for concern:

- (a) a specific indication from a child that s/he was abused,
- (b) a statement from a person who witnessed abuse,
- (c) an illness, injury or behavior consistent with abuse,
- (d) a symptom which may not in itself be totally consistent with abuse, but which is supported by corroborative evidence of deliberate harm or negligence,
- (e) consistent signs of neglect over a period of time.

Reports can be made in written form (sent via regular post or e-mail) or verbally (through a personal meeting). The DSO is responsible for making a record about all reports (DSO asks for a written factual statement from the person making the report.). (Annex 1: Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection Reporting form). All concerns are treated seriously and handled professionally and confidentially, and the reports are stored securely.

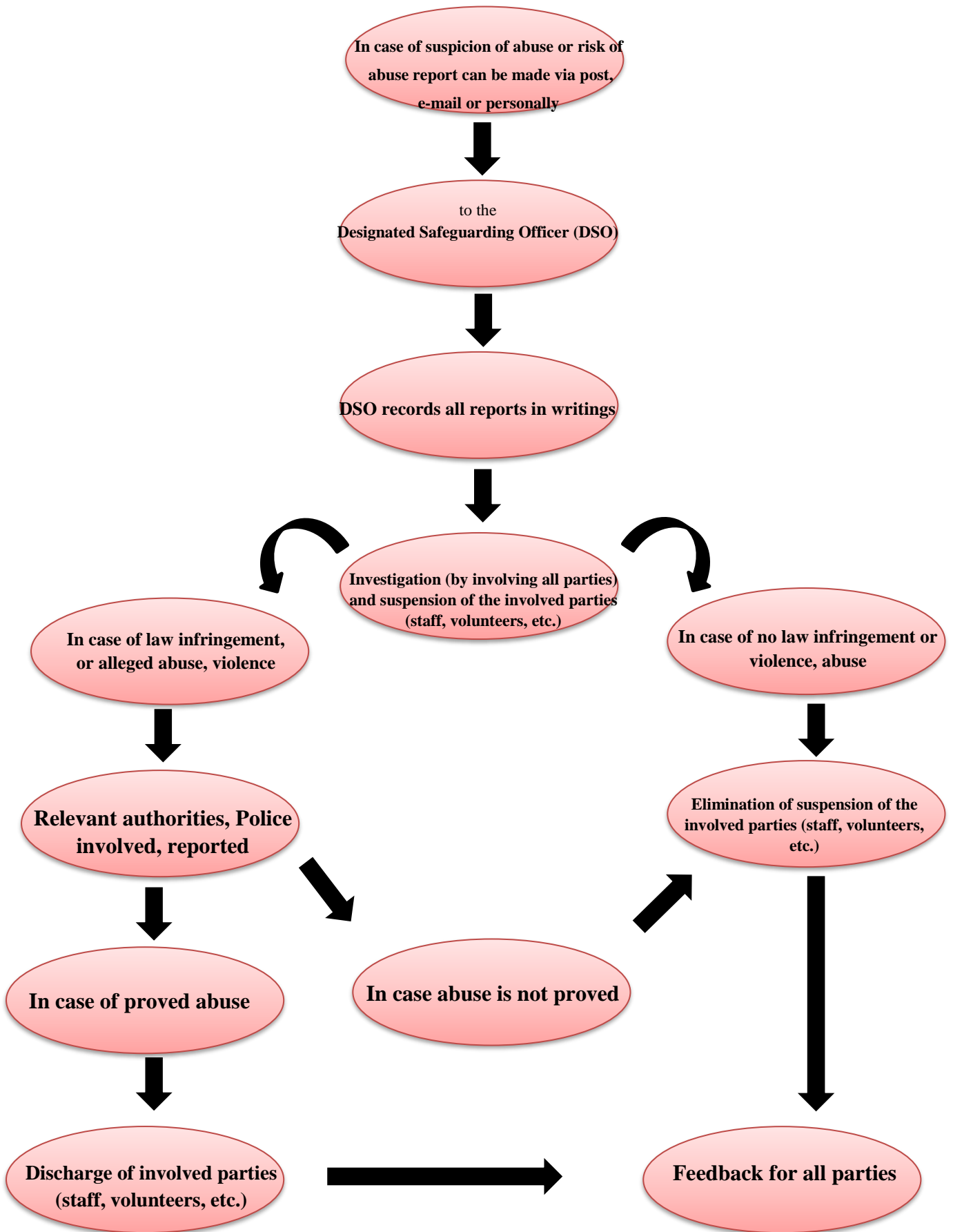
DSO investigates/makes consideration the reported situation by involving all affected parties – especially parents (in case of serious violence or abuse in 24 hours, in case of other cases maximum in one week after recording the report), and involves authorities, and/or police if the situation seems that infringement of laws or abuse, violence happened or can be suspected.

During the investigation immediate suspension of the involved parties (staff, volunteers, etc.) are practiced and immediate discharge is applied if abuse is proved. Those who reported their concerns, parents and all affected parties are fully informed about the whole process and the final result of the consideration, investigation.

Chart 1:

**Flow chart on**

How to report suspected abuse or risk of abuse



## **IX. Risk management**

To minimize risks before all of CFHU's programs, projects, events CFHU conducts risk management with regards to children and vulnerable adults. Risk management is taking into account the main risks factors, applying mitigation plans and at the end monitoring and evaluation of occurred risks and their mitigation is concluded.

When working with children and vulnerable adults the following factors need to be assessed as a minimum standard:

- Involved personnel – number of involved personnel, experience with the target group, safeguarding screening concluded and training provided;
- Situation, needs of the target group – number of children or vulnerable adults, age, parental support, special needs or disabilities, etc.;
- Location and timing – safety, appropriateness for special needs and disabilities, number of participants and nr. of involved personnel and other participants;
- Other participants (e.g. media, visitors, etc.) – number of other participants, their safeguarding awareness, screening;
- Supervision – provided to staff or volunteers or not.

## **X. Monitoring and evaluation**

CFHU is committed to regularly monitor the proper application and compliance with the external circumstances, legal environment and with its internal policies, regulations and activities.

DSO/CEO is responsible for the annual review of this policy with special attention on whether its procedures are properly applied (monitors and evaluates it in one year after its approval and after that at least in each three years) and adjust it to arising needs, circumstances.

The Chairman of the Board is actively involved into the monitoring and review of this policy annually by the CEO, as in the case of all policies and internal codes and manuals of the Foundation, the Supervisory Board audits it annually and based on the recommendations of the Supervisory Board and its own review the Board of Directors approves it annually.

In case of reported alleged abuses or harms this policy is immediately reviewed.

## **XI. Effective communication**

The Carpathian Foundation-Hungary encourages its partners, grantees; service providers to develop own procedures and apply policies for safeguarding children and vulnerable adults. As a minimum requirement in those grant programs where children and vulnerable adults are directly

involved/targeted, grantees are requested to at least accept this policy (with a signed declaration as the annex of the grant contract, or as a sub-point of that).

*The policy was approved by the Board of Directors of the Carpathian Foundation-Hungary on 23 April 2018 by its decree.*

### **Resources used**

ECPAT International Child Protection Policy

[http://www.ecpat.org/wp-content/uploads/legacy/child\\_protection\\_policies.pdf](http://www.ecpat.org/wp-content/uploads/legacy/child_protection_policies.pdf)

Keeping Children Safe Child Safeguarding Standards

<https://www.keepingchildrensafe.org.uk/how-we-keep-children-safe/capacity-building/resources/child-safeguarding-standards-and-how-implement>

Child-Safe Organisations Self Study Manual

[http://www.ecpat.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/02\\_Child-Safe-Organisation\\_Self-Study-Manual\\_eng.pdf](http://www.ecpat.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/02_Child-Safe-Organisation_Self-Study-Manual_eng.pdf)

Crèche Cois Laoi's Child and Adult Protection Policy

<https://www.ucc.ie/en/media/support/creche/documents/Child-and-Adult-Protection-Policy.pdf>

Early Childhood Ireland: Child Protection and Welfare Practice Handbook

[https://www.earlychildhoodireland.ie/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/CF\\_WelfarePracticehandbook-1.pdf](https://www.earlychildhoodireland.ie/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/CF_WelfarePracticehandbook-1.pdf)

National Early Years Children First Committee: DEVELOPING A CHILD PROTECTION & WELFARE POLICY: A RESOURCE FOR EARLY YEARS SERVICES

[https://www.earlychildhoodireland.ie/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/Revised\\_-\\_Developing\\_a\\_Child\\_Protection\\_Welfare\\_Policy\\_A\\_Resource\\_for\\_Early\\_Years\\_Services\\_.pdf](https://www.earlychildhoodireland.ie/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/Revised_-_Developing_a_Child_Protection_Welfare_Policy_A_Resource_for_Early_Years_Services_.pdf)

Haven Community Foundation: Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy

<https://www.havenpartnership.com/wp-content/uploads/Child-Protection-Policy-for-Website.pdf>

ChildHope UK: CHILD PROTECTION POLICIES AND PROCEDURES TOOLKIT

<https://www.unicef.org/violencestudy/pdf/CP%20Manual%20-%20Introduction.pdf>

## Annex 1. Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection Reporting form

### Incident Details

Name of the child or vulnerable adult:	Place and date of the incident, suspect:
Name of the referrer:	Status of the referrer (staff, volunteer, grantee, etc.):
<p>Details of the concern (What, where and when you noticed (if applicable); was the child accompanied and if so who by; nature of the injury or behavior; what the child said; what you said; witnesses; other adults involved and what they said):</p>	
<p>What actions were taken (What actions were taken and by whom; any recommendations for future actions; other agencies involved):</p>	
Date and place:	
Signature or the referrer:	Signature of the DSO:

### Annex 2: Recognizing Signs of Abuse

Recognizing signs of potential abuse is complex and there is no simple checklist that allows easy recognition. There are, however, potential warning signs that you can be alert to, which need to be assessed with care. It should not be automatically assumed that abuse is occurring. If such signs are observed, they should be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Officer without delay to allow for appropriate measures in line with the Policy to be taken if abuse is confirmed.

#### **Possible signs of physical abuse:**

- Bruises, burns, sprains, dislocations, bites, cuts;
- Improbable excuses given to explain injuries;
- Refusal to discuss injuries;
- Withdrawal from physical contact;
- Arms and legs kept covered in hot weather;
- Unwillingness to participate in physical activities (such as sports) that may involve undressing;

- Fear of returning home or of parents being contacted;
- Showing wariness or distrust of adults;
- Self-destructive tendencies;
- Aggression aimed at others;
- Passivity and frequent complaints;
- Running away (repeatedly).

**Possible signs of emotional abuse:**

- Delayed physical, cognitive or emotional development;
- Anxiousness;
- Delayed speech development or sudden speech disorders;
- Fear of new situations;
- Low self-esteem;
- Inappropriate emotional responses to situations;
- Extreme passivity and/or aggression;
- Drug or alcohol abuse;
- Running away (repeatedly);
- Compulsive stealing.

**Possible signs of neglect:**

- Frequent hunger;
- Taking scraps of food from bins or plates, stealing and/or hiding of food;
- Poor personal hygiene;
- Constant tiredness;
- Inappropriate clothing (such as summer clothes in winter);
- Frequent lateness or non-attendance at school;
- Untreated medical problems;
- Low self-esteem;
- Poor social relationships;
- Compulsive stealing;
- Drug or alcohol abuse.

**Possible signs of sexual abuse:**

- Age inappropriate sexualized behavior or highly sexualized language;
- Bed wetting or soiling;
- Anal or genital soreness;
- Sleep problems;
- Fear of being alone with adults;
- Promiscuity;
- Extreme risk taking in adolescents.

**Possible signs of concern regarding adult behavior:**

- A person in whose presence the behavior of a child changes significantly – e.g. a child becomes withdrawn, fearful, distressed or agitated;
- A person asking a child to lie or keep secrets;
- A person violating any of the principles of the organization's Safeguarding Policy and/or Code of conduct.

For more information please contact:

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