

EASTERN ALLIANCE FOR SAFE AND SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT (EASST)

SAFEGUARDING POLICY

1. POLICY STATEMENT

- 1.1** Our policy is to comply with the requirements of UK Child Protection and Safeguarding Procedures and the No Secrets Act 2000. We are committed to protecting our beneficiaries, employees and volunteers from all forms of abuse, including physical, emotional and sexual harm. We seek to provide an organisational culture where everyone feels safe and able to report incidents and feels confident that they will be handled appropriately and sensitively.
- 1.2** The purpose of this policy is to:
- (a) Set out our responsibilities in observing and upholding our policy on safeguarding;
 - (b) Provide information and guidance to our employees and partners on how to identify, report and record any concerns and incidents.
- 1.3** This policy applies directly to our trustees and to all individuals working within EASST as employees or agents and should be read alongside our code of conduct for staff and partner organisations representing EASST.

2. WHAT IS SAFEGUARDING?

EASST uses the definition of safeguarding as provided by the Charity Commission of England and Wales that:

“Safeguarding and promoting well-being and welfare means:

- Protecting the rights of adults to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect;
- Protecting children from maltreatment; preventing impairment of health or development; ensuring they are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and taking action to enable them to have the best outcomes.”

Our definition includes any form of abuse and/or harm and neglect made to or by all individuals working within EASST as employees, agents or beneficiaries including emotional, physical, psychological or sexual abuse regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity.

3. HOW TO RAISE A CONCERN/REPORT AN INCIDENT

- 3.1** If anyone is concerned that a child or vulnerable adult is at risk of being abused or neglected, they should not ignore their suspicions and should not assume that someone else will take action to protect that person.
- 3.2** Employees and partners are encouraged to raise concerns about any issue or suspicion of malpractice at the earliest possible stage. If you are unsure whether a particular act constitutes as a safeguarding issue, or if you have any other queries, these should be raised with the Director or the Chairman. Statutory protection of whistle blowers is afforded under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998.
- 3.3** In the unlikely instance that you are unable to approach the Compliance Officer, Director, designated Trustee for Safeguarding or Chairman about an incident or concern, you should make a report to the Charity Commission's Whistleblowing Team at whistleblowing@charitycommission.gsi.gov.uk
- 3.4** Employees or those who raise concerns or report another's wrongdoing are sometimes worried about possible repercussions. We aim to encourage openness and will support anyone who raises genuine concerns in good faith under this policy, even if they turn out to be mistaken.
- 3.5** We are committed to ensuring no one suffers any detrimental treatment as a result of reporting in good faith their suspicion that an actual or potential safeguarding incident has taken place, or may take place in the future. Detrimental treatment includes dismissal, disciplinary action, threats or other unfavourable treatment connected with raising a concern. If you believe that you have suffered any such treatment, you should inform the Compliance Officer immediately.

4. COMPLAINTS AND DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

- 4.1** All complaints and reports will be referred to the named Trustee responsible for safeguarding who will take appropriate action to investigate and if necessary seek external advice.
- 4.2** If a suspected a crime has been committed, it will be reported to the police and to any other regulators the charity is accountable to.
- 4.3** If a serious incident takes place, it will be reported by the Trustees to the Charity Commission (RSI@charitycommission.gsi.gov.uk) including details of what happened and how the issue has been dealt with, even if the issue has been reported to the police, donors or another regulator.
- 4.4** Any employee who breaches this policy will face disciplinary action, which could result in dismissal for gross misconduct. We reserve our right to terminate our contractual relationship with our partners, grant recipients, and associates if they breach this policy.

5. PROCEDURES FOR RECORDING ALLEGATIONS AND INCIDENTS

- 5.1** All allegations and incidents will be recorded in EASST's safeguarding monitoring log including details of the incident, date the allegation was made, and any actions taken.
- 5.2** The log will be stored by the Compliance Officer in a confidential, password-protected file.

6. YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES

- 6.1** You must ensure that you read, understand and comply with this policy.
- 6.2** The prevention, detection and reporting of safeguarding issues are the responsibility of all those working for EASST or under our control. You are required to avoid any activity that might lead to, or suggest, a breach of this policy.
- 6.3** You must notify the Director as soon as possible if you believe or suspect that a conflict with this policy has occurred, or may occur in the future.

7. TRAINING & COMMUNICATION

- 7.1** All employees will receive relevant training on how to implement and adhere to this policy
- 7.2** Our zero-tolerance approach to any form of abuse, harm or neglect will be communicated to all partners, grant recipients, associates, suppliers, and contractors at the outset of our relationship with them and as appropriate thereafter.

8. WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE POLICY

- 8.1** The Board of Trustees has overall responsibility for ensuring this policy complies with our legal and ethical obligations, and that all those under our control comply with it.
- 8.2** The Compliance Officer has primary and day-to-day responsibility for implementing this policy and for monitoring its use and effectiveness and dealing with any queries on its interpretation. Management at all levels are responsible for ensuring those reporting to them are made aware of and understand this policy and are given adequate and regular training on it.

9. MONITORING & REVIEW

- 9.1** As part of EASST's annual risk assessment process, the Director will monitor the effectiveness and review the implementation of this policy, considering its suitability, adequacy and effectiveness. The Compliance Officer will carry out regular audits of our control systems and procedures to provide assurance that they are effective in

detecting and dealing with safeguarding issues.

- 9.2** All employees are responsible for the success of this policy and should ensure they use it to disclose any suspected danger or wrongdoing.
- 9.3** This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment and it may be amended at any time.

Last reviewed: 18th April 2023

Useful resources and advice on safeguarding:

Charity Commission Guidance <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/how-to-report-a-serious-incident-in-your-charity>

Ofsted Safeguarding Policy <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/ofsted-safeguarding-policy/ofsted-safeguarding-policy>