



## **Northern Lights Aid Code of Conduct for field work**

### **Mission**

Northern Lights Aid is a neutral, independent humanitarian organization. Its objective is to preserve human dignity and promote community integration amongst refugees and others in need.

### **Values**

Northern Lights Aid work according to the following values: Sustainability, solidarity, equality, altruism, cooperation and integrity. We provide humanitarian aid, regardless of nationality, ethnicity, gender, religious beliefs, sexual orientation and political opinions.

### **The code of conduct**

This code of conduct states the values and policies of NLA. By signing it, you commit to respect the following guidelines, and understand that misconduct or actions contrary to the rules lead to consequences. According to the severity of the fault consequences will vary from verbal warning and reminder of the code of conduct, to permanent exclusion of the organization and report to the volunteer community in Northern Greece (through Indigo Volunteers).

The field coordinator is in charge to make sure volunteers respect the code of conduct and to evaluate the severity of the mistakes. In case of exclusion, the decision is made together by the field coordinator and the board. The decision and consequences are then notified to the volunteer.

## **Volunteer work with Northern Lights Aid**

- Do no harm.
- Do not take advantage of your position as a volunteer to profit in any way.
- Always follow NLA's rules, guidelines and policies.
- Take care of yourself mentally and physically and acknowledge your own personal limits, as well as the limits of volunteer work in general.

## **General working rules**

- Adhere to the instructions and schedules given to you by coordinators.
- Give prior notice if you can't attend a volunteering session as it is planned.
- Communicate with other team members and coordinators regarding any special events occurring in the field of operation which might affect the normal schedule of activities.
- Do not engage in activities that could be considered political activism or encourage beneficiaries to do so.
- Be culturally aware and remember that what may be considered acceptable in your own culture might be completely inappropriate in others.
- Dress appropriately and comfortably for field work, even in the event of an outing with beneficiaries (including at the beach) and be sensitive to cultural differences
- Do not provide care, legal, medical or personal advice, that exceeds your capabilities and/or the nature of the work you are expected to perform with the organization.
- Don't answer questions if you are not sure, don't make statements you can not keep and never make promises.
- Treat all beneficiaries equally, according to their needs. Volunteers must avoid showing any form of favoritism toward specific beneficiaries.
- Understand that your personal information (name, date of birth, country of origin, email address) may be shared with other volunteer organisations, other actors operating in the field, and/or government representatives.

## Security

- You should not enter the camp without a specific permission from the field coordinator, or the camp manager, or governmental authorities.
- In an event of an authorized visit in the camp, you should not stay in the camp after 21:00 unless previously approved for special events, and under no circumstance should any volunteer ever stay overnight in camp.
- No minor(s) shall be taken outside of camp, or Northern Lights Aid premises without permission from a parent or trusted guardian from the camp.
- If you feel that you are in danger or being threatened, leave the field of operation immediately, inform a coordinator and find a safe place.
- Do not escalate a conflict or tense situation. Show respect to beneficiaries and other team members, and remain calm at all times. If you feel you cannot do this, leave the situation and find assistance from a coordinator.
- Tell a coordinator if you have any concern about the welfare of a beneficiary or team member.
- If you witness violence or abuse occurring, notify the police officers and inform the coordinator.
- Do not intervene in any physical or verbal conflict, do not try to stop the situation or translate for any parties involved.
- Obey orders given by figures of authority (police, military, government officials and camp managers). If you feel that you are being treated unfairly, report the incident to a coordinator.
- If you are asked by authority to testify as a witness to an event of violence or abuse, do not give any statement unless you are absolutely certain of what you saw, or you are testifying to being personally threatened. Do not report anything that you haven't witnessed yourself, including gossip, rumors or second-hand information, and remember that the details of events can be easily confused or misinterpreted in high-stress situations (fights, arguments, etc.).
- Do not take picture of beneficiaries without prior consent from them or their legal guardian. Do not take picture of military, police or government officials.

## **Interaction with beneficiaries**

- Keep all information regarding the identity, location, asylum case and/or status of all beneficiaries confidential.
- It is not permitted for beneficiaries to visit and stay overnight in volunteer apartments.
- The organization of social events involving volunteers and beneficiaries outside working hours, should be discussed with the field coordinator and be professionally and culturally appropriate.
- Do not share personal, political or religious opinions with beneficiaries unless you are specifically asked to do so.
- Unless it comes up naturally within the context of a conversation, do not ask personal questions regarding beneficiaries' political opinion, religious beliefs or traumatic events.
- Avoid displays of physical affection with beneficiaries. Also avoid picking up and/or carrying children unnecessarily.
- Avoid creating emotional attachment with beneficiaries and keep in mind that you will leave after your time in the field, which can be painful for beneficiaries if an emotional dependence has developed.
- At the end of your time in the field, it is appropriate to say goodbye, but there should not be a ceremonial event of goodbyes. Also be aware not to make promises that you are not able to keep, like implying you will come back.
- It is acceptable to connect with beneficiaries on social media, but remember to remain professional in your conversation, in the content you make available publicly during your time in the field.
- When individually talking with beneficiaries, do not make comments on the behalf of Northern Lights Aid or disclose information about the organization's future events or plans that are still uncertain.
- Do not accept money or any items of monetary value from beneficiaries. Do not give money or any items of monetary value to beneficiaries.
- Volunteers with relevant translation skills, should not use them to talk on behalf of, or work as a spokesperson for the organisation.

## **Maintaining the reputation of Northern Lights Aid**

- Remember that during your time in the field, even outside of working hours, you represent the image and reputation of Northern Lights Aid through your actions.
- Do not make statements, publicly or privately, on behalf of Northern Lights Aid, but as a volunteer who participates in the organization's activities.
- Do not intentionally damage the reputation of Northern Lights Aid through your actions or speech, privately, publicly, through news and/or social media, to groups or individuals or in any other circumstances.
- All contact with members of the press or requests for public statements must go through the NLA General manager/ Field coordinator. No comments to the press should be made without prior approval.
- In the event of fundraising for Northern Lights Aid: The goal of the fundraiser must be stated clearly. In addition to this, the visual content, information about the organization, must be validated by a representant of Northern Lights Aid.

**The following behavior or actions are considered serious acts of misconduct and will result in immediate expulsion from Northern Lights Aid and may result in legal action against the offender:**

- Action or speech which is disrespectful, humiliating, neglectful, insubordinate, dishonest, threatening, lewd, violent, degrading, bullying, exploitive, hateful, illegal, sexist or racist.
- Engaging in a romantic, emotional or sexual relationship with any beneficiary, minor, or any other vulnerable individual.
- Provide humanitarian aid in exchange of any personal gain, such as: sexual favours, money or other personal benefits.
- Any violence, aggression or abuse of any kind, unless in the case of self-defense.
- Use of and/or providing, purchasing or carrying illegal substances for beneficiaries, volunteers or any other party, both inside and outside the field of operation.
- Consumption of alcohol during working hours, as well as purchasing or providing alcohol for beneficiaries in the field of operation.

## Procedure for volunteer protection

In case severe operational/ethical disagreement with the field coordinator, concern about your own mental or physical safety (without an appropriate reaction of the field coordinator), if you are victim of bullying, harassment, sexual harassment or misconduct from a another team member (without an appropriate reaction of the field coordinator) or from the field coordinator.

Please contact one of the following board members:

Anne Paulsen +47 90993774, or email [anne@northernlighsaid.org](mailto:anne@northernlighsaid.org)

Charlotte Vestli + 47 40247501 or email: [charlotte@northernlightaid.org](mailto:charlotte@northernlightaid.org)

Your concern will be taken seriously and confidential. You will also be able to remain anonymous if you wish.

By signing, I, \_\_\_\_\_ confirm that I have read, understand and agree to follow the Northern Lights Aid code of conduct.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Volunteer signature) (Date)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Coordinator signature) (Date)