UnitingWorld Code of Conduct

Approved by the Board: 24 March 2026

1. What this Code is about

You have been asked to sign this Code because you are, or may act as, a UnitingWorld Representative.

This Code explains how you should behave as a UnitingWorld Representative, so that you and UnitingWorld are seen as safe, respectful, honest and fair.

1.1. What is a UnitingWorld Representative?

You are a UnitingWorld Representative if you are a member of UnitingWorld staff, a UnitingWorld Board Member or a UnitingWorld volunteer. Even if you have a different connection to UnitingWorld, you are a UnitingWorld Representative at any time you are doing work on behalf of UnitingWorld, doing work that is funded by UnitingWorld, or if other people may assume you're doing work on behalf of UnitingWorld.

1.2. Who is UnitingWorld?

UnitingWorld is an agency of the Uniting Church in Australia and a registered charity. We work with partners across the world to address poverty and injustice.

We are accountable to the communities we serve, our partners, our supporters and donors, and to the laws and standards that govern our work. We are guided by Christian values of love and justice, and work with integrity, respect, transparency and care to promote the safety, dignity and inclusion of all people.

1.3. When does this Code apply to you?

This Code applies to you in all situations when you are a UnitingWorld Representative.

This includes when you're in the office, in the community, visiting partners and collaborators, online (including emails and social media), in written materials, or any other situation.

It applies for both paid and unpaid time. This Code still applies to your private activities to the extent that your private activities affect UnitingWorld.

1.4. Signing the Code

Before you start working on behalf of UnitingWorld, you must sign this document to confirm that you have read, understood and will follow this Code for the whole time you are a UnitingWorld Representative.

1.5. Before you sign the Code

You must tell us about any past or current conduct, allegations, charges or convictions that might affect your ability to meet this Code, or affect your suitability to be a UnitingWorld Representative.

1.6. What happens if you breach the Code

If you do not follow this Code while you are a UnitingWorld Representative, we may take disciplinary action against you, including ending your employment or other form of engagement with us.

When we consider a breach of the Code, we think about the following:

- What was happening?
- What was your role? What were your duties? What was your responsibility?
- Did your actions result in you not being able to do your job or meet your responsibilities?
- How did your actions affect UnitingWorld's relationship with people we work with and the public?

We will handle reporting of breaches confidentially, and in line with our safeguarding and complaints processes.

1.7. You must report any breach of the Code

You play an important role in keeping people safe and maintaining high standards.

If you breach the Code, it is important that you report it to UnitingWorld immediately. We will work with you to respond appropriately. Remember that NOT reporting a breach is also against the Code.

You must also report immediately if you believe that anyone else who has signed the Code has breached the Code.

You can report a breach of the Code to someone in a management role at UnitingWorld, a UnitingWorld Board Member, or through any one of the methods below, whatever suits you best.

- phone (Australia): 1800 998 122
- phone (international): +61 2 8267 9735
- email: complaints@unitingworld.org.au
- website: https://unitingworld.org.au/complaints
- whistleblower channels (only for staff, Board Members and volunteers).

You should speak up honestly and in good faith, even if you're unsure.

1.8. You may receive reports about breaches the Code

As a UnitingWorld Representative, someone else may come to you to report a breach of the Code.

You must always act in ways that make it easy for issues to be raised safely with you. You must never punish or disadvantage someone for raising a concern in good faith. Treat the report confidentially and pass it on immediately to UnitingWorld management or the Board, or through one of the methods above, whatever suits you best.

2. Standards of Behaviour

2.1. UnitingWorld Values

UnitingWorld wants all our Representatives to display our values.

You must:

1. nurture relationships, recognising they are not yours alone but are part of UnitingWorld's ongoing work
2. act honestly, responsibly, and with care
3. make decisions that are fair and can be clearly explained
4. treat every person with dignity and respect
5. take care of your own safety and the safety of others
6. use resources responsibly and avoid waste in your work
7. follow lawful and reasonable directions from UnitingWorld
8. follow the relevant laws and regulations that apply where you are working
9. speak up if you see someone being harmed, exploited, treated unfairly or placed at risk
10. tell UnitingWorld straight away if anything changes that may affect your ability to meet this Code, including any allegations, charges or convictions.

You must not:

11. do anything unlawful or criminal
12. do anything that may harm others or harm UnitingWorld, its work, or its reputation
13. work while alcohol or drugs are affecting your ability to do your job safely and properly.

2.2. Child Protection

UnitingWorld wants to keep children safe from harm. This is anyone under 18 years of age, regardless of local laws or customs.

You must:

14. act in ways that protect children and reduce the risk of harm and exploitation to them
15. keep children safe and treat them with dignity
16. treat all children equally and with respect, no matter their background or identity, without showing favouritism
17. maintain professional boundaries with children
18. avoid being alone with a child wherever possible. If you need to work with a child, make sure another adult is present or nearby
19. make sure your interactions with children can be seen by others, including when communicating online or by phone
20. be careful about giving gifts to children. Small items shared with a group may be appropriate, but avoid giving gifts to individual children, as this can create favouritism or be seen as grooming

21. make sure all interactions with children are safe, open and appropriate to your role (including online)
22. make sure any physical contact with a child is appropriate, necessary and does not put the child at risk or make them feel uncomfortable
23. explain how images or recordings will be used and get permission from both the child and their parent or caregiver before taking photos, videos or recordings
24. make sure images of children are respectful and dignified
25. keep children's personal information confidential
26. report any concerns or suspicions of harm, abuse or exploitation of a child immediately, even if you are unsure.

You must not:

27. mistreat, shame or harm a child
28. physically punish or discipline a child
29. give alcohol, drugs or harmful substances to a child
30. form special or exclusive relationships with individual children
31. engage in any sexual activity with a child (this is never allowed, regardless of local laws, and saying you did not know their age is not a valid excuse)
32. use sexual, exploitative or otherwise unsafe language or behaviour towards a child
33. invite a child into your home or private space unless it is necessary to keep them safe
34. sleep near a child without supervision, unless it cannot be avoided and another adult is present or aware
35. use phones, cameras, computers or social media in ways that exploit, harm or put children at risk
36. support or be involved in child labour that is harmful, takes advantage of children, or is not appropriate for a child's age
37. build trust or a relationship with a child in order to take advantage of or exploit them.
38. share or disclose identifying information about a child unless it is safe, appropriate and consistent with this Code.

2.3. Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment

UnitingWorld wants to create safe and respectful environments for all people. Sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment are forms of gender-based violence.

You must not:

39. misuse or try to misuse your power, authority or influence for sexual benefit
40. misuse or try to misuse someone's trust or vulnerability to obtain sexual benefit
41. provide or withhold assistance, benefits or opportunities to pressure someone into a personal or sexual relationship, including denying assistance to gain sexual benefit
42. receive sexual benefit in exchange for jobs, money, goods, services, assistance or other benefits, including sex or sexual favours, regardless of local laws or customs. This is known as transactional sex

43. start or seek personal social relationships with those who benefit from UnitingWorld's programs
44. have sexual relationships with people affected by crisis, disaster or receiving assistance, as these involve unequal power and can damage the credibility of humanitarian aid
45. form personal or social relationships with participants or community members where this creates a real or perceived power imbalance, including where your role or position influences the relationship
46. make someone take part in sexual activity by force, threats, coercion, pressure or deception, or when they cannot freely agree
47. engage in sexual behaviour that is unwanted, intimidating or inappropriate, including staring, gestures, unwanted physical contact or repeated requests for a relationship
48. make sexual comments, jokes, messages or posts, or ask unwanted questions about a person's private life, whether in person or online
49. display or share sexual or offensive images, materials or content in ways that may create an unsafe or inappropriate environment
50. share information about someone's experience of sexual exploitation, abuse or harassment without their consent, unless required for safeguarding or reporting purposes.

You must:

51. act in ways that protect people from and prevent sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment
52. maintain professional boundaries that uphold trust, safety and confidence and prevent exploitation, abuse or harm
53. tell UnitingWorld if you have a sexual relationship with someone from a community where we have a project, or with someone who works for UnitingWorld or our partners in a country where we work. This helps us to work out if you have a conflict of interest[1] and to make sure you are not using a position of power in the wrong way
54. take action if you see or suspect sexual exploitation, abuse or harassment, and do not ignore it
55. report any concerns or suspicions immediately, including if they involve aid workers from other organisations encountered through UnitingWorld's work
56. keep information about people who have experienced sexual exploitation, abuse or harassment confidential and only share it on a need-to-know basis.

2.4. Public and Media Comment

UnitingWorld wants to maintain public trust. Only authorised people can speak on behalf of UnitingWorld.

You must:

57. act in ways that protect trust in UnitingWorld and its work
58. tell journalists or anyone in the media to talk to the National Director. They are the only person authorised to speak with the media

[1] **Conflict of interest:** A situation where your personal interests could influence, or be seen to influence, your decisions or actions in your role.

59. report to UnitingWorld management if you are approached by anyone wanting to put information online or in the media about UnitingWorld's work
60. be clear when you speak with people that your personal views do not represent UnitingWorld
61. be careful that what you say publicly does not affect UnitingWorld's relationships, trust, or confidentiality.

You must not:

62. speak to the media about UnitingWorld or its work, or suggest you are authorised to speak on its behalf, unless you have been given permission to do so by the National Director
63. say anything in public, including on social media, that could reasonably undermine trust in UnitingWorld or damage its reputation, or the reputation of its partners or staff.

2.5. Images, Videos and Stories

UnitingWorld is committed to only collecting and sharing images, videos or stories that show people with respect and dignity.

You must:

64. understand and respect local culture, traditions and community expectations before collecting images, videos or stories, especially involving children, for example where there are restrictions on photographing certain people or events or where permission from community leaders is expected
65. explain how images, videos or stories will be used before collecting them, and get clear agreement from the person. For children get agreement from both the child and a parent or caregiver
66. present people, especially children, in a dignified and respectful way, and not show people as helpless, vulnerable or in a sexualised or degrading way, including making sure they are appropriately clothed
67. make sure images, videos and stories are honest about the setting and the facts and do not misrepresent people, situations or context
68. make sure file names, labels or metadata do not reveal personal information when sharing images electronically, for example by turning off location or geo-tagging on cameras and mobile phones
69. consider the risks before sharing images, videos or stories, especially online, including the risk that people may be identified or exposed to harm or stigma
70. take extra care to protect children's identity and personal information at all times, including avoiding sharing identifying details and considering how children may be recognised by others
71. make sure adults know they can choose not to be identified, and ask how they would like to be named or described when sharing images, videos or stories
72. follow these rules for all content, including stories and content created using digital tools or artificial intelligence
73. report concerns immediately if images, videos and stories may place people at risk, or are in breach of this Code.

You must not:

74. identify people in ways that could put them at risk, including through names, locations, captions or other identifying details.

2.6. Information and Confidentiality

UnitingWorld is committed to protecting people's privacy and safety when handling information. This covers all information you handle in your role about people, partners and UnitingWorld.

Information includes:

- confidential information: information about UnitingWorld that is not public, such as internal plans, financial information, donor information or partner agreements
- personal information: information that identifies a person or is about them, such as their name, contact details, location, health information, behaviour or personal circumstances.

You must:

75. keep information safe and prevent it from being lost, used in the wrong way or shared in the wrong way
76. only access, use or share information about people when you need it for your work and have permission to do so, and take extra care with information about their identity, health, behaviour or personal circumstances
77. store and share information using secure and appropriate systems or tools for your role, and make sure information is not accessible to others when using personal devices
78. use UnitingWorld's information, materials and content only for your work, and not for personal use or in ways that could harm UnitingWorld
79. use digital tools responsibly and take care not to expose information, including when using artificial intelligence
80. make sure you do not enter or share information in ways that could put people, partners or UnitingWorld at risk
81. report any concerns about lost, misused or shared information immediately.

You must not:

82. use confidential or sensitive information for personal benefit or to benefit others in the wrong way
83. share information without a clear work reason or permission
84. use systems or tools that have not been approved by UnitingWorld in ways that could put information at risk
85. access, view, download or share sexual or offensive material using UnitingWorld systems or networks, or in ways that may create an unsafe or inappropriate environment for others.

2.7. Bullying, Discrimination and Harassment

UnitingWorld is committed to safe, inclusive and respectful environments for everyone. Bullying, discrimination and harassment are different but related behaviours. These standards apply in all situations, including in person, in writing and online.

You must:

86. treat everyone with respect and courtesy, including speaking politely, listening carefully and considering the wellbeing of others
87. support a safe, inclusive and fair environment for everyone
88. recognise early signs of bullying, discrimination or harassment and take action
89. speak up and report concerns about bullying, discrimination or harassment immediately.

You must not:

90. misuse your power, position or influence to intimidate, exclude or disadvantage others
91. repeatedly criticise, belittle or undermine another person
92. behave in ways that make someone feel targeted, powerless or unsafe
93. exclude someone from work or work-related activities in a way that disadvantages them
94. deliberately withhold information or resources needed for someone to do their role
95. sabotage another person's work
96. spread false or misleading information about another person
97. make repeated or inappropriate threats about a person's role or employment
98. make excessive or unreasonable demands that undermine a person
99. intrude on or interfere with a person's work or personal activities in ways that are inappropriate or unreasonable
100. treat someone unfairly or less favourably because of their personal characteristics such as race, religion, ethnic or Indigenous background, disability, age, whether someone has been displaced, caste, gender, gender identity, sexuality, sexual orientation, marital or family status, political views, poverty, class, or social or economic status
101. harass, abuse or intimidate another person
102. make offensive comments, jokes or gestures about a person's identity, background or personal life
103. ask unwanted or inappropriate questions, or make comments about a person's private life
104. tell others that someone is living with HIV, TB or any other serious health conditions without their consent, unless this is required to protect others in a declared public health emergency
105. tell others that someone is involved in activities that could put them at risk in their community or context, such as promoting child rights, different ideas about the roles of women and men, or activities that may not be accepted or may be illegal in that setting
106. send offensive or threatening messages, including by email, social media or other online platforms.

2.8. Financial Integrity and Ethical Conduct

UnitingWorld expects you to act honestly and protect all resources, decisions and relationships.

You must:

107. act honestly when making decisions about and managing, approving or influencing the use of funds, resources or assets
108. use funds, assets and resources carefully and only for their intended purpose
109. declare any conflicts of interest, including where personal relationships or interests could influence, or be seen to influence, your decisions
110. when purchasing goods and services, take reasonable steps for your role to check that suppliers are not involved in exploitation, including modern slavery[2], and raise any risks you identify
111. follow relevant laws and requirements relating to financial management, fraud, corruption and misuse of funds
112. report any concerns or suspicions about misuse of funds, fraud, corruption, illegal activity or links to harmful organisations immediately.

You must not:

113. be involved in fraud, corruption or other dishonest conduct[3]
114. offer, request or accept bribes, kickbacks or other improper benefits
115. accept gifts, hospitality, travel, entertainment or other favours that could influence, or be seen to influence, how you do your role
116. use funds, assets or resources for personal benefit or for purposes unrelated to UnitingWorld's work
117. change or present financial or other records in a way that is not true
118. hide, destroy or alter information relevant to an audit, investigation or review
119. make decisions about buying goods or services that are dishonest, favour others unfairly, or are influenced by personal gain
120. use your position, authority or access to information to benefit yourself or others in the wrong way
121. knowingly support or work with individuals or organisations involved in illegal or harmful activities
122. use or provide goods or services that are unsafe or may cause harm
123. engage in, support or benefit from modern slavery, forced labour, human trafficking or exploitative labour practices.

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[2] **Modern slavery:** serious exploitation where a person cannot refuse or leave work because of coercion, threats or deception, including forced labour, human trafficking or exploitative labour practices.

[3] **Fraud:** dishonestly using deception to gain a benefit or cause a loss to someone else. **Corruption:** using your position or power for personal gain or to benefit others unfairly. **Bribery:** offering, giving, asking for or accepting something of value to influence a decision or action.

2.9. Additional Expectations for UnitingWorld Staff, Board Members and Volunteers

If you are a UnitingWorld staff member, Board or Committee Member, or volunteer, you have additional responsibilities.

You must:

124. follow UnitingWorld's Governance Manual, policies and procedures
125. follow workplace health and safety requirements and safe ways of working
126. follow travel, visa, safety and security requirements when travelling or working for UnitingWorld
127. act in ways that support a positive, respectful and inclusive organisational culture
128. support a culture where people can raise concerns safely, confidentially and without fear of punishment
129. work in a respectful and cooperative way, including supporting others, giving credit for contributions, and providing constructive feedback
130. use UnitingWorld systems, equipment, funds and other resources responsibly and only for authorised purposes.

You must not:

131. behave in ways that negatively affect the performance, safety or wellbeing of yourself, colleagues, volunteers, partners or others.

3. Commitment to the Code

By signing this Code, you confirm that you:

- have read and understood this Code
- agree to follow this Code at all times when you are a UnitingWorld Representative
- understand that you must report known or suspected breaches of this Code by anyone, including you, to UnitingWorld
- understand that breaches of this Code by you may result in action, including disciplinary action or ending your engagement
- have disclosed any past or current conduct, allegations, charges or convictions that may affect your ability to meet this Code or your suitability to represent UnitingWorld.

Full Name (print): _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____