

Code of Ethics and Conduct



Responsible	Caritas Denmark's Accountability Coordinator
Version	Version 2
Approved by – Date of approval meeting	Approved by Board 22/05/2025
Audience	All
Communicated to audience	During staff meeting
Next review due	Latest May 2030

Introduction

This Code specifies the attitudes and behaviour that all Caritas Denmark (C-DK) staff are expected to maintain. It is in line with Caritas Denmark's Values, Vision and Mission. As a Catholic organization, it is our fundamental view that every human being is unique and created in God's image. Thereby all human beings are of equal value, no matter who they are, what they believe in or under which circumstances they live. The personal conduct of anyone representing Caritas Denmark (C-DK) is expected to demonstrate respect for human dignity and universal rights and promote equal treatment and non-discrimination whatever the race, gender, age, religion, sexuality, culture and disability of the persons.

Those representing the organization should possess a high degree of personal integrity, reliability and credibility and are obliged to act in compliance with the standards set out in this Code. Through defining the standards of conduct and acceptable behaviour, the Code protects those Caritas Denmark works with and for, the organization and its representatives.

Scope of The Code

The Code applies to all those associated with Caritas Denmark, management, staff, volunteers, bridgebuilders and board members. On occasions, others will be asked to comply, for example consultants and private sector partners. For the purposes of this document, anyone bound by the Code is referred to as staff.

Managers have a particular responsibility in promoting and upholding the Code. They shall ensure that staff members understand and work within the Code. They shall be role models in relation to expected behaviours.

The Code applies to staff behaviour during professional duty hours, including official journey. The staff evidently has both a professional role and a private life; however, external perception may not always make the same distinction, and on certain occasions behaviour during leisure hours may be evaluated against the Code. Especially during professional journeys, one may also during leisure time be conceived as a staff member and one's behaviour thereby affects Caritas Denmark's reputation.

All C-DK staff are expected to:

1. Values, Conduct and Ethics

- Adhere to, or at least understand and respect the social and moral values and teaching of the Catholic Church
- Ensure at all times that their personal and professional conduct is of the highest standards, in accordance with Caritas Denmark's Values, Vision and Mission, and is seen to be so.
- Act in good faith and treat other people with dignity and respect, creating an environment that celebrates diversity.
- Respect all human rights and challenge discrimination, harassment, abuse, neglect, and exploitation that infringe the rights of others.
- Ensure equal treatment and non-discrimination on the basis of race, gender, age religion, sexuality, culture and disability.
- Avoid "impos[ing] one's faith upon others ... realiz[ing] that a pure and generous love is the best witness to the God in whom we believe and by whom we are driven to love"¹

¹ *Deus Caritas Est* #31c

- Refrain from making racist, sexist or otherwise offensive statements publicly or privately which can be perceived as harassment.
- Take reasonable action to protect others from harm.
- Observe the laws of the country in which they are working, within the bounds of conscience.
- Be sensitive to local customs and culture (dress accordingly) and actively demonstrate respect as long as it is not in conflict with Caritas Denmark's values.
- Ensure that they, and any staff that they manage, act in accordance with health, safety and security guidelines, and endeavour to safeguard others.
- Ensure that C-DK's reputation is not brought into disrepute.
- Maintain the confidentiality of any information or knowledge obtained during the exercise of their duties with C-DK in a manner consistent with general data protection principles.
- Perform their duties competently and with love, without prejudice or discrimination of any form, and maintain C-DK's preferential option for the poor.
- Keep in mind local sensitivities when expressing and practicing their respective beliefs.
- Welcome, and build solidarity and cooperation with people from other Caritas organisations.

2. Conflicts of interest, coercion and corruption.

- Never use the positions of power conferred by their roles as Caritas Denmark staff to exert pressure, obtain benefits or enhance personal gain – economically, professionally, politically, or sexually.
- Declare any potential or actual conflicts of interest (financial, personal, or familial) in matters relating to Caritas' work to their supervisor or other senior manager in writing.
- Never accept from partners, contractors, authorities, or beneficiaries any benefits, bribes or other forms of personal enrichment (under no circumstances), according to C-DK Anti-corruption Policy. In order to respect national and local traditions and conventional hospitality, minor token gifts can be accepted on behalf of C-DK but should be declared.

3. Protecting C-DK property and exercising stewardship

- Ensure that C-DK's assets and intellectual property are not misused and are protected from theft, fraud or other damage.
- Maintain appropriate standards of honesty and integrity in financial accountability.
- Intervene to protect others from harm to an extent, which is considered possible and reasonable from a security point of view in the specific context.

4. Preventing Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is, as defined by C-DK, any unwelcome sexual advance, request for sexual favour, verbal or physical conduct or gesture of a sexual nature, or any other behaviour of a sexual nature that might reasonably be expected or be perceived to cause offence or humiliation to another, when such conduct interferes with work, is made a condition of employment or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment.

While typically involving a pattern of behaviour, it can take the form of a single incident. Sexual harassment may occur between persons of the opposite or same sex. Both males and females can be either the victims or the offenders.

Harassment of any sort - verbal, physical, visual - will not be tolerated. Harassment of co-workers, counterparts, and people with whom we work are all equally prohibited.

All employees, and particularly managers, have a responsibility for keeping the work environment free of harassment. Any employee who becomes aware of an incident of harassment, whether by witnessing the incident, being told of it, or being the object of it, has the duty to report it in accordance with the C-DK Feedback & Complaint Handling Procedure. When supervisors become aware of possible instances of harassment, they should immediately bring it to the attention of the C-DK Complaints Committee (CCC) Chairman /Secretary General.

5. Personal conduct

- Carrying weapons is prohibited on Caritas Denmark's domain, including in vehicles (owned or rented), accommodation & office.
- Consumption of alcohol during working hours is only allowed during special, official occasions and in a quantity that does not affect the ability to work.
- Refrain from using recreational drugs or consuming excessive quantities of alcohol.
- Ensure that their sexual conduct is appropriate at all times.
- Staff will not use the organization's computers to access illegal services or pornographic material.

Implementation of the Code of Conduct

The Secretary General is responsible for ensuring that all staff are informed of the Code of Conduct & Ethic and are committed to upholding it, and that the document is reviewed and updated regularly.

Partnerships

The Code of Conduct is not formally binding for employees of partner organizations. When entering into partnerships, Caritas Denmark demands that the management of the partner organization adheres to the principles expressed in the code. The partner organisations are encouraged to develop their own code of ethics if no such exists and present them to the communities they work for. Members of the Caritas Confederation have to adhere to Caritas Internationalis policies if they haven't developed their own.

Duty to report

Every member of staff has a duty to immediately report any suspicions or concerns regarding breaches of this Code. In most cases staff should raise any concerns with their supervisor. This may be done orally or in writing and should include full details and, if possible, supporting evidence. If for some reason, (e.g. the manager may be implicated) this is not possible, they should speak to a more senior manager, board member or another appropriate authority.

How to report?

Contact and inform the most relevant Team Leader, or the Secretary General as chair of the CCC

Write to: complaint@caritas.dk

Call or send sms/whatsapp to: +45 31322786

Contact any employee through mail, phone or personal encounter

Through C-DK website: www.caritas.dk

- Clear reporting procedures are in place through the *C-DK Feedback & Complaint Handling Policy and Procedures* and communicated to C-DK personnel for informed action when confronted with suspicion of breach of the Code of conduct.
- All reports will be treated seriously, with confidentiality and sensitivity.
- The subject of complaint and all witnesses must cooperate fully and openly with investigations and hearing. Their confidentiality will be protected.
- Anyone who raises concerns of serious malpractice (“whistle-blower”) will be protected as far as possible from victimisation or any other detrimental treatment if they come forward with serious concerns, provided that concerns are raised in good faith. Deliberate false allegations are a serious disciplinary offense and will be investigated.
- When receiving a complaint, the Caritas Complaints Committee (CCC) convenes as soon as possible to classify the complaint. In case of the absence of a member, communication can be by email or phone. The members present can decide to prepare a proposal for handling of the case to the absent member for his/her approval.²
- In case of disqualification of a member of the complaints committee in relation to a specific complaint, the committee can decide: to process the complaint without participation of the disqualified member, to call upon a third person as ad hoc member, or to submit the complaint to the Board. In all cases of disqualification, the Board Chairman will be notified. The Board of Caritas Denmark will always process complaints concerning the Secretary General. Complaints against the Board of Caritas Denmark or individual Board Members will be processed by the Board of Caritas Norway³.

Breaches of the Code

Any breaches of the Code of Conduct will be investigated and may lead to disciplinary measures.

- A prompt and appropriate response will ensure that the situation is not perpetuated and that all individuals involved are clear on issues and actions to be taken.
- Allegations against a staff member will result in suspension of their employment immediately and subject to investigation of the issue. If the allegation is of criminal character, this will be reported to the relevant Danish authorities, as required by the Danish law and jurisdictional system.

² As stated in C-DK Feedback & Complaint Handling policy and Procedures

³ As stated in C-DK Feedback & Complaint Handling policy and Procedures

- Appropriate disciplinary and legal measures will be taken in the event that the concern is found to be true. Internal investigations related to allegations of criminal behaviour will be discussed with the appropriated formal authorities prior to embarking on this course of action to ensure that C-DK doesn't compromise the formal investigation. Serious concerns will be reported to the authorities as required by law.
- If the concern is found to be without base, appropriate steps will be taken to minimize damage to the reputation of the subject of concern.
- False accusations against an individual or organisation can have severe implications for those involved. If the complainant is a staff member of Caritas Denmark, the management will decide an appropriate reprimand towards the complainant and assess the need for compensation to the falsely accused individual or organisation. In case the complainant is a staff member of a partner organisation, Caritas Denmark will recommend the partner organisation to take similar action.

Should the complainant/reporter not feel satisfied with the outcome despite having had the opportunity to request further clarification or feedback, they can submit a formal appeal directly to Caritas Denmark's Board Chairman. This can be done in writing, by letter or e-mail, to the following addresses:

Caritas Denmark
Attn.Board Chairperson Stine Rørbæk Møller
Gammel kongevej 15,3.
1610 Copenhagen V
srm@caritas.dk
Mark: Confidential

Statement of Commitment

I, have read the Code of Conduct and understood the content.

Signature & date: