



MILLENNIUM CHILD SUPPORT GROUP

Workplace Ethics and Anti-Harassment Policy

Revised
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MILLENNIUM CHILD SUPPORT GROUP

"Save the child, Save the future, Save the world"

Millennium Child Support Group (MCSG)

Workplace Ethics and Anti-Harassment Policy

Effective Date: [September 2024]

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF SUPPORT AND COLLABORATION

Millennium Child Support Group (MCSG) extends its sincere gratitude to the **Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Commission, the Spanish Cooperation, the Africa Soccer Stars Network, UN Women, the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)**, and all our esteemed stakeholders for their unwavering support, commitment, and invaluable collaboration in advancing our shared vision of a **healthier, child rights-centered, women-empowered, and inclusive, violence-free world in Africa.**

Your steadfast partnership has been instrumental in strengthening our programs—particularly in the areas of school feeding, gender equality, women’s health, and child protection. Through these strategic collaborations, we have been able to reach and positively impact countless children, women, and families living in underserved communities in **Ghana and Nigeria**. Together, we are promoting sustainable development and delivering hope and opportunity to those who need it most.

As we continue to work toward equity, justice, and empowerment for all, we reaffirm our dedication to the collective values and goals that unite us. We look forward to building on our shared successes and deepening our collaboration to drive lasting, transformative change across the region.

Thank you for standing with us.

Together, we are building a future where every woman and child can thrive.

Millennium Child Support Group

Date: 09/09/2024

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1. Introduction

Purpose of the Policy

The purpose of this Workplace Ethics and Anti-Harassment Policy is to establish a clear framework for promoting a safe, respectful, and inclusive work environment at Millennium Child Support Group (MCSG). This policy aims to define the expectations of ethical conduct within the organization and provide clear guidelines for addressing any form of harassment, discrimination, or unethical behavior. We are committed to fostering a workplace where all employees, volunteers, and stakeholders can work in an atmosphere free from harassment, intimidation, and retaliation.

Scope and Applicability

This policy applies to all employees, board members, volunteers, contractors, and anyone engaged with MCSG in a professional capacity, regardless of their position or level within the organization. The policy extends to all work-related environments, including physical offices, remote workspaces, meetings, events, and any other setting in which MCSG operates or has influence.

Statement of Commitment

MCSG is committed to maintaining the highest standards of workplace ethics and ensuring that all individuals are treated with respect and dignity. We believe that every person has the right to work in an environment that is free of harassment, discrimination, and unethical behavior. We are dedicated to promoting fairness, equity, and accountability at all levels of the organization.

2. Definitions

Workplace Ethics

Workplace ethics refers to the principles and standards of conduct that guide behavior in the workplace. These include, but are not limited to, integrity, respect, accountability, professionalism, and responsibility in interactions with colleagues, clients, and the community.

Harassment

Harassment is any unwelcome or inappropriate behavior that creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment. This can take many forms, including verbal, physical, and non-verbal conduct. Harassment is prohibited in any form, whether it occurs between employees, between employees and management, or with any other stakeholders in the organization.

Types of Harassment:

- **Sexual Harassment:** Any unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature that affects the dignity of individuals or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment.
- **Bullying and Intimidation:** Repeated unreasonable behavior that intimidates, humiliates, or undermines the victim's ability to work effectively. This includes verbal abuse, insults, and malicious gossip.
- **Discrimination:** Treating someone unfairly or unfavorably based on their race, color, national origin, sex, gender, sexual orientation, disability, age, religion, or any other characteristic protected by law.
- **Retaliation:** Any adverse action taken against an individual for reporting harassment or participating in an investigation. Retaliation is strictly prohibited and will be dealt with severely.

3. Core Workplace Ethical Values

MCSG is committed to fostering an ethical work environment built upon the following core values:

Integrity

Employees and all stakeholders must act with integrity and honesty in all professional interactions, ensuring their conduct is transparent, truthful, and in alignment with organizational values.

Respect and Dignity

Everyone at MCSG must treat each other with dignity and respect. We value the contributions of each individual and promote mutual respect in all aspects of our work.

Accountability

Employees are expected to take responsibility for their actions and behavior. This includes owning mistakes, learning from them, and holding others accountable for their actions in a constructive and respectful manner.

Fairness and Equality

We strive to ensure that all individuals are treated equally, regardless of their background, identity, or position within the organization. MCSG is committed to providing equal opportunities for all employees and stakeholders.

Transparency

We value openness and transparency in all our dealings, from decision-making processes to communication within teams and with external partners.

Confidentiality

Respect for confidentiality is paramount in maintaining trust within the organization. Employees are expected to protect sensitive and personal information in accordance with legal and ethical standards.

4. MCSG's Commitment to Preventing Harassment

Zero Tolerance Policy

MCSG maintains a **Zero Tolerance Policy** for any form of harassment, discrimination, or unethical behavior. Harassment of any kind will not be tolerated under any circumstances. Any actions that contribute to a hostile, discriminatory, or unsafe work environment are strictly prohibited. MCSG is dedicated to taking immediate action to address harassment concerns, upholding a safe and supportive workplace for all.

Creating a Respectful and Inclusive Workplace

MCSG actively promotes a workplace where respect, inclusivity, and diversity are core values. We encourage open communication, collaboration, and teamwork. All individuals are expected to contribute to the creation of an environment that is welcoming and supportive. We celebrate the diversity of our workforce and strive to create a culture of mutual respect, where everyone is valued regardless of their differences.

5. Prohibited Behavior

MCSG defines the following as prohibited behavior in the workplace:

Types of Unacceptable Conduct

- **Physical Harassment:** Unwanted physical contact or gestures, including hitting, pushing, or any other form of violence or assault.
- **Verbal Harassment:** Offensive or derogatory comments, jokes, or insults that target an individual's personal characteristics, including but not limited to race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, or disability.

- **Visual Harassment:** Displaying offensive images, gestures, or written materials that create a hostile or intimidating work environment.
- **Bullying:** Repeated, offensive, and unwelcome behavior that belittles or demeans another person. This includes spreading rumors, isolating someone socially, or consistently undermining their work performance.
- **Sexual Harassment:** Any unwelcome sexual advances, comments, or actions, including requests for sexual favors that cause discomfort, distress, or interfere with a person's ability to work effectively.

Examples of Harassment and Discrimination

- Making derogatory comments about someone's gender, race, or nationality.
- Using offensive language or making jokes about someone's appearance or personal life.
- Engaging in unwelcome physical touching or gestures.
- Discriminating against someone based on their religious beliefs or practices.
- Retaliating against an individual who has reported harassment or unethical behavior.

Impact of Harassment on the Workplace

Harassment negatively affects individuals and the broader workplace environment. It undermines trust, damages team cohesion, reduces productivity, and can lead to increased absenteeism and turnover. MCSG recognizes the severe impact harassment can have on individuals' mental, emotional, and physical health, and is committed to providing support to those affected.

6. Responsibilities of Employees and Management

Employee Obligations

All employees are responsible for ensuring that they contribute to a respectful and ethical work environment. This includes:

- Treating colleagues and others with respect and dignity.
- Not engaging in or tolerating harassment, discrimination, or unethical behavior.
- Reporting any incidents of harassment or unethical behavior immediately.
- Supporting colleagues who may be experiencing harassment or discrimination.

Managerial and Leadership Responsibilities

Managers and leaders are expected to:

- Lead by example, demonstrating respect, integrity, and ethical behavior at all times.
- Address any concerns related to harassment or unethical behavior promptly and appropriately.
- Ensure that all employees are aware of this policy and their rights under it.

- Provide support and resources to employees who experience harassment.
- Take immediate action to stop harassment and ensure it does not recur.

Duty to Report Harassment

It is every employee's duty to report any instances of harassment, discrimination, or unethical behavior. The responsibility to maintain a respectful workplace is shared by everyone. Employees should not remain silent when they observe inappropriate conduct, and should feel confident that their concerns will be addressed confidentially and without retaliation.

7. Reporting Mechanisms

Reporting Harassment or Ethical Violations

Employees are encouraged to report any harassment or unethical behavior to ensure that it is addressed promptly and appropriately. Reports can be made through the following channels:

- Directly to a supervisor or manager.
- To the Human Resources Department (HR), which is responsible for investigating complaints.
- Anonymous reporting systems, if available (e.g., a hotline or online reporting platform).

Reports of harassment or unethical conduct will be treated with the utmost confidentiality. The organization will not disclose the identity of the complainant or the details of the complaint unless necessary for the investigation or resolution of the issue.

How to Report

To report harassment, employees should provide as much detail as possible, including:

- The nature of the harassment or unethical behavior.
- The individuals involved.
- The dates and times of the incidents.
- Any steps taken to address the issue.
- Any witnesses to the incident(s).

Confidentiality and Protection from Retaliation

MCSG guarantees the confidentiality of all reports to the fullest extent possible. We will not tolerate retaliation against anyone who reports harassment or unethical behavior, participates in an investigation, or provides testimony related to a harassment complaint. Any retaliatory actions will be subject to disciplinary measures.

8. Investigation and Resolution Process

Fair and Prompt Investigation

MCSG is committed to conducting fair, prompt, and thorough investigations into all reports of harassment or unethical behavior. All complaints will be taken seriously, and the process will be handled in a timely and respectful manner. The organization ensures that investigations are impartial and that all parties involved have an opportunity to present their perspectives.

Steps in the Investigation Process

- **Acknowledgment of Complaint:** Once a complaint is received, the HR department or designated investigator will acknowledge receipt of the complaint within a specified timeframe.
- **Preliminary Review:** A preliminary review of the facts will be conducted to determine whether the complaint warrants further investigation.
- **Investigation:** If the complaint is deemed valid, an investigation will begin. This may involve interviewing witnesses, reviewing evidence, and gathering relevant documentation.
- **Findings:** The investigator will compile the findings and determine whether harassment or unethical behavior occurred.
- **Resolution:** The results of the investigation will be communicated to both the complainant and the alleged harasser. If harassment or unethical behavior is substantiated, corrective actions will be taken.

Resolution and Outcomes

If harassment or unethical behavior is found to have occurred, appropriate corrective measures will be implemented, including but not limited to:

- Disciplinary actions, up to and including termination of employment.
- Mediation or conflict resolution for the parties involved (when appropriate).
- Implementing preventive measures to avoid future incidents.

The resolution will be communicated to the complainant, and steps will be taken to ensure that the harassment or unethical behavior does not continue.

Corrective Actions

The severity of corrective actions will depend on the nature of the violation. Actions may include:

- Verbal or written warnings.
- Suspension or demotion.
- Termination of employment.
- Remedial training or education on workplace ethics and harassment prevention.

9. Training and Awareness Programs

Ongoing Employee Training

MCSG is committed to providing ongoing training to all employees to raise awareness of ethical workplace behavior, harassment prevention, and the organization's policies. This training will include:

- Understanding what constitutes harassment and unethical behavior.
- Recognizing the impact of harassment on individuals and the organization.
- Learning the proper reporting channels and steps to take if harassment occurs.
- Understanding legal rights and responsibilities related to workplace behavior.

Training will be mandatory for all new employees during onboarding and will be offered regularly for all staff, including leadership.

Leadership Training

Managers and supervisors will receive additional training focused on their specific responsibilities regarding harassment prevention and ethical leadership. This training will include:

- How to recognize and address signs of harassment.
- How to effectively respond to complaints and conduct investigations.
- Strategies for fostering an inclusive and respectful workplace culture.
- Legal and organizational obligations regarding harassment and discrimination.

Raising Awareness of Workplace Ethics

In addition to formal training, MCSG will regularly communicate the importance of ethical behavior and harassment prevention through newsletters, workshops, and discussions. The goal is to ensure that every employee understands their role in maintaining a respectful and inclusive workplace.

10. Support and Resources

Support for Victims of Harassment

Employees who experience harassment or unethical behavior will be provided with the necessary support and resources. This may include:

- **Counseling and Emotional Support:** MCSG will provide access to counseling services for individuals who have experienced harassment, ensuring they have the emotional and psychological support they need.
- **Mediation Services:** In cases where both parties are willing, MCSG may offer mediation services to facilitate conflict resolution and rebuild working relationships.
- **Legal Assistance:** Employees will be informed about their rights and may be directed to legal support if necessary, either internally or through external agencies.

Counseling and External Resources

In addition to internal support services, MCSG will partner with external organizations and resources, such as legal aid groups, employee assistance programs (EAPs), and specialized counseling centers, to assist those affected by harassment or unethical conduct.

Legal Assistance

Employees who believe their legal rights have been violated may seek external legal advice or representation. MCSG will not discourage or impede any employee from pursuing their legal options.

11. Disciplinary Actions

Consequences of Policy Violations

Harassment and unethical behavior are serious violations of MCSG's policies and will result in disciplinary action. Disciplinary measures will be determined based on the severity of the offense and the findings of the investigation. Actions may range from informal counseling to immediate termination of employment.

Corrective Measures

Corrective measures will be applied with the goal of preventing further harassment and creating a positive work environment. Possible corrective actions include:

- **Warning:** Verbal or written warnings may be issued for less severe offenses or first-time violations.
- **Suspension:** In some cases, suspension from work may be necessary while an investigation is conducted or to ensure the individual does not have access to the work environment during resolution.

- **Termination:** Serious offenses, repeated violations, or the failure to comply with corrective actions may result in termination of employment.

Disciplinary Procedures

Disciplinary actions will be implemented following a fair and impartial investigation. Employees will have an opportunity to respond to allegations before final decisions are made. The goal is to ensure fairness, justice, and appropriate accountability for all parties involved.

12. Monitoring and Review

Policy Review and Updates

MCSG will regularly review and update this policy to ensure it remains relevant and in compliance with legal requirements. Feedback from employees, changes in the law, and evolving best practices will be considered during the review process.

Ongoing Monitoring

The organization will continually monitor the effectiveness of this policy by tracking complaints, investigations, and outcomes. Regular assessments will help ensure that the workplace remains free from harassment and that ethical standards are consistently upheld.

Feedback Mechanism

Employees are encouraged to provide feedback on the policy and its implementation. A feedback mechanism will be established to collect suggestions and ensure the policy's continuous improvement.

13. Acknowledgment and Compliance

Employee Acknowledgment of Policy

All employees are required to acknowledge that they have received, read, and understood this policy. A signed acknowledgment form will be retained in each employee's personnel file.

Compliance with Policy and Legal Requirements

Employees and all associated parties are expected to comply fully with this policy. Failure to comply with MCSG's ethical standards or harassment policy may result in disciplinary action, up

to and including termination of employment. This policy is also intended to comply with all applicable laws and regulations governing workplace behavior and harassment.

This concludes the **Workplace Ethics and Anti-Harassment Policy** draft. Would you like to make any adjustments or additions to the policy, or would you like assistance with another part of the document?