



Canadian Red Cross Society Policy On Safeguarding for Quality Programming

Policy Name	Safeguarding for Quality Programming		
References	Policy 2.1 – Code of Conduct Policy 2.3 – Integrity Protection Policy 2.5 – Confidentiality Policy 3.10 – Child Safeguarding		
Approval Authority	Morgan Cunningham	Responsible Executive	Larry Mills
Effective Date	September 25, 2023	Revision Date(s)	Within 5 years

Policy Statement

The Canadian Red Cross Society (CRCS) is committed to ensuring that all CRCS programming, in any location and through any form of partnership, is free of violence, abuse, exploitation, and neglect against the adults and children it interacts with regardless of the person's age, gender, Indigenous or racialized or ethnic background, or disability status.

In particular, the CRC takes action to ensure quality programming through:

- 1- Assessing and managing safeguarding risks and impact
- 2- Involving affected people in decisions that affect them
- 3- Sharing responsibility for safeguarding
- 4- Learning to improve
- 5- Responding to and documenting safeguarding concerns

Reason for the Policy

The purpose of this Policy is to strengthen CRCS programming, to reinforce Protection, Gender, and Inclusion related services lines, and to ensure quality and accountability on Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) and safeguarding children against violence, abuse, exploitation, and neglect. These are key elements of the CRCS commitments to Protection, Gender, Inclusion, and Community Engagement and Accountability.

Application and Scope

This Policy applies to CRCS Managers and Leadership responsible for services and programming inside Canada or internationally.

This Policy also defines what is expected from CRCS partners with regard to Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) and Child Safeguarding in all programming connected to the CRCS. Partners include National Societies, the ICRC, and the IFRC; contractors; and suppliers.

Policy Definitions



Canadian Red Cross Society Policy On Safeguarding for Quality Programming

Safeguarding¹ – our responsibility in taking action to: keep people safe from any form of harm caused by the misuse of power by making sure that our staff, volunteers, programmes and communications do no harm to children and adults, nor expose them to abuse or exploitation. Safeguarding also includes protecting staff and volunteers from harm and inappropriate behaviour such as sexual harassment.

Prevention and Response to Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA): policy, rules and actions intended to prevent CRCS Personnel from engaging in any form of sexual exploitation and abuse and to respond where it has occurred.

Child safeguarding: the broad obligation on CRCS personnel, partners, suppliers, and contractors to ensure that the design and delivery of programmes and organisational programmes are in the best interests of the child, do not expose children to adverse impacts, including the risk of violence, abuse, exploitation, or neglect and that any concerns about children's safety within the communities where they work are appropriately reported and responded to.

The Policy Content

1. Assessing and managing safeguarding risks and impact

- The CRCS will assess its safeguarding risks through conducting:
 - an organization-wide Safeguarding Self-assessment each three years.
 - an annual safeguarding review for all programs involving partner agencies.
- The CRCS will manage the risks it identifies through assessments by:
 - developing context/service/program specific safeguarding plans of action as part of their program design and implementation
 - ensuring all services/engagements/programs will include specific indicators on safeguarding.
 - requiring all personnel to complete training on Protection, Gender, and Inclusion training on Indigenous Cultural Safety.
 - making available specific qualified technical support on safeguarding to all services/programs.
 - investing in new priority safeguarding tools and processes as they are identified in services/programs.

2. Involving affected people in decisions that affect them around safeguarding

- CRCS will engage with affected populations throughout the program cycle through consultations to gather their perspectives on program decisions, including on safeguarding, that affect them and then ensure programs are designed and implemented to reflect their perspectives. This includes:
 - seeking active engagement from children, people of diverse genders, people living with disabilities, and people from Indigenous, racialized, and often marginalized communities.
 - working to ensure that affected populations can participate in ways that are appropriate to their personal needs and capacities and that reflect local culture, diversity, and processes.
 - consulting with relevant local agencies to understand their perspectives of the needs, capacities, and challenges facing local populations of diverse backgrounds around safeguarding issues.
- CRCS will make available safeguarding communication materials that are child friendly, culturally appropriate, accessible for people living with disabilities, and available in local languages.

¹ IFRC. *Protection, Gender, and Inclusion Policy*. 2022.



Canadian Red Cross Society Policy On Safeguarding for Quality Programming

- CRCS will provide accessible, confidential, and user-friendly community-based feedback mechanisms so that adults and children of diverse backgrounds have safe, and culturally and locally appropriate, ways to communicate their concerns about programs or risks to violence, abuse, and exploitation to CRCS.

3. Sharing responsibility for safeguarding

- CRCS will mainstream safeguarding into all of its relevant trainings, tools, and standards, and operating procedures.
- CRCS will ensure the commitment, support, and cooperation of partner organisations, including National Societies, the IFRC, and ICRC, and other agencies it funds, and individuals who help to deliver programmes administered by the CRCS or represent the CRCS in any way.

4. Learning how to improve

- CRCS will include safeguarding in its monitoring and related learning exercises based on each program's specific indicators on safeguarding.

5. Responding to and documenting safeguarding concerns

- CRCS will have in place a clear, safe, culturally appropriate, confidential, and accessible process to report and investigate concerns relating to safeguarding.
- CRCS will have in place systems to document the number of sexual exploitation and abuse and child safeguarding related concerns its Personnel encounter and to track what actions have been taken.
- CRCS will work to develop systems to support people who allege personnel of CRCS or its partners have harmed them through any acts of exploitation or abuse.

Non-Compliance with this Policy

Once a year, a report on CRCS progress on this Policy will be presented to the relevant CRC Governance Committee. CRC Governance and / or leadership will take action, as appropriate, for non-compliance with this Policy.

Questions regarding the Application of this Policy and Exceptions

Questions relating to this policy can be communicated to Quality Management.