

## Code of Ethics

Everything that we do at the Red Cross – as volunteers, employees or elected officials – has a bearing on what sort of an organisation the Red Cross is and how others see it. That is why we must all shoulder the responsibility of ensuring our work is ethical. How ethical we are is determined by our everyday actions and decisions – how responsibly we carry out our work, how we interact with others and how individuals and the entire organisation apply our guiding principles in practice.

The objective of the Code of Ethics is to illustrate the FRC's values, our responsible approach and the attitude we have towards our work. We hope this will inspire everyone who is part of our organisation to consider and assess their own actions from this perspective. The Code is also intended to enhance the unity within the Red Cross and the identity of all those working as part of this unique humanitarian movement.

However, even the best ethical guidelines cannot account for all situations, and ultimately everyone is responsible for their own actions.

Helsinki, 27 September 2013

The Board of the Finnish Red Cross

## The Code of Ethics of the Finnish Red Cross

### 1. I ACKNOWLEDGE THE PRINCIPLES OF THE RED CROSS

The most important principle guiding the operations of the Red Cross is humanity. Voluntary service and universality provide everyone with an open channel for contributing to the promotion of humanity. Our other principles make it possible to provide help and support in as many different types of situations and conditions as possible. These principles have proven their longevity throughout the 150-year history of this global organisation and must be cherished. The principles are implemented in the way we carry out our work.

- I will always stand up for humanity.
- I will work with those in need of aid and support in a manner that helps strengthen their own resources.
- When acting as a representative of the Red Cross, I will not present any opinions or participate in activities that are in conflict with the principles of the organisation.
- I will stand against the incitement of hatred and hate speech, as well as violence.

### 2. I WILL SHOW RESPECT, MOTIVATE AND INSPIRE

I will respect different people, values and views. I will treat all people as equals regardless of their gender, age, ethnic or national origin, nationality, language, religion or belief, opinion, disability, state of health, sexual orientation or other personal reasons.

- I acknowledge that each individual is unique and value everyone's opinions and their contribution to achieving our mutual goals.
- I will treat others fairly.
- I will improve the understanding, cooperation and trust between people through my actions.
- I will facilitate interaction that is accepting and encouraging in nature and based on mutual support.
- I will keep my mind open to new ideas and evaluate my own ways of working.
- I will share my knowledge and skills with others.

### 3. I WILL ACT OPENLY AND RESPONSIBLY

The Red Cross's humanitarian work requires a strong sense of trust in the organisation. I will do my best to look after the organisation's resources in order for us to achieve our goals.

- I will not participate in the handling or resolving of matters in which my personal interests may be in conflict with those of the organisation.
- I will take care of the safety of everyone taking part in the operations.
- I will do my best to reduce any negative environmental effects.

- I will keep promises and take care of remedying any problems or errors quickly and openly.
- I will prevent substance abuse.
- I will respect the privacy of those receiving help and support and anyone else within the scope of our activities. I will handle information accumulated as part of our work with care, showing respect to others.
- I acknowledge my special responsibility when working with children, adolescents or those in distress.
- I will only use the FRC's facilities and equipment for activities that comply with the organisation's principles.
- Bringing guns, ammunition and other weapon-like objects to the Red Cross's offices, other facilities or vehicles or storing these items in such locations is explicitly forbidden, in accordance with the Geneva Conventions.

#### **4. I WILL USE THE RED CROSS SYMBOL APPROPRIATELY**

The red cross and the equivalent red crescent and red crystal are international protection symbols used in war and conflict situations to secure medical care and aid. The Red Cross movement also has the right to use the symbol in its own operations. Using the symbol is governed by the Geneva Conventions and Finnish law. At its worst, inappropriate use of the protection symbols may hinder the possibility of providing aid to victims of war.

- I will ensure that the symbol of the organisation is used in compliance with the guidelines.
- I may wear a small symbol as a badge, to name an example.

#### **5. I WILL INTERVENE IN WRONGDOING**

Being open and honest is vital for the Red Cross's operations to remain financially, socially and ethically sustainable. It is therefore important that quick and determined measures are taken against any misconduct. Reporting any instances of wrongdoing is the right and obligation of every Finnish Red Cross representative, and no negative consequences must fall upon the reporting party.

- If I detect any misconduct, I will immediately notify the organisation, which will be responsible for processing the notification appropriately.
- I will also stand against inappropriate use of the symbol.