

# Child Protection Policy

*Enriching Lives & Empowering Livelihoods*

Lupin Human Welfare & Research Foundation  
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Lupin Human Welfare and Research Foundation (LHWRF) is a community-centric organization dedicated to enriching rural lives. Our mission requires us to engage directly with communities, including children, who are among the most vulnerable members of society. In this capacity, we hold a profound and unwavering commitment to safeguarding the rights, dignity and well-being of every child we serve or come into contact with. This Child Protection Policy serves as our formal framework to ensure that all employees, volunteers, partners and stakeholders uphold the highest standards of child safeguarding and protection, fostering an environment of trust, safety and empowerment.

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## 1. Policy Statement

LHWRF is committed to ensuring the health, safety and well-being of all children it serves through its programs. The Organization adopts a zero-tolerance approach to all forms of child abuse, neglect, exploitation and discrimination. This policy provides a comprehensive framework to ensure that children are protected from harm and that all employees, volunteers, partners and stakeholders uphold the highest standards of child safeguarding.

## 2. Scope

This policy shall apply to all individuals and entities associated with LHWRF, including:

- All employees on payrolls of LHWRF, third party employees and also volunteers, interns
- All partner organizations, contractors and vendors working with LHWRF.
- All programs, activities, offices and field sites that shall involve or may impact children.

## 3. Guiding Principles

This policy shall be based on the following core principles, which shall guide the actions of all individuals in their engagement with children:

- **Best Interests of the Child:** All decisions and actions shall prioritize the child's well-being and safety.
- **Zero Tolerance:** Any form of child abuse, neglect or exploitation shall not be tolerated under any circumstances.
- **Non-Discrimination:** All children, irrespective of their gender, caste, religion, ability or socio-economic status, shall have equal rights to protection.
- **Participation:** Children shall have the right to be heard and to participate safely in matters that affect them, in an age-appropriate manner.
- **Accountability:** All adults in contact with children shall be accountable for ensuring their safety and shall adhere to this policy at all times.

## 4. Definitions

- **Child:** Any person under 18 years of age, as defined by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and relevant Indian laws.
- **Child Abuse:** Any act or omission that causes or is likely to cause harm to a child's health, survival development or dignity. This includes physical, emotional and sexual abuse; neglect; exploitation (commercial or otherwise); and harmful practices.
- **Safeguarding:** All actions taken to ensure a child's health, safety and rights are protected from harm, including proactive measures and responsive actions to address abuse.

## 5. Legal Framework

This policy shall operate within the legal framework of the Government of India, which provides robust protections for children. It is critical for all personnel to understand and comply with these laws.

- **The Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012:** This is a special law enacted to protect children from sexual assault, sexual harassment and pornography. The Act defines a child as anyone below 18 years of age and mandates that any person who has knowledge of a sexual offense against a child must report it to the authorities. All LHWRP employees shall comply with the reporting procedures prescribed under this Act for any such incidents.
- **The Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015 (JJ Act):** This Act provides a legal framework for the care, protection and rehabilitation of children in need of care and protection, as well as those in conflict with the law. It establishes the Child Welfare Committee (CWC) in every district to take decisions regarding children's welfare. LHWRP's reporting and response mechanism shall coordinate with the CWC and other child welfare authorities as required by the Act.
- **Prohibition of Child Labour:** In line with national and international laws, LHWRP shall ensure the complete prohibition of child labour and shall not engage children in any form of exploitative or hazardous work. This commitment shall be upheld through the organization's Code of Conduct and operational practices.

## 6. Child Protection Code of Conduct

All LHWRP employees including third party employees, volunteers, partners and vendors shall strictly adhere to the following Code of Conduct when working with or around children. This code is mandatory and any violation shall result in disciplinary action, termination of contract and/or legal consequences.

### Do's (Always):

- Treat all children with respect, dignity and fairness.
- Ensure children feel safe, valued and heard.
- Listen to their views and encourage safe participation.
- Maintain appropriate boundaries in all interactions with children.
- Ensure interactions with children are safe, appropriate, and empowering.
- Obtain parental/guardian consent before involving children in activities, photographs or media.
- Create and maintain a safe environment free from discrimination and harm.
- Immediately report any concerns, suspicions or incidents of abuse to Senior Manager- HR & Administration (Designated HR Officer).

### Don'ts (Never):

- Do not hit, scold, humiliate or physically punish a child.
- Do not engage in sexual activity, harassment or suggestive behaviour with a child.

- Do not be alone with a child in a private or unmonitored space.
- Do not exploit children for labour, favours or personal gain.
- Do not take photographs, videos or share information about children without consent and LHWRF approval.
- Do not show discrimination or favouritism based on gender, caste, religion, disability, or background.

*(Refer Annexure 3)*

## **7. Procedures for Reporting & Response**

A robust and confidential mechanism shall be maintained to ensure that all reports of child protection concerns are handled promptly, professionally and in line with legal requirements.

### **7.1. Reporting a Concern**

Any LHWRF employees who has a concern or suspicion of child abuse shall report it immediately. The reporting channels shall include:

- Directly informing the Senior Manager- HR & Administration (Designated HR officer)
- Using established channels such as phone, email or a confidential grievance box.
- All reports shall be treated with the utmost confidentiality.

### **7.2. Role of Designated HR Officer**

The Senior Manager – HR & Administration (Designated HR Officer) shall serve as the nodal person responsible for:

- Receiving and documenting all reports of child abuse or safeguarding concerns.
- Ensuring the immediate safety of the child while an investigation is pending.
- Coordinating with relevant internal and external stakeholders, including legal authorities as per the POCSO Act and the Juvenile Justice Act.
- Maintaining strict confidentiality throughout the process to protect the privacy and safety of all parties involved.
- Overseeing the investigation and ensuring appropriate action is taken.

### **7.3. Immediate Response**

Upon receiving a report, the Designated HR Officer shall:

- Take immediate steps to ensure the child is safe and away from any potential harm.
- Initiate a preliminary assessment of the situation.
- Document the details of the incident using the designated Child Protection Incident Reporting Form (Annexure 1).
- If the concern involves a serious incident, the Designated HR Officer shall report it to child welfare authorities as per law, such as the Child Welfare Committee or the Police.

## 8. Roles & Responsibilities

The successful implementation of this policy shall be a collective responsibility, with defined roles for every level of the organization:

- **CSR Head/ Senior Management:** Shall be responsible for ensuring that this policy is effectively implemented, allocate necessary resources and provide leadership on child protection matters.
- **Senior Manager – HR & Administration (Designated HR Officer):** Shall serve as the central point of contact for reporting, training and monitoring all child safeguarding issues.
- **All Employees & Volunteers:** Shall have a mandatory responsibility to follow the Code of Conduct and to report any concerns or suspicions of abuse immediately.
- **Partners & Vendors:** Shall be made aware of LHWRF's Child Protection Policy and shall comply with its provisions as a condition of their engagement. Partners and vendors shall either:
  - Submit a signed declaration confirming adherence to LHWRF's Child Protection Policy (*as per Annexure 2*), or
  - Provide a copy of their own organizational Child Protection Policy, which shall be reviewed by LHWRF to ensure it aligns with equivalent safeguarding standards.

## 9. Recruitment & Screening

To ensure a safe environment, all employees hired for roles that involve direct contact with children shall be subject to a rigorous screening process, including background verification and professional reference checks.

## 10. Training & Awareness

All employees, volunteers and partners shall be required to undergo mandatory child protection training. Periodic refresher workshops on safeguarding and child rights shall also be conducted to ensure continuous awareness.

## 11. Monitoring & Review

The effectiveness of this policy shall be monitored through regular internal audits and periodic child safety assessments in project areas. The policy shall be reviewed every two years, or earlier if required, to ensure its continued relevance and alignment with legal requirements and best practices.

### Annexure 1: Child Protection Incident Reporting Form

Child Protection Incident Reporting Form	
Date/Time of Report:	
Location/Project:	
Child's Name, Age, Gender:	
Nature of Concern/Incident (physical/sexual/emotional/neglect/other) :	
Details of what happened (facts only):	
Reported by (Name/Role):	
Immediate action taken:	
Referral to Authorities (if applicable):	
Follow-up required:	
Signature of Reporter:	

### Annexure 2: Partner & Vendor Declaration Form

Child Protection Compliance Declaration
<p>This is to certify that I/we, as a partner/vendor of Lupin Human Welfare and Research Foundation (LHWRF), have read and understood the LHWRF Child Protection Policy.</p> <p>I/we agree to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Abide by the Child Protection Policy in all activities involving children.</li> <li>● Ensure that our staff, subcontractors, or representatives do not engage in child abuse, exploitation, or neglect.</li> <li>● Report immediately to Designated HR officer of any incident or suspicion of child abuse.</li> <li>● Accept that non-compliance may result in termination of contract and reporting to legal authorities.</li> </ul> <p>For Partner/Vendor:</p> <p>Name:</p> <p>Organization:</p> <p>Designation:</p>

Date:  
Signature & Seal:

### Annexure 3: Child Protection Code of Conduct

All LHWRF employees and volunteers must strictly follow this **Code of Conduct** when working with or around children.

#### Do's (Always):

- Treat all children with respect, dignity and fairness.
- Ensure children feel safe, valued and heard.
- Listen to their views and encourage safe participation.
- Maintain appropriate boundaries in all interactions with children.
- Ensure interactions are safe, appropriate and empowering.
- Obtain parental/guardian consent before involving children in activities, photographs, or media.
- Create and maintain a safe environment free from discrimination and harm.
- Immediately report any concerns, suspicions, or incidents of abuse to Senior Manager- HR & Administration (Designated HR Officer)

#### Don'ts (Never):

- Do not hit, scold, humiliate or physically punish a child.
- Do not engage in sexual activity, harassment or suggestive behaviour with a child.
- Do not be alone with a child in a private or unmonitored space.
- Do not exploit children for labour, favours or personal gain.
- Do not take photographs, videos, or share information about children without consent and LHWRF approval.
- Do not show discrimination or favouritism based on gender, caste, religion, disability or background.

#### Mandatory Reporting:

- Any breach of this Code of Conduct must be reported **immediately** to Designated HR Officer
- Serious cases will be referred to legal authorities in compliance with the **POCSO Act and Childline (1098)**

#### Declaration

"I have read, understood, and agree to follow the LHWRF Child Protection Code of Conduct. I understand that any violation may lead to disciplinary action, termination of contract and/or legal consequences."

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Designation/Role: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Annexure 4: Training & Awareness Plan

Training Area	Audience	Frequency	Method	Responsible
Child Protection Orientation	New staff/volunteers	At induction	Workshop & handbook	HR
Safeguarding & Reporting	All staff	Annual	Training module	HR
Partner/Vendor Orientation	Contractors	Annual	MoU briefing	HR
Community Awareness	Parents & children	Periodic	IEC sessions, plays, posters	Program Heads