



Volunt2Thai - Volunteer to Thailand

Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO)

Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy

PURPOSE

Volunt2Thai (V2T) is committed to upholding the security, rights and freedoms of children and vulnerable adults at all times. While assisting developing communities through providing international volunteers to local organizations, the first priority of V2T is the safety and protection of the children and vulnerable people they are working alongside. V2T is committed to ensuring that the children and vulnerable adults are not exposed to abuse, exploitation, violence or neglect.

SCOPE

The V2T Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy is an organization-wide policy and statement of intent. It applies to all V2T staff members and our operations, the operations of any partner organizations and also the actions of our volunteers. The policy is written with the acknowledgement that every V2T volunteer and every member of our organization has a responsibility to support the care and protection of children and vulnerable adults.

It also considers that V2T does not hold sole responsibility for protecting these members of society and identifies that their protection is also incumbent upon other stakeholders such as government agencies, families groups and non-government organizations.

DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this policy, a child is considered to be any person who is under 16 years of age and under the age of majority, defined as 20 years. A vulnerable adult is considered to be someone who may be in need of additional community support for reasons of disability, illness or socio-economic conditions. This includes older adults suffering from dementia, or adults who through poverty are unable to care for themselves and avoid exploitation.

When this policy refers to placement participants the conditions are related to any individual or group of individuals who are the recipient of the placement's services. This can include children, vulnerable adults or any other individual who volunteers interact with on their placement.

When this policy refers to abuse the primary interpretations is sexual abuse or other physical or mental harm deliberately caused to a person. Similarly, exploitation refers to an act of treating a person unfairly in order to gain some kind of benefit.

BEST INTERESTS OF THE INDIVIDUAL

All decisions and actions concerning a child or vulnerable adult will take the best interest of the individual as the most important consideration. It will be the policy of V2T that decisions or actions regarding any child, vulnerable adult, or groups of either, should ensure that the positive impact of the decision or action will outweigh any negative impact.

NON-DISCRIMINATION

V2T is committed to enforcing a policy of non-discrimination at all times. All children and vulnerable adults who have an interaction with V2T and our volunteers will be treated with respect and equal consideration.

The guidelines set out in the V2T Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy aim to protect both



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children and vulnerable adults from abuse, and also volunteers from false accusation of abuse. It is the policy of V2T to:

- Respect the rights and dignity of the children, vulnerable adults, families and communities with whom V2T works, and always act according to the best interest of the community
- Demonstrate a commitment to actively preventing the abuse of children and vulnerable adults
- Take positive action to prevent abusers becoming involved with V2T, and enforce stringent measures against any associate of V2T who commits abuse

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Program Coordinators

V2T has appointed a representative in each village in which V2T operates to be responsible for ensuring that the V2T Child and Vulnerable Protection Policy is distributed and understood by all associates of V2T and the program. V2T actively encourages that this policy is also used by placements in which V2T volunteers work and is implemented by placement staff.

The Program Coordinator is responsible for advising and informing all local staff and placement staff of the V2T Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy and is responsible for the effective implementation of this policy in country.

2. Senior management and staff

Senior managers at V2T are responsible for the development and implementation of this policy. They ensure that its content and the procedures that support its implementation are fit for purpose. They ensure partners understand and support the policy, and adhere to them at all times. They also ensure it is communicated appropriately with volunteers and other relevant stakeholders.

V2T staff members are involved in periodically auditing the application of this policy by the partners who facilitate each of our programs. They conduct compliance checks and the reporting of these checks back to senior management.

3. Volunteers

All V2T volunteers will receive a copy of the V2T Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy during their program orientation and must acknowledge, in writing, their receipt and understanding of their responsibilities under the policy. They are made aware of the policy and the Code of Conduct within it throughout their engagement with V2T and any failure to meet the requirements of the policy is considered a breach of V2T's Terms and Conditions of Service.

V2T VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT, SCREENING AND ORIENTATION

- All V2T staff and volunteers will be informed of the V2T Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy
- All V2T volunteers are required to provide a criminal background check to local staff during orientation, before they can begin volunteering on the program



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- V2T reserves the right to terminate a volunteer's program if a criminal background check or reference check reveals that the volunteer is not suitable to work with children or vulnerable adults, for any reason
- The V2T Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy will be reviewed by local staff and volunteers during the program orientation. The local Program Coordinator shall ensure that all new volunteers acknowledge their receipt and understanding of the policy in writing, with signed copies of their acknowledgement kept on file

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR V2T VOLUNTEERS

This Code of Conduct provides guidelines deemed to be appropriate and proper behavior for V2T volunteers when interacting with children and vulnerable adults. These guidelines are primarily designed for the individuals that volunteers work with, but are also intended to protect volunteers from false accusations of inappropriate behavior or abuse.

- No child or vulnerable adult is to be taken outside of the placement site, without making prior arrangements with the placement staff
- No child or vulnerable adult is to be taken to any volunteer's homestay, guesthouse, hotel or accommodation
- V2T volunteers are not permitted to take any child or vulnerable adult to a cafe, restaurant or buy them food, unless permission has been given by the placement staff
- V2T volunteers are not permitted to share a bed or room with any children or vulnerable adult while participating on an V2T program
- No presents are to be bought for placement participants without prior approval from the placement staff
- Photography and videography of children or vulnerable adults is only permitted with permission from the placement staff and photos/videos should not be taken in a way intended to belittle or degrade any placement participant
- V2T volunteers should not act in ways intended to shame, humiliate, belittle or degrade children or vulnerable adults or perpetrate any form of emotional abuse
- V2T volunteers must display appropriate language, actions and relationships with children at all times
- V2T volunteers must take extreme care when interacting physically with placement participants. Under no circumstance should any physical contact be, or have the appearance of being sexual in any way
- V2T volunteers must not exert inappropriate physical force when dealing with children or vulnerable adults. This includes pushing, shoving, hitting, slapping or any other action that could cause fear, intimidation or distress
- V2T volunteers must not discriminate against, show differential treatment, or favor particular individual to the exclusion of others
- V2T volunteers are responsible for their actions and reactions to children and vulnerable adults at all times. Volunteers are always considered to be responsible for their actions regardless of how a child or vulnerable adult behaves towards them



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- Where possible and practical, V2T volunteers should implement the 'two person' rule, whereby two or more responsible adults supervise all activities with children and vulnerable adults
- Inappropriate conduct toward children and vulnerable adults, including failure to follow the behavior standards stated above, is grounds for discipline, up to and including dismissal from the V2T program and/or police notification and legal action
- Please note, this is not an exhaustive or exclusive list. The principle underlying this policy is that volunteers and staff should avoid actions or behavior, which may constitute poor practice or potential abuse and exploitation

V2T VOLUNTEER COMPLIANCE

I have read the complete V2T Child Protection Policy. I fully understand and agree to follow all procedures contained within. If at any time I fail to follow the guidelines set forth by the V2T Child Protection Policy, I understand that my volunteer program may be terminated by V2T and appropriate action will be taken.

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____