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### Acronyms and abbreviations

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<td>Administrative circular</td>
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<td>Chief Executive’s Board for Coordination</td>
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<td>Code</td>
<td>Code of Ethical Conduct</td>
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<td>CSH</td>
<td>Human Resource Division</td>
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<td>FAO</td>
<td>Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations</td>
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<td>Office of the Inspector General</td>
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<td>Inter-Agency Standing Committee</td>
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<td>International Civil Service Commission</td>
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<td>ICT</td>
<td>Information and communication technology</td>
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<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non-governmental organization</td>
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<td>NPP</td>
<td>National Project Personnel</td>
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<td>PEMS</td>
<td>Performance Management and Evaluation System</td>
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<td>SRB</td>
<td>Staff representative body</td>
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<td>WHO</td>
<td>World Health Organization</td>
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Foreword

Everyday FAO personnel work tirelessly for the transformation to MORE efficient, inclusive, resilient and sustainable agri-food systems for better production, better nutrition, a better environment, and a better life, leaving no one behind. They do so from more than 150 offices across the globe, sometimes far away from their families and loved ones, with steadfast dedication, professionalism and expertise, and often in the face of difficult and complex challenges.

The journey is much simpler, when one is guided. At FAO, that guidance is provided by the Basic Texts of the Organization. Our delivery is built on fully understanding the expectations set out by Management, diligently applying rules, regulations and policies. We adhere to a common vision, while appreciating the rich diversity represented across the Organization.

Ethical conduct is at the core of FAO’s philosophy. It is crucial to achieving the Organization’s noble objectives and to reaching the Sustainable Development Goals.

FAO’s first Code of Ethical Conduct will provide additional clarity on our standards of conduct, values and principles, and serve as a guiding light as we move forward.

FAO is a rule-based organization and every employee has the unconditional responsibility to act ethically and embrace the principles set out in the Code of Ethical Conduct, as we strive to ensure that work is conducted in the most professional manner and with a strong spirit of collegiality, mutual respect and solidarity.

Dr QU Dongyu
Director-General

Acknowledgements

This document was prepared by the Ethics Office of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). The content has been enriched thanks to contributions and inputs from colleagues across FAO, collected between September 2020 and April 2021. The document has been reviewed and endorsed by the FAO Oversight Advisory Committee.
1. INTRODUCTION

As a part of the United Nations system, FAO must exemplify the highest principles of integrity, independence and honesty, and it is critical that our personnel discharge their duties accordingly. The long-term success of the Organization depends on maintaining the respect and confidence of Governments, Members, partners and donors, and the millions of beneficiaries that we serve. We are all FAO Ambassadors in both our private and professional lives and how we behave reflects on the Organization. Therefore, we are all bound to act ethically in every way, every day.

It is widely recognized that a code of ethical conduct is an essential tool for staff members and other personnel to be able to understand and comply with the policies, rules and regulations of a work place. For this reason, following broad internal stakeholder collaboration in 2020/21, the FAO Ethics Office is pleased to publish this Code of Ethical Conduct (the Code).

While the Code is an important guide to ethical conduct in FAO, it is not a substitute for common sense and good judgment, nor does it address every situation that we may encounter. There may be situations, conduct or actions which are not specifically mentioned in FAO’s rules or regulations or covered in the examples in this Code, but are deemed unethical nevertheless because they violate the spirit or underlying principles of our ethical framework.

Questions on the guidance in this Code and all the related policies, rules and regulations may be directed to the Ethics-Office@fao.org.

1.1 Purpose

This Code is intended as a practical guide to FAO rules and policies that govern the conduct of its personnel, thus in turn enabling them to do what is right, and to foster an ethical workplace culture.

The Code complements FAO’s rules and policies, but does not replace or supersede them. Should there be a discrepancy between the rules and the Code, the rules and policies prevail.1 The information and the references in the Code to rules and policies indicated in boxes 1–39 will be updated as required so check the online version for the latest information.2

1.2 To whom is the Code applicable?

All FAO personnel (including, but not limited to, staff members, consultants, national project personnel (NPP), personal service providers, volunteers and interns) may benefit from consulting this Code, as all are expected to behave in accordance with the ethical standards in the Code.3

1 While the Ethics Office has sought to ensure that all references to rules and policy documents are current as of the date of publication of this Code, note that rules and policies are subject to periodic revision.

2 Sometimes references are made to information or directives of the UN Secretariat or other international entities. These references are for information purposes only, as they do not apply directly at FAO unless they have been incorporated into the FAO legal framework.

3 The Code will note where certain rules or policies apply to staff members only.
2. OUR VALUES

Our ethical framework is found in the Charter of the UN, the FAO Constitution, and the Standards of Conduct for the International Civil Service, our Staff Regulations and Rules, Administrative Manual and policies.

Article I of the FAO Staff Regulations and Chapter 1 of the Staff Rules sets out the duties, obligations and privileges of staff, which are grounded in the following basic principles common to organizations across the UN system:

- independence
- loyalty
- impartiality
- integrity
- accountability
- respect for human rights.

These principles are also encompassed in the three foundational “values” in the FAO Competency Framework. This framework has the aim of strengthening FAO’s workforce, and guides FAO’s recruitment, performance management and staff development activities. The values are as follows:

- commitment to FAO
- respect for all
- integrity and transparency.

The Code is structured around these values because, like this Code, the Competency Framework is intended to guide us in creating and maintaining an ethical workplace that enables FAO to achieve its goal of a world without hunger.

2.1 Responsibilities

Without the respect of the world and its Nations for the UN and the international civil service, FAO would be unable to fulfil its important mandate. All of us who work for FAO have a responsibility to act with the highest integrity, and to understand and follow the standards explained in the Code.

We must know the UN values and the FAO rules and policies, and we must act ethically in line with these values, not only while at work but also in our lives outside of work. We must complete the mandatory training provided by FAO.

Managers have a special responsibility to uphold the ethical standards that we must all follow. They are role models who lead by example and have the primary responsibility for providing timely guidance to their personnel about the correct way to act, especially in situations that may be challenging. They have a duty to provide timely, honest and objective feedback to their personnel, and to provide explicit reasons for their decisions, so that personnel may understand.

Managers have a responsibility to initiate prompt informal or formal actions where unethical conduct has been brought to their attention.

2.2 Duty to comply

We must all follow the rules and comply with the standards described in the Code. Upon appointment or recruitment, all members of FAO personnel are required to acknowledge the required standards of ethical conduct.

4 Established by the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC) and incorporated into the FAO Administrative Manual at section 304, Appendix A.

5 Contained in Chapter 3 of the Administrative Manual.

6 FAO Declaration or Oath of Office.
FAO sets out the consequences for not complying with the rules and policies, or for not upholding the ethical standards required of us. Disciplinary measures or informal actions may be imposed on staff members for misconduct or unethical conduct, and administrative action may be taken regarding other personnel, pursuant to their contractual terms.

2.3 Obligation to report

We have a duty to report possible unethical conduct, including related to gross negligence. Depending on the type of concern at issue, such reports may be addressed to our supervisor or to the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) (see details and Contacts below). OIG is responsible for investigating allegations of misconduct involving FAO personnel.

The Organization has an obligation to protect us from retaliation for reporting such misconduct and for cooperating with any internal investigation or audit, as set out in our Whistleblower Protection Policy. The Ethics Officer is responsible for receiving complaints of retaliation arising from the reporting misconduct or from co-operation with an internal investigation or audit. The Ethics Officer will also take action under the Whistleblower Protection Policy to protect individuals who are subject to retaliation.

For further guidance on the various offices and resources that FAO personnel may refer to, please see From Concern to Clarity - FAO’s Roadmap on where to go when in need.8

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8 FAO Declaration or Oath of Office.

7 Gross negligence refers to a conscious and voluntary disregard of the need to use reasonable care which is likely to cause foreseeable grave injury or harm.


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Box 1  Resources

- ICSC Standards of conduct at paragraphs 16 to 20
- Staff Regulations Article I (Manual Section 301.1)
- Staff Rules Chapter 1 (Manual Section 302.1)
- Staff Regulation 301.10.2
- Manual Section 330 Disciplinary Measures at 330.1.51
- Charter of the Office of the Inspector-General
- AC 2017/03 Revised Guidelines for internal administrative investigations by the Office of the Inspector General
- AC 2019/06 Whistleblower Protection Policy
- AC 2016/23 Gross Negligence
- AC 2021/03, AC 2020/09, AC 2017/13, AC 2015/16 and AC 2013/17 on Practice of the Organization in Disciplinary Matters
- E-learning UN Ethics and Integrity
- E-learning Fraud and Corruption
3. COMMITMENT TO FAO

The first of our three core values is commitment to FAO. When we make a commitment to FAO, we agree to place the interests of the Organization above all others, including our own, in the context of discharging our duties. This means that we demonstrate dedication and professionalism in our work, that we hold ourselves accountable, and that we uphold the values of FAO when carrying out our daily activities.

3.1 Loyalty to objectives and purposes of FAO

Article I of the Staff Regulations sets out our obligations as staff members. The Declaration / Oath of Office in Staff Regulation 301.19, which we make upon appointment, reminds us that we must always act only in the interests of FAO, with honesty, integrity and with respect for all.

3.2 Independence and impartiality

As a UN Specialized Agency, FAO acts for the good of the international community as a whole. FAO’s independence and impartiality are the foundation for the trust placed in it by its Members. It is this trust that enables us to carry out FAO’s work throughout the world.

Acting with independence means being answerable only to FAO. We must not accept instructions from any third party or external authority, including our own national government or any other government. Remember, it is important that our actions are not only independent, but that they are also seen to be independent. This concept is enshrined in the FAO Constitution in Article VIII.

Acting impartially and objectively means that our personal views and interests in any situation must not compromise the performance of our duties or the interests of FAO. Again, it is very important that we endeavor to carry out our actions in such a manner that they are also perceived by others as impartial, free from bias, prejudice or conflict of interest.

Box 2

Declaration or Oath of Office

I solemnly swear (undertake, promise) to exercise in all loyalty, discretion and conscience the functions entrusted to me as an international civil servant of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations; to discharge these functions and regulate my conduct with the interests of the Organization only in view, and not to seek or accept instructions in regard to the performance of my duties from any government or other authority external to the Organization.

Box 3

Resources

- ICSC Standards of Conduct at paragraphs 3 to 15; 27 to 29; 33 and 34
- FAO Constitution Article VIII paragraph 2
- Staff Regulation 301.1
- Manual Section 361 Outside Activities at 361.2.4
- Manual Section 330 Disciplinary Measures at 330.1.51
3.3 Personal conduct

Our private lives are our own concern, but there may be situations outside of work where our behaviour or activities, or that of our family members, may reflect on FAO. We should bear in mind that our personal conduct, even if unrelated to our official duties, may have an adverse impact on the reputation or interests of FAO, and we must take care to act accordingly.

3.4 Respect for national laws

We are granted privileges and immunities to enable us to carry out FAO’s work; these are not for our personal benefit. Therefore, we must observe local laws and we must meet our private legal obligations. FAO rules define non-payment of debts and a serious breach of any national law as misconduct that may incur a disciplinary measure.

Observing national and local laws includes meeting legal obligations such as following traffic regulations, complying with laws when selling or purchasing motor vehicles, and ensuring that domestic employees are hired according to local legal requirements. Taking care of private legal obligations includes paying our debts and fulfilling all our personal legal responsibilities, such as support payments for children and ex-spouses. Under certain circumstances, FAO may make deductions from your salary or other payments and use these to pay your debts to a third party when the indebtedness to a third party has been legally established.

While acknowledging that local laws and customs may differ from one country to another and need to be respected, we also recognize that in some situations what is acceptable under the local laws and customs may be incompatible with FAO’s values, and the values of the UN with respect to human rights. Our common values as international civil servants are paramount.

If you have violated a local law, you should immediately report it to your supervisor at your duty station. FAO has a duty to cooperate with national authorities to facilitate the proper administration of justice and prevent the occurrence of any abuses in connection with its privileges, immunities and facilities. If local authorities bring to the attention of FAO any concerns regarding non-observance of local laws or private legal obligations by its personnel, FAO will cooperate to resolve any compliance issues, and may engage OIG in further internal investigative activities, if necessary. Immunity may be waived by the Director-General of FAO where it is determined that immunity would impede the course of justice. In cases where FAO establishes that misconduct has occurred, which would amount to a serious violation of a national law (e.g. if an employee engaged in a serious case of fraud), FAO may also decide to report such misconduct to the appropriate national authorities.
3.5 Sexual exploitation and abuse

Within the UN and FAO, “sexual exploitation and abuse” (SEA) refers to sexual misconduct towards those who are our beneficiaries or are part of the communities where we work.

SEA, which is a form of gender-based violence, represents a catastrophic failure of protection, bringing harm to those we are mandated to protect, and it jeopardizes the reputation of the Organization. Such conduct may also violate universally recognized international legal norms and standards. We are all under an obligation to report in good faith any concerns or suspicions of SEA (see Contacts for details on reporting concerns). See below for information on the separate but related issue of sexual harassment.

All FAO personnel must be familiar with the Six Core Principles established by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC). These principles establish inter alia that prohibited conduct includes the exchange of money, goods or beneficiary assistance for sex, and sexual relations with a child, defined as a person under the age of 18 regardless of the age of consent locally. All personnel must complete FAO’s mandatory training on Protection from SEA.

FAO has zero tolerance for SEA and considers such acts, when substantiated, to be serious misconduct that will result in summary dismissal or termination of contract. In appropriate cases, FAO will also refer the matter to national authorities for criminal prosecution. FAO participates in the UN Secretary-General’s iReport SEA Tracker system, which records all allegations and substantiated cases of sexual exploitation and abuse within the UN common system, and the ClearCheck database that functions as a reference check, regarding such type of allegations, for employment across the UN common system.

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Box 4 Resources

- ICSC Standards of Conduct at paragraphs 43 and 44
- Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the Specialized Agencies, Article VI, Section 23
- FAO Headquarters Agreement with Italy, Article XIII, Section 29(b)
- Staff Regulation 301.1.8
- Staff Rule 302.3.122 Deductions and Contributions
- Manual Section 330 Disciplinary Measures at 330.1.52 and 330.2.41
- AC 1988/19 Diplomatic Immunities
- Administrative Circular 1998/18 Financial and Other Obligations of Staff Members

Box 5 Definitions

“Sexual exploitation” means any actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power, or trust, for sexual purposes, including, but not limited to, profiting monetarily, socially or politically from the sexual exploitation of another

“Sexual abuse” means the actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force or under unequal or coercive conditions.

*Definitions from UN Secretary-General’s Bulletin ST/SGB/2003/13 – See also AC 2013/27-Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse

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9 IASC Task Force on Sexual Exploitation and Abuse by our own staff.

10 Established under the Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB).
3.6 Domestic abuse and intimate partner violence

Domestic abuse and intimate partner violence are forms of abuse that occur between family or household members, or between people involved in a personal relationship. FAO considers domestic abuse and intimate partner violence to strongly conflict with its ethical standards referred to in this Code.

Examples of such behaviour include:
- acts of physical violence, such as slapping, hitting, kicking and beating;
- sexual violence, including forced sexual intercourse and other forms of sexual coercion;
- emotional (psychological) abuse, such as insults, belittling, constant humiliation, intimidation (e.g. destroying things), threats of harm, threats to take away children; and
- controlling behaviours, including isolating a person from family and friends, monitoring their movements, and restricting access to financial resources, employment, education or medical care.

The Health Services Counsellors may be contacted for advice on situations that may involve domestic abuse or intimate partner violence (see Contacts below).

If possible involvement of a member of personnel in such abuse is brought to the attention of FAO by national authorities, FAO will cooperate with the authorities. Administrative, including disciplinary, action may be initiated where such acts by a member of personnel are substantiated.
3.7 Violence in the workplace

Any type of physical violence or threat of violence in any form, whether it occurs on FAO premises or elsewhere, is contrary to the ethical values of FAO. Carrying weapons, real or fake, on FAO premises or in FAO vehicles is strictly prohibited unless there is specific authorization, such as for security personnel or government law enforcement officials.

If the possible involvement by a member of personnel in such violence is brought to the attention of FAO by national authorities, FAO will cooperate with the authorities. Administrative, including disciplinary, actions may be initiated where such acts by a member of personnel are substantiated.

3.8 Security and safety

FAO has a duty of care towards its personnel and takes their safety and wellbeing seriously. FAO takes steps to ensure that all personnel enjoy a safe and respectful working environment that is in line with FAO values. FAO supports the UN Vision on Duty of Care and its Core Principles for a healthier, safer and more respectful UN workplace.11

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In all countries where FAO operates, the primary responsibility for the security and protection of FAO personnel, eligible dependents, activities, and property rests with the host government. However, it is in the interest of FAO to take additional actions to ensure that its personnel and property are adequately protected, and that appropriate security and business continuity plans are developed and maintained. The Organization has an obligation to ensure that its personnel and their families are not subject to undue risk. We must all do our part by exercising common sense, following guidance provided, and taking care to observe the requirements in place to ensure our security. Security personnel are responsible for ensuring that security measures are applied. They have the authority to issue instructions and take the appropriate actions in this respect.

We must also complete the mandatory training in security and safety and bring any security concerns to the attention of our supervisors or the security personnel so that these can be addressed. Emergencies and security incidents affecting FAO personnel and dependents should be reported to the Designated Official as well as to FAO Security Services at headquarters (see Contacts below).

### 3.9 Drug and alcohol abuse

FAO prohibits abuse or misuse of drugs or alcohol, whether legal or illegal. It cannot only adversely affect the safety of personnel and the working environment but also bring FAO into disrepute. Anyone who is struggling with addiction is encouraged to contact the FAO Health Services to obtain assistance.

#### Box 10 Resources

- ICSC Standards of conduct at paragraph 41
- Manual Section 330 Disciplinary Measures at 330.1.52
- Manual Section 390 Personnel Emergencies Outside Headquarters
- Manual Section 550 Security Service
- AC 2014/30 Field Security Policy
- AC 2011/25 UN Security Clearance and Security in the Field Training for FAO Personnel
- FAO Critical Incident Guidelines
- E-learning course BSAFE

#### Box 11 Resources

- Manual Section 330 Disciplinary Measures at 330.1.52
- AC 2000/06 Policy and procedures for dealing with alcohol-related and other substance abuse problems in the workplace
4. RESPECT FOR ALL

Respect for all means showing consideration and sensitivity towards gender, culture, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, political conviction and other differences. It means welcoming and working effectively with people from all backgrounds, promoting acceptance and understanding, and valuing diversity.

4.1 Fair and respectful workplace

A harmonious working environment is of benefit to everyone. The foundation of such an environment is ethical conduct that displays fairness, tolerance and respect, where everyone is treated with dignity.

While every one of us contributes to making the workplace respectful, supervisors should be mindful that they set the tone in their office or team, and have a responsibility to take appropriate action to ensure a respectful workplace. Talking openly about workplace conduct and the standards of respectful behaviour makes it easier for everyone to know what is expected of them.

Supervisors must take prompt action to respond to problems as they arise. They must also foster an environment in which the personnel can express their views without fear of reprisal. Mindful of confidentiality considerations, supervisors should communicate openly and clearly about their decisions and the reasons for them, to ensure that affected personnel are informed and can understand.

4.2 Respectful feedback on performance

FAO personnel are required to uphold the highest standards of efficiency, competency and integrity in discharging their functions. FAO supervisors are accountable for delivering results and for supporting personnel in their office or team in reaching their full potential. Remember, the three core values (commitment to FAO, respect for all, and integrity and transparency) around which this Code is organized must be consistently demonstrated by each and every one of us in carrying out our duties.

Truthful, objective, accurate feedback on an ongoing basis, and timely reporting of performance results in accordance with our performance management procedures, are essential to creating an open and respectful working environment, in which we all feel able to express our opinions. Such an environment enables problems to be addressed when they arise, which increases the likelihood of a positive resolution.

Box 13 Resources

- ICSC Standards of conduct at paragraphs 16 to 19
- Staff Rule 303.2.6 Service evaluation reports
- AC 2015/17 PEMS Policy
- PEMS Competency framework

Box 12 Resources

- ICSC Standards of conduct at paragraphs 3, 6 and 40
4.3 Harassment

Treating each other with respect and behaving with dignity entails avoiding offensive, intimidating or hostile behaviour towards others. Conduct that is disrespectful or insulting is unacceptable in our workplace.

Harassment may come in many forms. Examples include shouting at someone, ridiculing them, making offensive comments about or to them, intentionally excluding them or undermining their work. Harassment may occur in or outside of the physical premises of FAO and may involve an external party to FAO. It is harassment when such conduct will have a negative impact on the work place, for instance by creating a toxic work environment. Determination of harassment is based on a reasonable expectation that the behaviour may cause offense, which means that it is not the intent of the person causing the behaviour that matters, but rather how it is perceived by the target of the behaviour.

In accordance with FAO’s Policy on Prevention of Harassment and Abuse of Authority, such improper behaviour will not be left unaddressed. Appropriate action will take into account the nature of the conduct and the individuals involved.

Negative feedback on performance should not be mistaken for harassment, and in doubt, the examples of behaviours that may constitute harassment listed in AC 2015/03 may be referred to.

Harassment normally implies repeated incidents.

*AC 2015/03

4.4 Sexual harassment

Sexual harassment has no place in the UN system. Leaders of UN system organizations have reiterated their firm commitment to uphold a zero-tolerance approach to sexual harassment, to strengthen victim-centered prevention and response efforts, and to foster a safe and inclusive working environment.12

FAO makes every effort to ensure a workplace where sexual harassment is never tolerated, abusers are held accountable and personnel feel safe to report incidents. At FAO sexual harassment is dealt with in accordance with our Policy on Prevention of Sexual

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**Definition**

Harassment is any improper and unwelcome conduct by an individual or group of individuals that is directed at, and offensive to, another person and that the individual(s) knew, or reasonably ought to have known, would cause offence or harm to that person. Harassment does not have to be intentional or deliberate. Harassment may take the form of words, gestures or actions which tend to annoy, alarm, abuse, demean, intimidate, belittle, humiliate or embarrass another or which create an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment. Harassment normally implies repeated incidents.

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**Resources**

- ICSC Standards of conduct at paragraphs 21 and 22
- AC 2015/03 Policy on the Prevention of Harassment, Sexual Harassment, and Abuse of Authority Working Harmoniously Together e-learning course

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12 CEB Statement on Addressing Sexual Harassment within the Organizations of the UN, May 2018.
**Definition**

Sexual harassment is any unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature that might reasonably be expected or be perceived to cause offense or humiliation, when such conduct interferes with work, is made a condition of employment or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment. Sexual harassment may occur in the workplace or in connection with work. While typically involving a pattern of conduct, sexual harassment may take the form of a single incident. In assessing the reasonableness of expectations or perceptions, the perspective of the person who is the target of the conduct shall be considered.

*AC 2019/01

Examples of behaviour that may be sexual harassment are:
- unwelcome touching, including patting, stroking, or brushing up against someone;
- repeatedly asking someone for dates;
- making sexual remarks or comments about a person's appearance, body or sexuality;
- sharing jokes, anecdotes or images of a sexual nature;
- referring to someone with a name or term that has a sexual connotation; and
- making gestures of a sexual nature.

FAO uses the ClearCheck centralized job candidate screening application, which captures information on sexual harassment offenders.13

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**Box 16**

**Box 17**

**Harassment.** Sexual harassment may occur in or outside the FAO work environment against or by any person irrespective of whether the person has any contractual status with the Organization.

Supervisors are encouraged to contact the Human Resources Division (CSH) or the Ombudsman for advice and guidance on any matters involving possible sexual harassment that are brought to their attention. Similarly, any member of FAO personnel who experiences or witnesses sexual harassment may consult with the Ombudsman for confidential guidance and informal resolution. The Ethics Office may also be contacted for advice on matters related to sexual harassment.

Formal complaints involving a member of FAO personnel must be lodged with OIG who will undertake due investigations. Administrative, including disciplinary, actions may be initiated where such acts by a member of personnel are substantiated.

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13 Used by UN Common System entities.
4.5 Abuse of authority

Abuse of authority is the improper use of a position of influence, power or authority against another person and is prohibited. Abuse of authority can take various forms and it is particularly serious when it is used to negatively influence career or employment conditions such as appointment, assignment, contract renewal, performance evaluation or promotion. The effects of such behaviour are damaging to morale and to a harmonious workplace.

Examples of abuse of authority include pressuring someone to distort facts or break rules, interfering with a colleague’s ability to work effectively by preventing them from obtaining access to information or resources, requesting FAO personnel to carry out your personal errands or do personal favours for you.

Box 19 Resources

- ICSC Standards of conduct at paragraphs 17 and 22
- Manual Section 330 Disciplinary Measures at 330.1.52
- AC 2015/03 Policy on the Prevention of Harassment, Sexual Harassment, and Abuse of Authority

Administrative, including disciplinary, actions may be initiated where abuse of power by a member of personnel is substantiated.

Box 18 Definition

Abuse of authority is the improper use of a position of influence, power or authority against another person. This is particularly serious when a person uses his or her influence, power or authority to improperly influence the career or employment conditions of another, including, but not limited to, appointment, assignment, contract renewal, performance evaluation or promotion. Abuse of authority may also include conduct that creates a hostile or offensive work environment which includes, but is not limited to, the use of intimidation, threats, blackmail or coercion.

*AC 2015/03
4.6 Discrimination

The international civil service is based on inclusion, acceptance and understanding, and we must reflect these principles when interacting with our colleagues and with the public.

Box 20 Definition

Discrimination is any unfair treatment or arbitrary distinction based on a person’s race, sex, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, religion, nationality, ethnic origin, disability, age, language, social origin or other similar shared characteristic or trait. Discrimination may be an isolated event affecting one person or a group of persons similarly situated, or may manifest itself through harassment or abuse of authority.

*Definition from UN Secretary General’s Bulletin ST/SGB/2019/8

Box 21 Resources

- ICSC Standards of conduct at paragraphs 6, 14 and 15
- AC 2015/03 Policy on the Prevention of Harassment, Sexual Harassment, and Abuse of Authority
- AC 2011/23 Policy on Persons with Disabilities in the FAO Workplace
- See also UN Strategy and Plan of Action on Hate Speech

It is essential that we respect everyone equally and act without bias towards anyone, making special efforts to identify and avoid unconscious bias. This is particularly important when making decisions regarding the employment or career advancement of individuals within the Organization.

It is never acceptable to make statements or engage in behaviour that incite hatred or any other form of discrimination on the basis of religion, nationality, ethnicity, sexual orientation or other characteristics. Administrative, including disciplinary, actions may be initiated where such acts by a member of personnel are substantiated.
4.7 Diversity

A diverse and inclusive organizational environment is at the heart of FAO’s effectiveness as a UN Specialized Agency. Our personnel have a wide range of perspectives and competencies, which are put to good use in carrying out our mission worldwide. Differences are to be respected, valued and acknowledged as a source of strength and innovation, and all personnel should be enabled to fulfil their potential.

When at work, we should all dress with due respect for the diversity that characterizes FAO, the specific working environment and our role. While it is not necessary to dress formally at all times, we must remember that we are part of the international civil service and we are expected to uphold its image.

Box 22 Resources

- ICSC Standards of conduct at paragraphs 10 and 40
- AC 2011/23 Policy on Persons with Disabilities in the FAO Workplace (Disability Inclusion Strategy)
- Director-General’s Bulletin 2020/07 on FAO’s accountability and commitment to gender equality
- UN System-Wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-SWAP)
- AC 2009/13 corr. 1 Dress etiquette
Acting with integrity and transparency means acting honestly, without consideration of personal gain or benefit to others and ensuring that actual, perceived or potential conflicts of interest are disclosed and addressed. It means being accountable for delivering the agreed outputs, and communicating proactively. It means embracing transparency while observing the requirements of confidentiality. These are essential principles to which we at FAO must all adhere.

5.1 Fraud and corruption

Our resources are provided to us through the contributions of our Members and other engaged stakeholders. They must be managed carefully and used only for their intended purposes to ensure cost-effectiveness and to prevent waste or misuse. Personnel should exercise diligence in the discharge of their functions, and while mistakes and some degree of negligence may be inevitable, reckless behaviour (gross negligence) is not.

Fraudulent and other corrupt practices are a serious threat to our work. FAO has a zero-tolerance policy with respect to such practices. It is our duty to report instances of fraud or corrupt practices and to protect the interests of the Organization. We must also cooperate with investigations into allegations of fraud and corruption.

Fraudulent and corrupt practices include:
- exchanging money or favours for preferential treatment (e.g. sharing confidential information with a vendor, kickbacks, bribery);
- providing or approving false information, or concealing information, in the context of procurement activities or requests for payment, e.g. in the context of letters of agreement/contracts, staff entitlements, when making medical insurance claims;
- private use of the Organization’s resources that interferes with or deprives the Organization of the use of those resources; and
- an agreement between two or more people to engage in an action to obtain an undue benefit or gain some financial advantage.

If you are found to have engaged in fraud or another corrupt practice, you may be dismissed for misconduct. If you are non-staff personnel, your contract will be terminated. In certain cases, your conduct may also be referred to national legal authorities for appropriate action. FAO will also make every effort to recover defrauded monies from a member of personnel.

Contact OIG to report fraudulent and corrupt practices (see Contacts below).

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Contact OIG to report fraudulent and corrupt practices (see Contacts below).

FAO has a Whistleblower Protection Policy and anyone who reports fraud or other misconduct may request protection from retaliation in accordance with the Policy. Contact the Ethics Office if you believe you may be subject to retaliation (see Contacts below).

Box 23 Resources
- ICSC Standards of conduct at paragraphs 4 and 5
- AC 2015/08 Policy against Fraud and other Corrupt Practices
- AC 2019/06 Whistleblower Protection Policy
5.2 Conflicts of interest

It is our duty to avoid conflicts between the interests of FAO and our own. Even potential or perceived conflicts of interest can undermine trust in the independence and impartiality of FAO and its personnel. A conflict of interest is present, for instance, if our circumstances imply that we are not in a position to act objectively or where there may be a personal gain or benefit from the conflict. Even if we do not act in a way that personally benefits us, the conflict of interest may still exist and must be disclosed so that it can be considered and addressed as appropriate under the circumstances.

It is extremely important that all FAO personnel disclose any situation that may involve a conflict of interest as soon as it arises. The purpose of disclosure is to allow for adequate consideration and, if necessary, action to mitigate or eliminate the conflict, so we avoid any negative impact on the reputation or assets of FAO, or on the member of personnel concerned.

The situations covered in the topics below (outside activities, political activities, gifts and favours, awards and honours, personal relationships) can easily give rise to conflicts of interest, thereby exposing FAO to reputational risks. Contact the Ethics Office for confidential advice and guidance on situations that may involve a conflict of interest.

5.3 Outside activities

We are expected to devote our working time and energy to the work of FAO. Outside work or activities, paid or unpaid, may interfere with our ability to serve FAO. Some activities are also incompatible with the status of international civil servant or otherwise conflict with the best interests of FAO.

As a staff member, before engaging in any outside activity, you must request approval in accordance with the applicable procedures. If this approval is granted, you must undertake the activity during your own time. Approvals are granted for a period of 12 months or until there are material changes that may affect the request.
Outside activities requiring authorization include holding a position, even unpaid, on a board or panel of any non-UN entity (including commercial entities), teaching and speaking, including in an educational setting. Volunteer or charitable activities generally do not require authorization, provided they are carried out during your own time, in your personal capacity, and do not conflict with your status as an international civil servant.

As a general rule, you may not accept remuneration from outside sources; however, in some cases, payment towards expenses or a small amount of remuneration may be specifically approved as part of the authorization of an outside activity.

Consultants and other affiliated personnel, including interns, volunteers and NPPs, may take on other commitments provided these are compatible with their FAO engagements and they must expressly disclose these to their supervisor in writing who may consult the Ethics Office. This avoids any doubt about whether there could be a conflict of interest. Approvals are granted for a period of 12 months or until there are material changes that may affect the request.

### 5.4 Political activities

We are all encouraged to exercise our right to vote and we may have political or religious beliefs. But remember, FAO’s international status means that our conduct must reflect our independence and impartiality at all times. Therefore, there are limits to publicly expressing our views on political issues and to taking part in political activities.

We may not stand for or hold any political office at any level. Membership of a political party is possible, but not if it means we are required to take any action that could affect our independent status or appearance of independence. It is inappropriate to publicly criticize governments, and we must exercise judgement in wearing politically themed clothing or accessories or taking part in political demonstrations or campaign activities. The above considerations extend to our social media online activity.

### 5.5 Gifts and favours

As part of ethical conduct, we must never solicit or offer gifts or favours in connection with our official duties, as it could appear that we are trying to influence the recipient’s official actions or create the expectation of a favour in return. Such actions could have a negative impact on our independence and impartiality, and on FAO’s reputation.

Accepting gifts is discouraged, but FAO allows us to accept gifts that have a nominal value, which includes the whole value of the gifts if there is more...
than one item. However, we must never accept a gift or favour from a person or entity doing business with FAO or seeking to have any sort of contractual relationship with the UN (e.g. a FAO vendor, bidder, or implementing partner), regardless of the value of the gift. There are additional special conditions for FAO personnel who are involved in sensitive areas of work, such as procurement (see References below).

If we are offered a gift estimated at above the nominal value, we must not accept it without first obtaining approval in accordance with the applicable procedures (see References below). Approval will be granted only in exceptional cases.

FAO personnel should always refrain from asking for or accepting favours from other FAO employees or from third parties, which may impede or affect their neutrality. Should a favour have been accepted, due disclosure should be made to the Ethics Office who will recommend mitigation actions to the person concerned and management, as appropriate.

The Ethics Office is available to assist in the case of any doubt.

Box 28 Resources

- ICSC Standards of conduct at paragraphs 17, 24, 50 and 51
- Staff Regulation 301.1.6
- Staff Rule 302.1.6 Expenses, Tokens and Courtesies
- Manual Section 361.3 Acceptance of Honours, Decorations, Gifts, Favours, etc.
- Manual Section 361.6 Disposition for Remuneration
- AC 2006/3 Gifts and gratuities
- AC 2012/14 Procedures for handling gifts

5.6 Awards and honours

Like gifts, awards and honours may not be accepted without first obtaining the approval in accordance with the applicable procedures. This includes any awards or honours that are presented for services prior to joining FAO, or those that are unrelated to service with FAO. The purpose of this rule is to ensure our independence and impartiality.
If the award or honour is given unexpectedly without notice, and a public refusal would cause offence, it may be accepted expressly on behalf of FAO. The Ethics Office must be notified immediately in accordance with applicable rules.

5.7 Personal relationships

To avoid real or perceived conflicts of interest or preferential treatment, FAO rules provide that an employment contract shall not be granted to a person who bears any of the following relationships to staff members or other personnel:

- father
- mother
- son
- daughter
- brother
- sister.

While a spouse may be employed by FAO, there are specific rules that apply. These rules are aimed at avoiding any conflict of interest. Remember, to avoid conflicts of interest we must disclose the existence of any type of family relationship, not only those listed in the rules, included in regards to other official engagements (e.g. partnerships/programmes, letters of agreement, contracts). For example, if an ex-spouse, partner, ex-partner, in-law, cousin, niece or nephew is employed by FAO, this must be disclosed. Changes in a relationship with another member of FAO personnel must also be disclosed as soon as they are known.

Disclosures should be made to a higher-level supervisor, preferably in writing, to enable mitigation of the risk of improper situations as soon as possible. The Ethics Office is available for guidance as required.

We must not use our position with FAO to directly or indirectly promote the interests of friends or relatives. If friends or acquaintances ask about employment with FAO, direct them to the job opportunities available through the FAO website and tell them to follow the application procedures. Always disclose to your supervisor a prior relationship with any person or entity that wishes to do business with your unit, so that appropriate mitigating measures can be taken. There are special rules for those working in procurement (see References below).

Having an intimate personal relationship with a subordinate or a person in the same line of authority is inappropriate. Such a relationship constitutes a conflict of interest and may also constitute an abuse of authority, even if the relationship is consensual (see above). You cannot be an objective and fair supervisor to a person with whom you have a close personal relationship. This kind of relationship also has negative repercussions on the office environment and morale of the team and on the Organization’s image and reputation. An intimate relationship with someone in the office must be promptly disclosed to a higher-level supervisor. The Ethics Office is available for guidance as required.

Box 29 Resources

- ICSC Standards of conduct at paragraph 50
- Staff Regulation 301.1.6
- Staff Rule 302.1.6 Expenses, Tokens and Courtesies
- Manual Section 361.3 Acceptance of Honours, Decorations, Gifts, Favours, etc.

Box 30 Resources

- ICSC Standards of conduct at paragraph 23
- Staff Rule 302.4.8 Family Relationships
- Staff Rule 302.1.53
- Manual Section 375 National Project Personnel at 375.1.23
5.8 Annual disclosure programme

The annual disclosure programme helps to maintain and enhance public trust in the integrity of FAO. The primary purpose of the programme is for the Organization to identify and address conflicts of interest, so that we do not risk being perceived as using our official position for personal gain. Participation in the programme does not release us from our general obligation to disclose to our supervisor any actual or possible conflicts of interest as they arise.

Staff members and other specific FAO personnel are annually selected to participate in the programme on the basis of their position or functions. The administration of the disclosure programme has been entrusted to the Ethics Office, which ensures an independent review of any conflicts that are identified and advises on appropriate actions to prevent or mitigate such conflicts, in the interests of FAO. The information provided in the programme is treated confidentially and will only be used in assessing whether an actual, possible or perceived conflict of interest exists. Participants are required to cooperate with the verification of the information submitted, and to provide complete and truthful information in a timely manner.

Upon initial appointment or hire, we must all complete a separate disclosure of interest form. This will ensure that any conflicts of interest that exist at that time are eliminated or mitigated.

For any questions, contact the Ethics Office.

Box 31 Resources

- ICSC Standards of conduct at paragraphs 23 and 24
- Staff Regulation 301.1.10 and 301.1.11
- Staff Rules 302.1.52, 302.1.53, 302.1.54
- AC 2020/04 Declaration of Interest and Financial Disclosure Programme
5.9 Protecting property and resources

We are all responsible for safeguarding the property and resources of FAO that we use in advancing our Organization’s work and in its best interests. The Organization has procedures in place that are to be followed for maintaining and disposing of assets.

Property and resources must be used for the official intended purpose, and we must take care to prevent the waste or misuse of such assets as funds, IT equipment, supplies and vehicles, as well as intangibles such as our time. The greatest asset of FAO is its personnel, and how well we manage our time and perform our duties greatly contributes to the effectiveness of FAO in achieving its mandate.

In the area of staff benefits and entitlements, it is also important to avoid waste. Our claims for such benefits and entitlements (for example, health insurance and leave) must be reasonable, made in good faith, and supported by appropriate documentation. False or fraudulent claims for benefits and entitlements will be dealt with by way of disciplinary measures, and staff will be dismissed for misconduct where fraud is established. See also the section on fraud and corruption above.

5.10 Procurement

To ensure that the Organization’s resources are used in a responsible manner and to maintain a high degree of public trust in the Organization, it is essential that all procurement activities are competitive, transparent and fair. Such activities must be carried out impartially and avoid even the appearance of preferential treatment. For this reason, there are specific rules governing procurement activities, including those involving Letters of Agreement with implementing partners and purchase orders awarded to vendors.

All personnel involved in procurement for the Organization are covered by a no gifts and no hospitality policy. This imposes additional responsibilities on those involved in procurement. If any gift, favour or promise of employment is offered by a current or prospective vendor, it must be reported to the head of the procurement unit or the Ethics Office. Vendors are themselves subject to disclosure and requirements to uphold ethical conduct as part of FAO’s vendor management in compliance with the UN Supplier Code of Conduct, and may be subject to sanctions if these requirements are not followed.

If you or any member of your family are in a situation that would allow you to obtain a personal benefit (even if the benefit does not actually materialize), or if you or a member of your family have more than a nominal interest in a vendor, you must also promptly disclose this. Any other relationship that could appear to compromise the impartiality and transparency of the procurement process, or raise concerns about a potential conflict of interest, should be disclosed. Proper and timely disclosure permits the Organization to address any potential conflicts of interest and mitigate related risks, including to FAO’s image and reputation, before proceeding. If there is any doubt, the Ethics Office should be consulted.

Box 32 Resources

- ICSC Standards of conduct at paragraph 25
- Staff Rule 303.2.3 Financial responsibility
- Administrative Manual Section 503 Asset management
- Administrative Manual Section 510 Guidelines on the Use, Maintenance and Administration of Official Vehicles in the Field
- AC 2016/23 Gross Negligence
- Manual Section 330 Disciplinary measures at 330.1.52
5.11 Accuracy of records

FAO is responsible to its members and other stakeholders for the capture and maintenance of authentic and reliable records. All records created in the course of conducting organizational business are the property of FAO and are managed through an organization-wide records management system.

All records must be retained according to the prescribed retention periods and disposition procedures. We must not intentionally remove, alter or destroy records, except as in line with records management and archival policies and procedures.

5.12 Use and protection of information

As a general rule, we should exercise discretion and use good judgment in handling information. When we are communicating information outside of FAO, we must ensure that this is done in accordance with applicable rules and procedures and seek authorization as required. If in doubt about whether information should be shared, consult your supervisor.

We should assume that, unless clearly specified or evident, the information we are handling is of an internal nature. Internal information is information that has not been made public such as correspondence or third-party information made available to the Organization.

We are all responsible for ensuring that confidential information, including information that is provided to FAO or generated by FAO, is securely held and protected from unauthorized disclosure. Information that is confidential should be marked as such.

Personal information is a special category that must be dealt with carefully to ensure that it is only used for the appropriate purpose. FAO has procedures in place to ensure correct handling of the personal information of its personnel.

Information that has been obtained in the course of our duties must never be used for our private advantage or that of anyone else. Similarly, it must not be used for personal reasons to prejudice or harm any other party. In this connection, see also the sections above on conflicts of interest and fraud and corruption.

Box 33 Resources
- ICSC Standards of conduct at paragraphs 23, 24 and 26
- Manual Section 502 Procurement of Goods, Works and Services
- Manual Section 507 Letters of Agreement
- AC 2014/27 FAO Vendor Sanctions Policy
- UN Supplier Code of Conduct

Box 34 Resources
- Administrative Manual Section 601 Records and Archives Management

Box 35 Resources
- ICSC Standards of conduct at paragraphs 9 and 10, 38 and 39
- Staff Regulation 301.1.5
- Staff Rules 302.1.55 and 302.1.61
- Administrative Manual Section 361.5 Communication of Information
- AC 2013/23 Confidentiality
- AC 2021/1 Personal data protection principles
5.13 Post-employment restrictions

Working for FAO, we have access to confidential or internal information, gain special expertise and may also develop relationships with stakeholders. It is important that we do not use our official position for our private advantage, either during our service or afterwards.

Similarly, we may not use confidential or internal information to influence the decisions of FAO or of third-party entities with a view to seeking employment with them. We must exercise care in our relationships with former and future colleagues and employers, so that it does not appear that FAO’s neutrality is compromised, for instance by favouring its former personnel or its operational, technical or commercial partners in any way, especially in situations where former FAO personnel may subsequently join an entity that they directly interacted with in their official FAO capacity. Consult the Ethics Office if you are unsure of the appropriate course of action.

5.14 Acceptable use of information technology

The use of FAO computer resources and networks is primarily for legitimate FAO official use. We are all responsible for ensuring that the information and communication technology (ICT) resources of the Organization are used in a lawful and ethical manner. Employees can make some personal use of the Organization’s equipment and software and under certain conditions and it is imperative that we exercise good judgment to ensure that this is kept to a minimum, does not negatively impact the Organization’s resources and that it does not interfere with doing our job properly and in a timely manner. Personal use simply for entertainment is not permitted. It is important to highlight that FAO accepts no responsibility in connection with personal use of the Organization’s computing resources and networks.

ICT resources should be accessed only through the authorized use of personal credentials and passwords. Authorized users are responsible for familiarizing themselves with the Organization’s rules and policies applicable to the use of IT Resources.

We also all have a duty to help maintain the confidentiality, integrity and availability of the Organization’s technology, systems and information, exercising caution and due diligence to ensure that information available through the ICT resources is protected from unauthorized access.

Users are not permitted to augment, change, or modify in any way the FAO equipment and software, or install non-FAO approved software. The circumvention of computing systems and or network security controls is strictly prohibited.

FAO respects copyright and other intellectual property laws that apply to the FAO equipment and software. All personnel are required to respect these laws as well. The software used by FAO is licensed, and the licenses contain restrictions on use. All personnel using such

Box 36 Resources

- ICSC Standards of conduct at paragraphs 24 and 26
- Manual Section 507 Letters of Agreement at 507.4 Accountability and Ethical Behaviour
- AC 2013/23 Confidentiality policy
software under FAO’s license are required to comply with the terms of the license. Copying, using, downloading, or transferring any images, sounds, video, objects, documents or programmes for which FAO does not have a license, is prohibited.

In relation to content creation and communication:

- Creating, accessing or sending material that is pornographic, racist or xenophobic is strictly prohibited along with any other material that violates human dignity.
- Users shall always bear in mind they represent FAO whenever using FAO resources to access and use the Internet. Whenever FAO personnel state an affiliation to FAO, they must also clearly indicate that “the opinions expressed are my own and not necessarily those of FAO”.
- Sending unsolicited email messages, including the sending of “junk mail” or other advertising material to individuals who did not specifically request such material (email spam) is prohibited.
- Any form of harassment via email, telephone or paging, whether through language, frequency, or size of messages is prohibited.

- Solicitation of email for any other email address, other than that of the poster’s account, with the intent to harass or to collect replies is prohibited.
- Creating or forwarding “chain letters”, “Ponzi” or other “pyramid” schemes of any type is prohibited.
- Use of unsolicited email originating from within FAO’s networks of other Internet/Intranet/Extranet service providers on behalf of, or to advertise, any service hosted by FAO or connected via FAO’s network is prohibited.
- Forwarding or sending malicious emails or emails with malicious attachments is prohibited.

FAO monitors the use of computing equipment and software for management purposes, and to ensure that these principles are being observed. When, as a result of monitoring activities, there is reason to believe that anyone may have engaged in improper behaviour through their use of ICT, OIG will be informed. Use of Internet facilities for illegal purposes in the specific national context may be subject to monitoring by the competent national authorities.
5.15 Social media

On social media, our personal conduct should be in line with our obligations as members of the international civil service.

Staff must ensure that the expression of their personal views and convictions on social media does not adversely affect their official duties, reflect poorly on their status as international civil servants or call into question their duty of loyalty, impartiality and responsibility to the Organization.

Do not establish social media channels on FAO’s behalf and do not directly upload FAO content (documents, photos, presentations, videos, etc.) to personal accounts. Instead, this material should be uploaded to official FAO repositories, and then disseminated using links from there.

5.16 Intellectual property

The work that you produce while working for FAO is the property of FAO. FAO retains the right to use it in any manner that it deems appropriate.

You may only use other people’s information with their consent or if it is publicly available without restriction. Do not use information or install software if you do not have a license to do so, and do not otherwise violate licensing agreements or copyright law.

When creating FAO work products, authorship should be assigned appropriately in accordance with the contribution to the development of material published. If you have any queries, these should be raised with your supervisors or the Office of Communications. The Ethics Office can also provide guidance as necessary.
6. REPORTING CONCERNS AND SEEKING GUIDANCE

Information about the different offices that are available to assist you with concerns relating to the topics covered in the Code and the rules and policies that it references is presented below. Please also refer to the From Concern to Clarity - FAO’s Roadmap on where to go when in need.

6.1 Office of the Inspector-General

Pursuant to its Charter, OIG is responsible for investigating allegations of misconduct involving FAO personnel. These include:

- fraudulent and corrupt practices;
- sexual exploitation and abuse;
- sexual harassment;
- workplace harassment and abuse of authority;
- retaliation against whistleblowers;
- abuse of privileges and immunities; and
- any other serious breaches of the Standards of Conduct for the International Civil Service and other FAO rules and policies.

Reports of misconduct are received on a confidential basis. While complaints may be lodged anonymously, providing one’s identity helps OIG with its investigative activities when additional information is required about the complaint. Investigations follow FAO’s investigation guidelines.\(^{14}\) Remember – do not undertake any investigation yourself as this may expose you to risks and also compromise the usefulness of investigative activities – report your concerns to OIG.

6.2 Ethics Office

The Ethics Office provides confidential, impartial advice and support in order to help individuals ascertain whether certain facts should be reported, and which options are available. The Ethics Office provides guidance on situations that may involve a conflict of interest, including recommending action to mitigate or eliminate the conflict. By consulting with the Ethics Office, you can ensure that your actions are in line with our rules and standards of ethical conduct and this Code.

Under the Whistleblower Protection Policy,\(^ {15}\) the Ethics Officer receives complaints of retaliation and acts to prevent retaliation from occurring as well as to protect individuals from being retaliated against. Upon referral by the Ethics Office when a \textit{prima facie} case of retaliation has been established, OIG investigates complaints of retaliation.

The Ethics Officer also acts as the Senior Focal point for Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse.

\(^{14}\) AC 2017/03

\(^{15}\) AC 2019/06
6.3 Office of the Ombudsman

The Ombudsman is a neutral and informal conflict resolution resource that offers opportunities for an individual to:
- discuss a problem off-the-record and in confidentiality outside formal channels;
- explore alternatives for resolving a problem and learn about the resources that are available for this purpose;
- increase the individual’s ability and confidence to deal with conflict; and
- receive coaching and guidance on how to present an issue or concern through another internal mechanism.

Where the parties to a dispute agree to use mediation, the Ombudsman can provide mediation services under the Mediation Policy in AC 2010/14.

6.4 Human Resources Division

The Human Resources Division provides guidance on our human resources policies and procedures, and the related rules, especially as regards recruitment and selection and performance management. The Human Resources Division also manages learning priorities for our personnel as a whole.

6.5 Health Services

The Health Services are available to provide various types of support, for instance health awareness and preventive care, clinical care, emergency services, and overall guidance on health and wellbeing.

The Staff Counsellors are available for FAO personnel and their family members to address personal and work-related issues. If you need more specialized care, you will be referred to an outside provider among a selected group of private mental health professionals.

6.6 Security services

FAO Security Services contribute to a work environment that is safe and secure by providing practical security infrastructure, support, services, and advice. They also ensure a coherent, effective, and timely response to all security-related threats and other emergencies. Security incidents, including all losses, thefts, or damage to FAO property, whether at Headquarters, in duty stations, or while traveling, must be reported to Security Services.

6.7 Staff Representative Bodies

In FAO, there are two bodies representing staff, namely the Union of General Service Staff (UGSS) that represents all GS staff from FAO and WFP at headquarters, and the Association of Professionals (AP-in-FAO) that represents all international professional staff at headquarters and in the field. The Staff Representative Bodies (SRBs) help resolve issues relating to staff welfare and working conditions. Staff members may bring individual cases to the attention of their SRB who can advise on and assist in addressing issues informally or formally. The SRBs may also provide affected staff with support and legal advice in appeals cases.
7. Contacts

Office of the Inspector-General
Telephone: +39 06 570 51367 (general information) or +39 06 570 52333 (confidential hotline)
Email: investigations-hotline@fao.org

Ethics Office
Telephone: +39 06 570 53800
Email: ethics-office@fao.org

Office of the Ombudsman
Telephone: +39 06 570 53900
Email: ombudsman@fao.org

Office of Human Resources
Email: HR-Advice@fao.org

Security Services
Telephone: +39 06 570 53616
Email: Security-Services@fao.org
In the event of an emergency at FAO Headquarters call extensions 33 or 55.

Association of Professionals in FAO (AP-in-FAO)
Telephone: +39 06 57053986
Email: AP-in-FAO@fao.org

Union of General Service Staff of FAO and WFP (UGSS)
Telephone: +39 06 570 53530
Email: UGSS@fao.org

Health Services
Telephone: +39 06 570 53577
Email: Health-Services@fao.org