

## **Rules, Policies and Guidelines for Participants in a Surgical Teams Project, Humanitarian Effort or Educational Activity of the International College of Surgeons - United States Section**

The following document provides various rules, policies and guidelines for participants who are engaging in Surgical Team Projects sanctioned or run by the United States Section of the International College of Surgeons (ICSUS). The term “Member” shall refer to not only members or Fellows of the ICSUS, but also any individual that is participating in an ICSUS project, whether a physician or not.

Funding requirements include the grant requestor’s agreement to provide a written report for the project funded to be published on this website. In addition, grant recipients must agree to make every reasonable effort to attend the United States Section’s Annual Surgical Update and provide a verbal report to attendees about the project that was supported.

### **CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY**

It is the policy of ICSUS to prohibit its members who are actively participating in a project of ICSUS from engaging in any activity, practice, or act which conflicts with, or appears to conflict with, the interests of ICSUS. Each member is required to disclose any interest or involvement when participating in a transaction of the organization in which another party to the transaction includes himself, a close relative (spouse, parent, child, sibling, niece, nephew or in-law) or an organization with which the member is affiliated.

This policy is not intended to detail every situation that could give rise to a conflict of interest. A person with ordinary good judgment should know whether or not a particular activity involves an actual or potential conflict. Where there is doubt, the matter should be brought to the attention of the Executive Director, who will take action as appropriate. In general, members should refrain from: offering, soliciting or accepting gifts, except those of a nominal value, in return for an advantageous position; engaging in conduct that interferes with the primary time and effort obligation to ICSUS or divides his or her loyalty, or discredits ICSUS’s name; or, disclosing confidential or proprietary information about ICSUS to third parties.

Upon discovery of a potential conflict, either in procurement or hiring or any other area of organizational interest, the member should make prompt disclosure to the Executive Director, but no later than 30 days after the occurrence.

Members who have a conflict of interest in any matter shall refrain from participating in the consideration of the proposed transaction.

Failure on the part of a member to abide by this policy will be considered a major misconduct and the member will not be allowed to actively participate in further projects of the ICSUS.

### **GIFTS AND SERVICES ACCEPTANCE POLICY**

In countries where ICSUS conducts projects, members may receive gifts and services from refugees, IDPs, and contractors. It is understandable that beneficiaries are grateful for the services our member provides under difficult conditions. The pervasive warm hospitality of the many host cultures we work in makes refusing gifts difficult though, obviously, not impossible.

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Any member who decides to accept a gift (including valuables, large amounts of food, livestock, etc.) valued over **10 US Dollars** must send a memo to the Executive Director, to inform him/her of the nature and value of the gift and the steps planned or taken to reimburse the person(s) who provided the gifts in cash or kind from non-ICSUS sources.

Gifts over **30 US Dollars** are prohibited without direct and personal (i.e., non-ICSUS) reimbursement to the giving party. If reimbursement is not possible the gift must be turned over to the ICSUS Executive Director. No exchanges of ICSUS services or commodities, or other favors are allowed.

Members who accept a gift and do not disclose the gift will be found in non-compliance with ICSUS stated policy, and are subject to disciplinary action.

### **"LOSS PREVENTION" RESPONSIBILITIES STATEMENT**

The single most important asset of ICSUS is its people. It is our responsibility to protect this valued asset by providing understanding, direction and support for high standards of conduct.

All of ICSUS's assets - commodities, property, information, services and people - are intended to be used in a manner that contributes to our humanitarian mission. Using, diverting, damaging, or taking a company asset for personal use or benefit is an abuse of the humanitarian intended use of that asset.

The purpose of this Statement of Responsibilities of Loss Prevention is to help ICSUS members make correct decisions and judgments regarding activities that are considered project abuse. It is not a policy for running the operations, but a guideline to help each member define project abuse in their area of responsibility. The list of examples is not all-inclusive. Each member should add to it from their understanding of project abuse.

### **Definition of Project Abuse**

Project abuse is any illegal, dishonest, irresponsible, or counterproductive act that causes loss or harm to the ICSUS, its members or beneficiaries.

### **Examples of Project Abuse**

1. Unauthorized taking or use of ICSUS merchandise, cash, materials, equipment or services.
2. Taking or damaging another member's property.
3. Intentional damaging of ICSUS inventory or other property.
4. Assaulting or harassing beneficiaries or other colleagues.
5. Stealing from or cheating a beneficiary.
6. Unauthorized giving of relief goods or accepting money, gifts, or services from beneficiaries.
7. Borrowing or using ICSUS property, vehicles or tools without proper authorization.
8. Unauthorized acceptance or solicitation of gifts from suppliers and vendors.

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9. Failure to pre-disclose operating or having a major investment or relationship in an agency or company that competes or has a conflict of interest with ICSUS.
10. Falsifying any ICSUS records.
11. Unauthorized use or dissemination of ICSUS proprietary information.
12. Intentionally allowing relief commodities to leave the physical control of the ICSUS premises without proper authorizations paperwork or required transaction.
13. Failure to report known project abuse.
14. Gambling or any other illegal activity while engaged in an ICSUS project.
15. Possessing or being under the influence of illegal drugs or alcohol while engaged in an ICSUS project.
16. Buying or selling drugs or alcohol while engaged in an ICSUS project.
17. Rudeness to a beneficiary.

### **DRUG-FREE PROJECT STATEMENT**

The unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession, or use of a controlled substance during an ICSUS project is prohibited. **No member shall be under the influence of controlled substances while engaging in ICSUS projects.** Each member must abide by the terms of the foregoing statement. Project leaders will promptly investigate any alleged violations and provide written notice to ICSUS headquarters of the allegation and investigation. **Disciplinary action will be taken with members who violate these rules. A member is required to notify his or her project leader of any criminal drug statute conviction no later than five (5) working days after such conviction.**

### **RULES OF CONDUCT FOR ALL ICSUS MEMBERS**

ICSUS members must regard the attached “Code of Conduct for ICRC and NGOs in Disaster Relief” as an integral part of the ICSUS’s rules of conduct.

#### **1. General Rules**

ICSUS members:

- must observe all the instruction given by the head of the country office or the project leader;
- must refrain from any other project-related activity not connected with their duties;
- must not commit ICSUS financially or otherwise, without having received specific authorization;
- must adhere strictly to the laws, orders, and regulations of the countries in which they sojourn in the course of their mission; they must pay special attention to currency and traffic laws and regulations and should not expect any support from ICSUS should they willfully infringe such laws and orders;
- must not at any time carry arms or ammunition on their person or in their luggage;
- must administer with the greatest exactitude and care the funds and material supplies entrusted into their keeping and must at all times be prepared to render an account of their use of such funds and supplies;

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## **2. Specific Undertaking in Respect of Confidential Information**

As ICSUS members individually cannot readily decide what items of information may be safely communicated without causing any disadvantage to their project and to that of ICSUS in general, all members undertake to observe the following rules;

- A strictly impartial attitude must be maintained in anything said, whether officially or unofficially.
- No communication may be made, and no views may be expressed, on their mission or on that of ICSUS during or after their mission except to their superiors within their own project at ICSUS, in the form of reports on, or accounts of, their mission. No information about the military or political situation in general should be divulged, not even in their private correspondence.
- Utmost discretion must be maintained with regard to the mass media. Any information to be provided for the latter may only be issued by a competent ICSUS office member in Chicago or by the Executive Director.
- It is forbidden to grant interviews or to give information to any person without having obtained explicit authorization to do so from a competent ICSUS office member, under the conditions stated in paragraph 4.3.

## **3. Specific adherence to ICSUS's "Drug-Free Project Policy", "Conflict of Interest Policy" and "Gift Policy."**

## **4. ICSUS members will endeavor to protect vulnerable women and children from sexual and gender based violence by adopting the six principles of the UNHCR code of conduct:**

- Accountability of all ICSUS members
- ICSUS will work to achieve and maintain a high level of coordination with all agencies and governmental institutions
- ICSUS members will raise awareness and educate refugees to their basic human rights especially in relation to sexual and gender based violence
- ICSUS undertakes to train and educate all members about sexual and gender based violence
- ICSUS will scrupulously monitor the behavior of all its staff and contractors and report any incidents of sexual and gender based violence, or any other infringements against beneficiaries, to the appropriate authorities
- ICSUS will contribute to existing and new programs that raise awareness and increase levels of protection for refugees and other groups

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## **CODE OF CONDUCT**

### **Principles of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and NGOs in Disaster Response Programs**

#### **1. The Humanitarian imperative comes first**

The right to receive humanitarian assistance, and to offer it, is a fundamental humanitarian principle, which should be enjoyed by all citizens of all countries. As members of the international community, we recognize our obligation to provide humanitarian assistance wherever it is needed. Hence the need for unimpeded access to affected populations is of fundamental importance in exercising that responsibility. The prime motivation of our response to disaster is to alleviate human suffering amongst those least able to withstand the stress caused by disaster. When we give humanitarian aid it is not a partisan or political act and should not be viewed as such.

#### **2. Aid is given regardless of the race, creed or nationality of the recipients and without adverse distinction of any kind. Aid priorities are calculated on the basis of need alone**

Wherever possible, we will base the provision of relief aid upon a thorough assessment of the needs of the disaster victims and the local capacities already in place to meet those needs. Within the entirety of our programs, we will reflect considerations of proportionality. Human suffering must be alleviated whenever it is found; life is as precious in one part of a country as another. Thus, our provision of aid will reflect the degree of suffering it seeks to alleviate. In implementing this approach, we recognize the crucial role played by women in disaster prone communities and will ensure that this role is supported, not diminished, by our aid programs. The implementation of such a universal, impartial and independent policy, can only be effective if we and our partners have access to the necessary resources to provide for such equitable relief, and have equal access to all disaster victims.

#### **3. Aid will not be used to further a particular political or religious standpoint**

Humanitarian aid will be given according to the need of individuals, families and communities. Notwithstanding the right of Non-Governmental Humanitarian Agencies (NGHAs) to espouse particular political or religious opinions, we affirm that assistance will not be dependent on the adherence of the recipients to those opinions. We will not tie the promise, delivery or distribution of assistance to the embracing or acceptance of a particular political or religious creed.

#### **4. We shall endeavor not to act as instruments of government foreign policy**

NGHAs are agencies, which act independently from governments. We therefore formulate our own policies and implementation strategies and do not seek to implement the policy of any government, except in so far as it coincides with our own independent policy. We will never knowingly - or through negligence - allow ourselves, or our employees, to be used to gather information of a political, military or economically sensitive nature for governments or other

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bodies that may serve purposes other than those which are strictly humanitarian, nor will we act as instruments of foreign policy of donor governments. We will use the assistance we receive to respond to needs and this assistance should not be driven by the need to dispose of donor commodity surpluses, nor by the political interest of any particular donor. We value and promote the voluntary giving of labor and finances by concerned individuals to support our work and recognize the independence of action promoted by such voluntary motivation. In order to protect our independence, we will seek to avoid dependence upon a single funding source.

### **5. We shall respect culture and custom**

We will endeavor to respect the culture, structures and customs of the communities and countries we are working in.

### **6. We shall attempt to build disaster response on local capacities**

All people and communities - even in disaster - possess capacities as well as vulnerabilities. Where possible, we will strengthen these capacities by employing local staff, purchasing local materials and trading with local companies. Where possible, we will work through local NGHAs as partners in planning and implementation, and co-operate with local government structures where appropriate. We will place a high priority on the proper co-ordination of our emergency responses. This is best done within the countries concerned by those most directly involved in the relief operations, and should include representatives of the relevant UN bodies.

### **7. Ways shall be found to involve program beneficiaries in the management of relief aid**

Disaster response assistance should never be imposed upon the beneficiaries. Effective relief and lasting rehabilitation can best be achieved where the intended beneficiaries are involved in the design, management and implementation of the assistance program. We will strive to achieve full community participation in our relief and rehabilitation programs.

### **8. Relief aid must strive to reduce future vulnerabilities to disaster as well as meeting basic needs**

All relief actions affect the prospects for long-term development, either in a positive or a negative fashion. Recognizing this, we will strive to implement relief programs which actively reduce the beneficiaries' vulnerability to future disasters and help create sustainable lifestyles. We will pay particular attention to environmental concerns in the design and management of relief programs. We will also endeavor to minimize the negative impact of humanitarian assistance, seeking to avoid long-term beneficiary dependence upon external aid.

### **9. We hold ourselves accountable to both those we seek to assist and those from whom we accept resources**

We often act as an institutional link in the partnership between those who wish to assist and those who need assistance during disasters. We therefore hold ourselves accountable to both constituencies. All our dealings with donors and beneficiaries shall reflect an attitude of openness and transparency. We recognize the need to report on our activities, both from a

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financial perspective and the perspective of effectiveness. We recognize the obligation to ensure appropriate monitoring of aid distributions and to carry out regular assessments of the impact of disaster assistance. We will also seek to report, in an open fashion, upon the impact of our work, and the factors limiting or enhancing that impact. Our programs will be based upon high standards of professionalism and expertise in order to minimize the wasting of valuable resources.

### **10. In our information, publicity and advertising activities, we shall recognize disaster victims as dignified humans, not hopeless objects**

Respect for the disaster victim as an equal partner in action should never be lost. In our public information we shall portray an objective image of the disaster situation where the capacities and aspirations of disaster victims are highlighted, and not just their vulnerabilities and fears. While we will co-operate with the media in order to enhance public response, we will not allow external or internal demands for publicity to take precedence over the principle of maximizing overall relief assistance. We will avoid competing with other disaster response agencies for media coverage in situations where such coverage may be to the detriment of the service provided to the beneficiaries or to the security of our staff or the beneficiaries.

### **SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY**

It is the policy of the ICSUS that sexual harassment of any type at any time is prohibited. This policy is intended to prevent sexual harassment of ICSUS members and any other persons with whom ICSUS members interact within the course and scope of their participation in ICSUS activities and projects. If sexual harassment does occur in violation of this policy, prompt corrective measures will be taken.

If you are a victim of, or witness any incident of sexual harassment, please report it immediately to the Project Leader or Executive Director.

### **INDEMNIFICATION**

The ICSUS member or other project participant listed on page 8 of this document will hold harmless and indemnify the ICSUS against any and all claims and actions arising out of the participation of the ICSUS member or other project participant in the Surgical Team project or other activity as specified, including, without limitation, expenses, judgments, fines, settlements and other amounts actually and reasonably incurred in connection with any liability, suit, action, loss, or damage arising or resulting from the ICSUS member or other project participant's participation in the project.