

Youth Corps Singapore

Volunteer Code of Conduct

At Youth Corps Singapore, while we believe in the need for volunteers to learn and serve in an empowering environment, we also appreciate the importance for volunteers to treat all stakeholders and partners with respect and dignity. Volunteers should strive to be positive role models to their peers, community partners and clients (beneficiaries¹) in their speech and actions.

To facilitate this, you will be required to abide by the following tenets of the Youth Corps Singapore Volunteer Code of Conduct. Failure to comply with the policy may lead to the termination of service with Youth Corps Singapore.

Respect for others and self

In the process of volunteering, volunteers shall not:

- Impose their own religious beliefs or political views on fellow volunteers, community partners and clients. Cultural, racial, and religious sensitivity are to be observed at all times. Volunteers should refrain from the following:
 - o Vulgarities – in any language, whether colloquial or slang;
 - o Personal attacks, threats, insults, degrading or derogatory remarks about a person or organisation;
 - o Racially offensive remarks or language;
 - o Religiously insensitive or provocative remarks or language;
 - o Defamatory or libellous comments; and
 - o Involvement in any form of lobbying or politicising
- Consume tobacco, alcohol and any form of intoxicating consumables when engaging with other volunteers, mentors, community partners and clients;

When interacting with other volunteers,

Volunteers shall:

- Observe the personal boundaries of other team members;
- Be respectful and not put down other team members; and
- Be open to diverse points of view offered by team members

¹ In Youth Corps, we refer the beneficiaries as clients as we believe that when we volunteer, we can also benefit from the interaction with the clients.

Volunteers shall not:

- Engage in inappropriate physical conduct with other volunteers; and
- Make inappropriate or unsolicited comments about other volunteers

Note that conduct giving rise to allegations of discrimination or exploitation of any volunteers and/or stakeholders involved, including sexual harassment, will be taken seriously, amounting to disciplinary action or termination of service with Youth Corps Singapore.

When interacting with community partners and clients:

Volunteers shall:

- Treat all clients with respect and dignity. Conduct giving rise to allegations of discrimination or exploitation of vulnerable persons, including sexual harassment, will be taken seriously, amounting to disciplinary action or termination of service with Youth Corps Singapore

Volunteers shall not:

- Be involved in the proselytising, politicising or lobbying efforts by Community Partners or clients;

Note that conduct giving rise to allegations of discrimination or exploitation of any volunteers and/or stakeholders involved, including sexual harassment, will be taken seriously, amounting to disciplinary action or termination of service with Youth Corps Singapore.

When interacting with mentors (where applicable):

Volunteers shall:

- Maintain a respectful attitude towards mentors who are designated as custodians of the project teams
- Observe the privacy of the mentors by maintaining personal boundaries and keeping communications to within appropriate hours;
- Respond to emails and other forms of communication from mentors in a timely manner; and
- Highlight early any concerns they may have with regard to the Youth Corps programme so that mentors can address them appropriately;

Note that conduct giving rise to allegations of discrimination or exploitation of any volunteers and/or stakeholders, involved including sexual harassment, will be taken seriously, amounting to disciplinary action or termination of service with Youth Corps Singapore.

Professionalism

Volunteers shall:

- Serve the community to the best of their ability, in a respectful, professional and cooperative manner;
- Be present and punctual for all Youth Corps related activities including but not limited to monthly trainings, stakeholder meetings etc.;
- Be appropriately dressed at Youth Corps related activities (i.e. no scantily-clad attire), and when donning the Youth Corps t-shirt, present themselves professionally;
- Inform Youth Corps Singapore as early as possible if they are unable to volunteer during the agreed day and time.
- Attend all training and orientation sessions organised by Youth Corps Singapore in order to serve the clients to the best of their ability.

Volunteers shall not:

- Accept cash, donations, gratuities or gifts from community partners and clients in return for their service. In the event volunteer is presented with tokens of appreciation, including plaques and statuettes, it should not be valued more than \$50. When in doubt, volunteers are to check in with their mentors or Youth Corps Singapore;
- Exploit one's volunteer status for financial gain, or engage in any business or activity for profit or personal financial gain;
- Offer personal gifts in cash, donations, or gratuities to community partners or clients;
- Be alone with a client in an enclosed/secluded setting or wander away from the group;
- Interact with any clients outside of a Project / Programme / Event on behalf of Youth Corps Singapore; and

When interacting with the Media:

Volunteers shall:

- Immediately refer to Youth Corps Singapore all media queries and requests pertaining to Youth Corps and its programmes and schemes from any media agencies, including, but not limited to the broadcast, electronic, print and online media, wire services and mass circulation publications;

Volunteers shall not:

- Engage in any form of communication with the media, including writing reports for the media, accepting interviews and / or writing letters to the forum pages, in the capacity of a Youth Corps volunteer, without prior discussion with Youth Corps Singapore.

Confidentiality

Volunteers shall:

- Maintain the confidentiality of all proprietary or privileged information to which they are exposed while serving as a volunteer; and
- Breach the confidentiality of client if the client harm themselves, have intentions to harm others, or was harmed by others.

Volunteers shall also highlight to the Youth Corps staff if they observe inappropriate behaviours exhibited by the clients or if clients disclose the following information which would arise to any physical, emotional, mental safety concerns. These include:

- Illegal activities;
- Drug consumption within the household;
- Escalating tensions that may lead to injuries;
- Presence of questionable persons in the household; and
- Clients' exhibiting unexplained distress.

Volunteers shall not:

- Bring external guests to a Project / Programme / Event unless prior approval is sought and approved by Youth Corps Singapore.
- Take or publish any forms of digital media with **clients** on their personal social media platforms unless permission is granted by the clients;
- Exchange personal contact details with clients.

If you are aware of any individuals who are not complying to the Code of Conduct or have concerns about him/her, please inform us at www.youthcorps.gov.sg/en/enquiry so that we can provide the right support for him/her. Identity of the complainant will be kept confidential.

For Virtual Volunteerism

Virtual volunteerism refers to tasks completed offsite, in whole or in part, via the Internet or phone. It includes activities such as tele-befriending, tele-tutoring, e-mentoring, task-based assistance such as research campaigns or marketing campaigns (list is non-exhaustive). Mode of engagements include voice calls, video conferencing and text messaging, through platforms such as Telegram, WhatsApp, SMS, Zoom, Google Meet/Hangouts etc.

For virtual volunteering efforts where volunteers will engage clients directly, this additional segment applies.

Safety

Volunteers are encouraged to prioritise theirs and the clients' safety by putting in place necessary measures to prevent any unwanted occurrences such as the potential of having the contents of the video call being abused and circulated after the engagement.

For example, volunteers to ensure that the video calls are being made in the presence of another volunteer, and volunteers to uphold professionalism and be mindful that everything shared in a call can be made public information.

Conduct

For engagement via video conferencing, volunteers shall ensure that they do not over expose home-based information that are not relevant to the engagement.

For example, volunteers to use a plain background or conducive room to safeguard the privacy of volunteers and clients and ensure privacy by using earpiece to ensure that the conversation will not be exposed to other family members and/or others in the same household unit.

Volunteers shall behave appropriately and not have inappropriate postures. Volunteers shall reveal only their face and shoulders during the video conference. Exceptions will be made for virtual volunteering programmes like virtual workout that are sanctioned by Youth Corps.

Privacy and Confidentiality

Volunteers shall establish an agreement with the clients that the engagement sessions will not be recorded by either party. In the event a recording is being made by accident, it is to be deleted immediately.

Breach

Should there be a breach in safety, conduct, privacy or confidentiality, of another volunteer or the clients, volunteers are to end the engagement immediately, especially if it is via video conference, and alert the Youth Corps staff in-charge immediately.

Emergency

Volunteers are to alert emergency services immediately (e.g. police, medical services) if they observe any of the following:

- Violent incident occurring;
- Clients incurring serious injuries accidentally; and
- Clients threatening or attempting self-harm or suicide.

Volunteers shall notify staff thereafter as soon as possible.

Note that conduct giving rise to allegations of discrimination or exploitation of any volunteers and/or stakeholders, involved including sexual harassment, will be taken seriously, amounting to disciplinary action or termination of service with Youth Corps Singapore.

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