

# Code of Conduct for The Norwegian Seamen's Church/ The Norwegian Church Abroad

**Approved by the Seamen's Church Board of Directors on 10.03.2011**

Updated with revised Vision and Values from the strategy plan approved by the Board of Directors on 31.08.2021.

## 1. Introduction

The Seamen's Church is a non-profit organization assigned by the Church of Norway and the Norwegian Parliament with the ecclesiastical responsibility for the Norwegian seamen and other Norwegians located abroad or on the Norwegian continental shelf.

The work of the Seamen's Church is based on the Bible and the Confessions of the Church of Norway.

The Seamen's Church's main goal is to promote God's kingdom by being a serving church in the world's everyday life.

The Code of Conduct is built on three important pillars:

- **The purpose of the Seamen's Church:** The purpose of the Seamen's Church is to promote God's kingdom by being a church in the world's everyday life
- **The Seamen's Church's vision:** "Church in the world's everyday life"
- **The Seamen's Church's values:** Inclusive, Outreach, Innovative

These are discussed in more detail in the "2021-2026 Seamen's Church's Strategy". Both employees and volunteers must be able to identify with the Seamen's Church's vision and values.

Reference is also made to the Seamen's Church's documents:

- Founding document
- Contingency Plan for Sexual Assault
- Procedures for Whistleblowing and Conflict Management
- Formal Requirements for Recruitment
- Staff Handbook and Management Handbook
- HSE Handbook
- Alcohol Policy Guidelines

## 2. General

The Code of Conduct applies primarily to all employees (also local employees), as well as temporary employees on ordinary salary or subsistence allowance. We expect everyone who holds a position of trust (members of the general meeting, board of directors, circuit board, church council, church board or other bodies) to follow the Code of Conduct. It must be stated in contracts with volunteers that they have "read and will comply with" the organization’s Code of Conduct.

It is a fundamental requirement that the Seamen’s Church as an organization, its employees, volunteers, and all those who hold positions of trust, operate in accordance with the applicable laws and regulations in the countries in which the Seamen’s Church operates, in the same way as those who work in administration and operational work in Norway must act in accordance with the Norwegian legislation.

The Code of Conduct shall contribute to responsible behaviour by indicating what is desired behaviour in relation to ethical issues. It must be easy to understand and practice and must be regarded as relevant in relation to challenges and dilemmas that may arise.

The Code of Conduct is not intended to be comprehensive and is mainly principle-based. It shall provide guidance that will facilitate making correct assessments and decisions in the specific situations that may arise. In case of doubt, seek advice from your line manager or other persons/bodies in the organization.

## 3. Employee Relations

Everyone has the obligation to treat colleagues and volunteers with respect and tolerance, so that no one has any reason to feel harassed or discriminated. This also applies to local employees. One must therefore be careful with how they refer to other co-workers and avoid giving descriptions or other information that could create conflicts or damage others' reputations. If conflicts or disagreements arise, official channels must be used and parties who are not part of the conflict must not be involved. Reference is also made to the "Plan for Conflict Management".

All employees in the Seamen’s Church have a shared responsibility to contribute to a work environment characterized by wellbeing, development, enthusiasm, and openness. Volunteers must be recognized and valued so that they are inspired and empowered to carry out the tasks they have been given in the best possible way.

## 4. Relationship with users of the Seamen’s Church

The Seamen’s Church wants to create good encounters with people both inside and outside the church’s premises. People who meet the Seamen’s Church should feel that they are met with respect and care, and that employees and volunteers act in accordance with the Seamen’s Church’s vision and values. This should also influence the way we approach people, whether it is in recruitment processes, donation requests to private individuals and companies, or in other circumstances.

## **5. Trust**

All employees and volunteers must look after the organization's interests and contribute to the realization of its approved goals, strategies, and decisions. Trust is also required within individual staffs and service areas, both in relation to the information that is shared, and in each other as co-workers.

## **6. Conflict of Interest**

Employees of the Seamen's Church shall not have other paid work or positions outside the Seamen's Church if these may come into conflict with the interests of the Seamen's Church or weaken the trust in the organization or its employees. Any assignments/part-time positions must be approved by the head of department in advance.

## **7. Confidentiality**

All employees, volunteers and those who hold positions of trust in the Seamen's Church have a duty of confidentiality with regards to information of a confidential or sensitive nature that they become aware of through their work for the Norwegian Seamen's Church. They have a duty to protect and store such information in accordance with internal routines, and applicable laws and guidelines. The duty of confidentiality also applies after the employment relationship or position of trust is terminated, or the assignment has been completed. All employees sign a non-disclosure agreement at the start of the employment relationship.

## **8. Drugs and Alcohol**

The Seamen's Church must be a drug and alcohol-free workplace, and the Seamen's Church events must be drug and alcohol-free. The main rule is that employees do not consume alcohol while on duty. If alcohol is served while on duty, the employee must exercise restraint. See also «Alcohol Policy Guidelines».

If an employee's substance use in their spare time or during assignments affects the work they must perform for the Seamen's Church, or it is detrimental to relationships with other staff or other church partners, the employee by definition has a problem that also concerns the work situation and the employer.

There is zero tolerance in relation to driving while under the influence of drugs or alcohol, both when it comes to your own driving as well as being a passenger to a driver who the employee suspects to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

With reference to the Norwegian law, it is specified that illicit narcotic substances must not be used, including during leisure time, even if the legislation of the country of residence allows it.

## **9. Sexual Relationships**

An employee or volunteer of the Seamen’s church shall not exploit or sexually offend others.

An employee or volunteer must not enter a sexual relationship when they are a superior, a supervisor, a caregiver or any similar position in relation to the other person. Consent from the other party will not exempt from liability. Employees of the Seamen’s Church must not purchase sexual services, even if it is legal under the legislation of the country of residence.

The Seamen’s Church’s “Plan Against Sexual Assault” will be the guide for how individual cases are handled. The Seamen’s Church is associated to the professional council in Bjørgvin’s diocese.

The Seamen’s Church depends on the trust from the communities we work with. The Seamen’s Church wants to promote marriage as the right and good form of partnership and union for its employees at home and abroad. In such a context, partnership ethical issues relating to employees can become the employer’s concern, especially for people in ordained positions. Such cases will be dealt with individually.

## **10. Corruption and Bribery**

An employee or volunteer of the Seamen’s Church is not allowed to receive personal gifts with a value above the current (Norwegian) government’s rate for gifts received in connection with their work. There will be no exception for accepting monetary gifts.

If an employee wrongfully appropriates money from users of the Seamen’s Church or the organization itself, it is grounds for dismissal.

## **11. Administration of donations and State subsidies**

The Seamen’s Church’s finances rely on funding from private individuals, agreements with companies and public subsidy. Everyone has a responsibility to manage these funds in the most economical and reasonable way possible. It is also expected that everyone always acts with seriousness in relation to the financial framework within which Sjømannskirken operates and finds solutions that reflect this.

The organization receives cash donations in different ways, such as gifts, collections and similar. To ensure the donor’s certainty that this is handled securely, there is a requirement that all cash donations must be counted and acknowledged by two people – in the case of a collection or anonymous donor, for example – or by the donor and the recipient. Suitable receipt books must therefore be available.

## **12. Representation on behalf of the Sjømannskirken**

When an employee, volunteer or someone who holds a position of trust in the Seamen’s Church acts on behalf of the Seamen’s Church, either on trips or in other contexts, this must be done in a way that reflects the Seamen’s Church’s values and which does not

bring the organization into disrepute. The Seamen's Church as an organization depends on trust and credibility in the work we do, especially in the seamen's church stations. It is therefore expected that everyone who acts on behalf of the organization also follows these guidelines in their spare time.

### **13. Sosial Media**

Social media is increasingly used both at work and in private life. Reference is made to "Guidelines for The Use of Social Media for Employees of the Norwegian Seamen's Church" where one can be viewed as a representative of the Norwegian Seamen's Church. Such online presence must happen in a way that reflects the values of the Seamen's Church, and which does not bring the organization into disrepute.

### **14. Environmental impact**

Sjømannskirken aims to reduce our adverse environmental impact to a minimum. The whole organization must be conscious of overall travel activities and facilitate and encourage alternatives to travel. All employees have a responsibility to limit unnecessary travel activities and make use of video or telephone conference whenever possible and appropriate.

Where suitable, we shall also inform external partners about our environmental profile and, if possible, try to influence them to act according to it.

### **15. Whistleblowing**

Whistleblowing is reporting objectionable conditions in the workplace. Sections 2-4, 2-5 and 3-6 of the (Norwegian) "Working Environment Act" regulate employees' right to report. The provisions shall help to strengthen the actual freedom of expression in an employment relationship.

Reference is also made to our own "Procedures for Whistleblowing and Conflict Management" and "My Notification" (*Mitt varsel* - channel for reporting objectionable conditions).

### **16. Sanctions**

In the event of a breach of the Code of Conduct, relevant legal provisions or other guidelines, applicable sanctions may be a written warning, termination, dismissal, compensation lawsuit or notification to the relevant authority. Theft and embezzlement must be reported to the police, regardless of who commits it.

### **17. Dissemination of the Code of Conduct**

The Norwegian Seamen's Church has a responsibility to create a good ethical attitude among all its employees, volunteers and those who hold positions of trust in the Norwegian Seamen's Church. This Code of Conduct must be made known and respected by all employees.