

BAAS Code of Conduct

We expect the core principles of Be Aware and Share (hereafter BAAS) to be upheld by all individuals working with the organisation, *i.e.* BAAS personnel and volunteers, at all times.

We work for a more socially-just and integrity-based approach to and for people in need. The aim of BAAS is to contribute to a peaceful, solidary and mutually inclusive society. We are committed to sharing resources and knowledge across cultural boundaries, overcoming prejudices and addressing material inequalities. BAAS stands for the idea that a successful and peaceful future for our societies is only possible through the full potential and voice of all their members.

Our work is politically independent, transparently funded and supported by donations.

1. Humanitarian values: What guides us and our work

- **HUMANITY:** The singular motivation of humanitarian action is to support People on the Move in a manner that respects and restores personal dignity.
- **IMPARTIALITY:** In humanitarian action, priority is given to the most urgent cases irrespective of ethnicity, gender, religious belief, political opinion or class.
- **NEUTRALITY:** We refrain from taking sides in hostilities or engaging in political, racial, religious or ideological controversies.
- **'DO NO HARM':** Aid can become part of the dynamics of the situation; therefore, we must try to minimise the harm - we may be inadvertently causing - simply by being present and providing support. To try and minimise harm, we must constantly be aware of and assess: the form in which assistance is provided (e.g. the more self-sustainable the better), the environment in which assistance is provided (e.g. safe, protected, relaxed), our own limitations (e.g. make no promises).

Our ethos:

- ***Teamwork***
- ***Solidarity***
- ***Hands-on spirit***
- ***Transparency***
- ***Friendliness***
- ***Practical solutions***
- ***Authenticity***
- ***On-the-ground mentality***

2. What we expect from you

All personnel and volunteers, by accepting a position within the organisation, commit to a level of dedication to their role, and agree to:

- Promote the humanitarian principles of humanity, impartiality, neutrality and 'do no harm'. This includes respecting the equal worth and dignity of every individual without distinction, and promoting fundamental human rights irrespective of race, ethnicity, religion, age, sexual orientation or gender.
- Respect and accept technical and administrative decisions, methods, and priorities, as set out by virtue of the organisational hierarchy, should a conflict of ideas arise.
- Be dependable, recognising the commitment and responsibility to assignment(s) - Accept assignment(s) consistent with interests, abilities, and available time, with an open mind and a willingness to learn - Accept feedback in order to do the best job possible.

What you can expect from us

When belonging in a close-knit team there are challenges as well as benefits. We all need to work together to nurture an environment in which everyone feels safe, respected and valued. You can expect BAAS to:

- Put the safety of the entire team first, and do everything possible to promote health and safety standards.
- Work to continuously assess the risk of the context in which we are working.

- Promote an inclusive and friendly environment, in which ideas, thoughts and feedback are openly shared.
- Respect that personal safety is different for each person, and do our utmost to respect each individual's boundaries.
- Encourage candid discussions about potential conflicts, before a situation escalates.
- Understand that each team member has their own aspirations and goals, and work to create a culture of learning, and personal and professional growth.
- Conform to our ethos, especially solidarity and teamwork, where everyone's role in the team serves a function, and we work towards a common goal.

3. General Working Guidelines

- Respect the work schedule in order to minimise disruption to operations.
If you are running late to a shift, you will be expected to inform the Coordinator on shift (for Volunteers) or the Ops Manager as early as possible.
- Do not invite other individuals or organisations to engage in our work without the permission of a Coordinator or the Ops Manager.
- Do not give any advice on legal, medical or psychological matters.
Always refer such queries to the Coordinator on shift or the Ops Manager, who will connect the individual with the designated organisations and authorities.
- Do not transport any of our participants or participants of other organisations. **This may result in human trafficking charges.** If asked to transport volunteers of other organisations, ensure that they have the required legal documents/status.

- Do not share private or confidential information relating to the organisation or any of its team members, partners or stakeholders e.g. locations, personal data, financial data, unannounced strategies. Please ask a Coordinator or the Ops Manager if you are unsure what information should or should not be shared, you can always share the BAAS Ioannina Phone number if you are unsure: **+30 698 336 96 33**
- Always be respectful towards the people we engage with and the rest of the working team; if issues arise choose an appropriate time and place for further discussion.

4. Neutrality and Conflict of Interest

- Treat all people impartially, respectfully, and humanely regardless of nationality, race, gender, age, ability, sexual orientation, religion, political opinions etc.
- **Engaging in intimate relationships with the participants, i.e. sexual or romantic ones, can have severe consequences for all parties engaged.**

When an individual is dependent on you for their food, clothing, hygiene items, laundry, shower facilities, etc. there is an ***unequal distribution of power in the relationship***.

Romantic/sexual relationships between humanitarian workers and participants are deeply sensitive and ethically complex; while such relationships might appear consensual on the surface, they are shaped by significant power imbalances and raise serious concerns about ethics, consent, and professional conduct.

It should be noted that even a simply romantic relationship, which by default might not involve visible sexual actions, can be as strong, emotional and interdependent as a purely sexual relationship. Romantic relationships are also a strong indicator of a "behind-the-doors" sexual relationship.

Hence, in order to protect ourselves, the organization, - but most importantly - our participants, romantic/sexual relationships between BAAS personnel/volunteers & participants are explicitly prohibited.

If BAAS personnel or volunteers are involved in such a relationship, they will be handed an official warning. A 2nd warning could lead to automatic end of employment with BAAS.

If there are situations where you perceive a shift (may also be unintentional) in your relationship with a visitor of the community centre, immediately search for a conversation with a Coordinator or the Ops Manager, depending on your line of work.

The abovementioned prohibition re: intimate (sexual/romantic) relationships includes such relationships with community volunteers, who are also participants of the centre.

- Consuming any illegal substances while socializing with community volunteers is prohibited. Alcohol consumption should be limited, conducted respectfully and being mindful of cultural differences, always observing appropriate boundaries.
- When working in the CC, do not give extra aid, such as money or gifts, to any of the people we engage with. When we work, we treat all people equally, providing the same services and material support to everybody.
Do not accept any gifts either. When in doubt, check with a Coordinator or the Ops Manager.
- Avoid physical contact beyond a handshake/fistbump with the people we work with.
Acts like hugging may be read as favouritism & intimate engagement and are not appropriate in the workspace.
- Do not make promises or create expectations you cannot live up to.
This can lead to disappointment for individuals which may have heightened effects due to their precarious position. It also breaks the trust relationship between the organisation and the community.
- Do not ask questions or initiate dialogue about a person's past, journey, or current situation. Not only are these highly personal questions which are inappropriate to ask, but

they can bring up past trauma which you, and we as an organisation, are not equipped to deal with professionally.

5. Confidentiality and Social Media

- BAAS personnel and volunteers should not take photos of or with participants of the project unless they are responsible for Public Relations and are therefore familiar with the social media policy.
- When sharing your experiences on social media or blogs, make it clear in the post that the words are your own and are not representative of the organisation.
- If you want to share your experiences with the media please ask for permission from the person you report to, based on your line of work in the organization, **beforehand**.
- We especially ask that people don't post political beliefs or write about police or authorities as or on behalf of BAAS. This may put other team members, participants & operations at risk.
- BAAS focuses on action, not advocacy- particularly in the public sense - in order to prioritise practical goals and to avoid situations where our access to certain areas may be restricted and/or our activities on the ground are compromised.
- BAAS personnel and volunteers may come into contact with sensitive information in relation to the lives, identities, and needs of their colleagues, the people we work with, or other vulnerable persons. Such information should be treated with discretion and not shared publicly with the media or on social media platforms and blog sites. If you believe this information may have a negative or harmful impact on the welfare and safety of the concerned party or any other individual/group/project, we ask that the information is **privately disclosed to a Coordinator or the Ops Manager**.

6. Illegal and Unethical Activities

- BAAS personnel and volunteers must not engage in any illegal activities, unethical activities or any activities that contravene human rights. This includes consuming any illicit substances whilst working or in the workplace or in the apartments. Consumption of alcohol is prohibited whilst working or in the workplace.
- Do not moralise or promote a particular religion or political stance whilst working for the organisation.
- Report any inappropriate or irresponsible behaviour that has a negative impact on you or the team to a Coordinator or the Ops Manager immediately.

If you see somebody breaking the Code of Conduct you are **obliged** to notify a Coordinator or the Ops Manager – if you are not comfortable doing so in person, you can use the [Anonymous Incident Report Form](#).

7. Volunteer Wellbeing

- Look after yourself and your team. Self care is essential for this kind of work, as it can be emotionally, mentally, and physically draining at times.
If you need more support or time off, communicate this with a Coordinator.
- It is important that volunteers share a healthy relationship with each other to ensure that they feel comfortable and are able to deliver at their best performance.
Volunteers must respect the personal boundaries of fellow volunteers. It is important to always be aware of these boundaries, and inclusive to others' opinions or beliefs in the workspace.
- Do not put yourself in danger when confronted with physical violence or any other kind of hazard - stay safe! Report incidents **immediately** to a Coordinator.
We ask you as a volunteer not to intervene but rather to stay out of the way and continue your job unless told otherwise.

If you have any general inquiries or feedback that you don't feel comfortable sharing with the coordination team, you can always contact the board of BAAS via board@beawareandshare.ch

The following signature of this Code of Conduct is an acknowledgement that I have read all the provisions mentioned in it and I agree to abide by them.

Agreement Acknowledgement:

Date & Place

Full Name & Signature