

PIN CODE OF CONDUCT

Approved by Executive Board on October 7, 2024

Effective of November 1, 2024

CONTENTS

1	INTRODUCTION.....	3
2	BASIC PRINCIPLES OF OUR WORK	3
3	SCOPE OF APPLICABILITY OF THE CODE.....	4
4	STANDARDS OF BEHAVIOUR.....	4
5	BREACH OF THE CODE	6

1 INTRODUCTION

- People in Need (hereafter referred to as PIN) is a non-governmental, non-profit organisation committed to the ideas of humanism, freedom, equality and solidarity. We consider human dignity and freedom to be fundamental values. We believe that people living anywhere in the world should have the right to make decisions about their lives in accordance with the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*¹.
- PIN promotes democracy and advocates the protection of human rights at home and abroad. In the Czech Republic, we provide counselling and educational services aimed at improving the social situation of disadvantaged individuals and families. We also provide humanitarian and development aid around the world.
- PIN strives for an open, informed and engaged society with a responsible approach to problem solving. We want to actively contribute to cultural, ethnic, racial and other differences being seen as a source of mutual enrichment, not as a source of conflict.
- PIN is part of civil society. The personal commitment of our employees, volunteers and partners, both in the Czech Republic and in all countries where we work, forms the main pillar of our activity. However, we cannot get by without the trust and support that individuals, companies, governments and international institutions provide.

2 BASIC PRINCIPLES OF OUR WORK

- The purpose of this Code is:
 - to protect individuals from unethical behaviour, with priority protection for vulnerable groups and persons in a position of power (or otherwise) disadvantage,
 - to protect the organisation's property,
 - to create, maintain and deepen public trust (clients of social services, recipients of aid, partners and other persons) towards PIN,
 - to contribute to the creation of mutual respect and trust among PIN associates and to motivate them to act ethically.
- All forms of abuse of power are contrary to our fundamental values and beliefs about the right to human dignity.
- PIN is committed to making every effort to ensure the high quality of work not only of its employees but also of partner organisations and other associates. Our goal is to achieve the best possible results in our day-to-day operations while following ethical principles that meet the highest expected standards.
- The Code sets out the rules for all PIN associates as well as for the other entities listed in the *Scope of applicability* section. Conduct at variance with this Code is unacceptable and may lead to disciplinary action and termination of cooperation.
- Recognising the cultural and legislative differences of all countries in which PIN operates, this Code is based on international legal standards, universal principles of similar codes of conduct, and a commitment to promote and respect universal, inherent, inalienable and indivisible fundamental human rights as formulated in particular in the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, the *UN Convention on the Rights of the Child*, the *UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women* and other universal and regional human rights mechanisms; in the text of the Code, these rights are collectively referred to as “**fundamental human rights**”.
- The Code forms a common basis for individual policies which further elaborate the values and rules enshrined in the Code. These policies represent a main pillar of the work of PIN and should be understood together with the Code as a single set of binding rules. This concerns the following policies:
 - *Anti-Corruption Policy*

¹ The Universal Declaration of Human Rights was adopted by the General Assembly of the [United Nations](#) on 10 December 1948.

- *Conflict of Interest Policy*
- *Whistleblowing Policy*

3 SCOPE OF APPLICABILITY OF THE CODE

- The Code is binding for all employees, other full-time and part-time workers of PIN, volunteers, interns, consultants or trainees, members of the Supervisory Board and the Board of Directors, and all other persons acting on behalf of PIN (hereinafter referred to as “**associates**”). The Code is also binding for associates working with PIN’s sister organisation, People in Need UK, which is based in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.
- The Code is a basic set of rules that applies to the entire organisation. The individual sections of PIN may further develop more specific internal rules, but these must always respect and comply with the Code.
- The Code may apply to partner organisations or organisations supported by People in Need if they do not have their own Code or other similar regulations embodying the principles set out in this Code. If third parties will be working with clients of social services or recipients of aid from PIN, it is necessary to consider whether the Code will also apply to them.
- PIN associates must comply with the Code at all times during working hours and outside of working hours when their activities and behaviour may affect or be associated with the reputation and good name of the organisation. However, on PIN missions abroad, the Code applies both during and outside working hours without exception.

4 STANDARDS OF BEHAVIOUR

PIN associates agree to adhere to the **highest standards** of personal and professional conduct and the **rules** listed below:

4.1 No discrimination, bullying, harassment, or intimidation

- All people around the world are entitled to be treated with dignity. All forms of discriminatory conduct on the basis of race, gender, religion, beliefs or opinions, social status, colour of skin, national or ethnic origin, socio-economic status, age, ability, sexual orientation or other differences are prohibited. PIN is committed to creating a safe environment in which any such discriminatory behaviour is effectively prevented.
- PIN associates are obliged to treat every person they come into contact with in the course of their work, especially clients of social services and recipients of aid, their colleagues and partner organisations, with respect and to refrain from any discriminatory behaviour, humiliation, degradation or psychological abuse, including bullying and abuse of power.
- Psychological and physical violence, except in the event of an extreme emergency and self-defence, is totally unacceptable.
- Inappropriate, aggressive or abusive verbal or written language is unacceptable. PIN associates must communicate and behave in a manner appropriate to the situation and their position. By doing so, they contribute to creating a positive perception of the organisation.
- PIN expects its associates to act with honesty and integrity.

4.2 Protection of children and no sexual or other abuse

- The abuse or exploitation of children and adults in ways or for activities which are in any way contrary to fundamental human rights is prohibited.
- PIN emphasises the protection and well-being of children in all its programmes. Any action which could cause harm to children, including physical or psychological abuse or neglect, is prohibited.
- Any form of sexual relationship with a child is prohibited regardless of the age of consent or the child’s consent. A child is a person under the age of 18. The argument that the person looked older cannot be used as an excuse.

- Any form of sexual violence and aggression, including sexual exploitation, abuse or harassment, is prohibited. It is also completely unacceptable for PIN associates to abuse their position to demand sexual or other favours. Relationships between PIN associates and the clients of social services or recipients of aid are also unacceptable, as such relationships are inherently based on unequal power dynamics.
- PIN prohibits any conduct, comments or gestures with sexual overtones which may cause a sense of threat or humiliation, including inappropriate statements and innuendo with sexual overtones, unwanted physical contact, or sharing of inappropriate material, whether via email, social media, or otherwise.
- Behaviour which exploits others in the broadest possible sense (sexual, economic or social, etc.) is prohibited. PIN condemns the exchange of money, goods, services or other benefits for sexual services.

4.3 No participation in activities which are illegal or which might compromise the activities and reputation of PIN

- PIN is a politically and religiously impartial organisation. It does not participate in political activities or in the promotion of religious values in any way which could negatively impact the organisation's goals or damage or compromise the perception of PIN as an impartial defender of human dignity, fundamental human rights and democracy.
- The private political activities of associates will not be deemed to be at variance with this Code as long as they are clearly separate from the activities of PIN and cannot be linked in any way to the organisation. Participation of our associates in political activities or the promotion of their own religious values may be restricted or prohibited in some countries where we operate in cases where such restriction or prohibition could adversely affect the objectives of PIN's work or damage the perception of PIN as a politically and religiously impartial organisation, and where such restriction or prohibition is not contrary to the regulations of the country in question.
- Violations of the law which would have a negative impact on individuals or the organisation's property are unacceptable, as is any support for criminal activity. However, if the Code prohibits participation in illegal or criminal activities, such prohibition does not apply to activities which, although considered illegal in the country in question by local regulations or the decisions of local authorities, are expressions of support for or exercising of fundamental human rights.
- PIN associates working abroad are obliged to comply with the laws and cultural norms of the country in question, except where such laws or cultural norms conflict with or undermine the legal standards, universal principles and fundamental human rights protected by this Code.
- PIN associates must take care to avoid behaviour or actions which could compromise the activities or damage the reputation and good name of the organisation.

4.4 No corruption and no conflicts of interest

- Any form of corrupt or fraudulent behaviour is prohibited.
- PIN defines corruption as abuse of position by associates for the purpose of obtaining undeserved personal gain or advantage. In particular, this includes cases of bribery and acceptance of bribes, loans, rewards and commissions or the giving and receiving of any other considerations or advantages, as well as any deceptive conduct and embezzlement, agreements restricting open competition and money laundering. Further details are described in the *Anti-Corruption Policy*.
- PIN associates must not use their position for personal gain or advantage and must avoid any situation in which private interests may conflict with the interests of the organisation. The basic principles and procedures for preventing such situations are set out in the *Conflict of Interest Policy*.
- PIN considers a conflict of interest to be a situation where the impartial and objective performance of duties or the unbiased decision-making of associates is compromised or called into question due to a conflict with personal, family, political, economic or other interests.

4.5 No damage to property and no misuse of information

- The property, funds, and other PIN resources must be used responsibly, in the interest of the organisation, and in accordance with the relevant policies. The property of PIN must not be used for illegal activities². All funds entrusted and services provided must be used appropriately and responsibly. Intentional or grossly negligent damage to the organisation's property constitutes a breach of the Code.
- Sensitive information (e.g., staff-related or financial) which would damage or compromise the organisation's operations, its clients and associates, as well as sensitive information related to the activities of PIN, which is subject to the more specific rules of the respective section, must not be shared outside the organisation verbally, in writing, through the media, social media or otherwise, except in situations where required by law, but always subject to compliance with the established security rules and protocols. Sharing of such data within the organisation is only possible between persons authorised to handle such data.
- The handling and protection of personal data is governed by the separate *Personal Data Processing Policy*.

4.6 Responsibility for health and safety

- Associates are obliged to comply with the safety regulations applicable in the Czech Republic and abroad.
- PIN associates are required to conduct themselves in a manner which does not endanger their own health and safety or the health and safety of their colleagues and others. This responsible approach is also required in relationships with partner organisations, clients of social services and recipients of aid.
- PIN associates must not consume alcoholic beverages or use other addictive substances at the workplace or even outside the workplace during working hours and must not enter the workplace under their influence. The prohibition on the consumption of alcoholic beverages does not apply to employees whose consumption of such beverages is part of or normally associated with the performance of their duties at work.

5 BREACH OF THE CODE

- Any breach of the Code must be reported in line with the *Whistleblowing Policy*, which sets out the procedure for submission of reports, distinguishes between major and minor breaches of the Code, and explains the process for investigating reports which are submitted. Major breaches of the Code must be reported at all times and under all circumstances.
- Every report of a breach of the Code will be investigated promptly, thoroughly, confidentially and sensitively.
- The person against whom the report has been made has the right to explain his or her behaviour and to respond to the allegations made; he or she shall be regarded as blameless until the investigation is concluded. If the nature of the report or investigation means that the person under investigation must be suspended from holding his or her current position, the procedure will be followed in line with the *Whistleblowing Policy*.
- PIN will adopt all necessary steps to prevent any form of retaliation against persons who have reported any breach of the Code, persons conducting an investigation, or persons against whom a report has been made unless the investigation has been concluded or the report is deemed unjustified.
- Knowingly false accusations made with the intent to harm another person are completely unacceptable and shall be deemed to be a major breach of the Code. Apart from disciplinary action, such accusations may be referred to the law enforcement authorities for further investigation.

² In the context of this paragraph, illegal activities do not include activities which, although considered to be prohibited in the country in question, are expressions of support for or exercising of fundamental human rights.

