

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

I. Introductory provisions

This document is the Child protection policy of the Center of Jewish Cultural Heritage Synagogue Maribor (Center judovske kulturne dediščine Sinagoga Maribor), which will be followed by all employees and associates of the Synagogue and implemented by those in position of leadership within the institution.

The Synagogue Maribor is an independent public institution that functions as a cultural center responsible for studying, preserving, cultivating and presenting the Jewish cultural heritage in the Republic of Slovenia. It organizes cultural, scientific and other public events with the aim to draw attention to cultural diversities, whilst at the same time reviving the former synagogue as a place for intercultural and interreligious dialogue. A significant part of the Synagogue's programme content is mainly devoted to the history of the Holocaust and antisemitism, and it cooperates with numerous domestic experts and institutions to ensure the remembrance of the Jewish genocide during World War II.

The Synagogue's activities also include the cooperation with schools and other organizations that work with children. In line with these activities, the Synagogue Maribor respects the existing national legislation in the field of education, social, family and criminal law for the protection of children, and international instruments and documents related to human rights and the rights of the child, such as the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and Declaration of the Rights of the Child, the Council of Europe Convention on Human Rights, and adheres to high ethical standards in working with children.

The Child protection policy aims to ensure the protection and best interest of children participating in activities organized by the Synagogue Maribor, as well as the transparency of the work of the institution.

The policy ensures legal and professional guidelines for all employees, associates, volunteers, trainees and others who come in contact with children due to their association to the Synagogue Maribor, with the purpose of protecting children (any person under the age of 18) from any form of physical or emotional violence, harm or abuse, neglect, maltreatment or exploitation, always taking their best interest into consideration.

II. Purpose of the Child protection policy

In actions concerning children, the Synagogue Maribor will always adhere to the fundamental international standards guaranteed by the Convention of the Right of Children whereby the best interests of the child will be of paramount consideration.

The Child protection policy of the Synagogue Maribor is a document providing the value and operational framework for a safe and stimulating work with children through activities that the Synagogue carries out and in which it participates.

All children participating in the activities organized by the Synagogue have the right to health, safety and well-being, and their best interest is a priority in the work of the institution. The Synagogue Maribor advocates the respect, promotion and understanding of children's rights in the context of their own culture, religion and ethnicity.

It is the responsibility of every entity working with children to establish standards and mechanisms for their protection, thus fulfilling the principal duty of care for children, combating and preventing violence, neglect, exploitation and discrimination of children, and in the case of inappropriate behavior, ensuring an appropriate response in order to protect and support children, which provides for a transparent work of the Synagogue, trust in care for children and the safety of the institution.

The Child protection policy ensures the highest standards of professional conduct and personal practice and provides for the safety and protection of children in all activities organized by the Synagogue Maribor. It therefore includes measures regarding recruitment procedures, review of management structures, creation of space for children to speak out, training, and development of transparent protocols. The included standards are a tool servicing the promotion of the welfare of children in the Synagogue's activities, projects and programmes.

This document summarizes obligations and internal bylaws of the Synagogue Maribor and establishes standards for conduct of employees of the institution, its associates, volunteers, trainees and other persons when taking measures for the protection of children's rights as well as regarding the obligation to report every violation of those rights to competent authorities.

The purpose of this policy statement is:

- To protect children who receive services of the Synagogue from harm;
- To provide employees, associates, volunteers or trainees, as well as children and their families, with the overarching principles that guide our approach to child protection.

III. Scope of the Child protection policy

The Child protection policy is binding for:

- The Synagogue Maribor and all its employees;
- Associates of the Synagogue Maribor;
- Volunteers, trainees and students who can be engaged by the Synagogue Maribor pursuant to regulations and in line with those regulations;
- Other persons who are engaged by the Synagogue Maribor or who participate in the activities organized by the institution;
- All adults accompanying children to events and activities organized by the Synagogue Maribor (e.g. parents, guardians, teachers, assistants);
- All other people participating in events and activities organized by the Synagogue Maribor for children that involve children;
- Children participating in activities organized by the Synagogue Maribor, in a way that is appropriate for them.

IV. Basic terms

A child is defined as anyone under the age of 18, in line with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Children's rights are the rights enshrined in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Child protection is a broad term to describe philosophies, standards, guidelines and procedures to protect children from both intentional and unintentional harm. In the current context, it applies to the Synagogue's duty to ensure that its employees, operations and programmes do no harm to children, that is that they do not expose children to the risk of harm and abuse, and that any concerns the institution has about children's safety within the activities and programmes in which they work, are reported to the appropriate authorities.

Violence is any form of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse.

Contact with the child is the physical presence of a child or children in the context of the work of the Synagogue Maribor, whether temporary or regular. Contact with the child also includes indirect contact with the child, that is, access to information about children in the context of the work of the Synagogue, such as data on children, photographs, videos etc.

V. Legal framework

The Child protection policy of the Synagogue Maribor is based on the provisions of national and international regulations relating to the realization of children's rights, including the relevant codes of ethics. It reflects upon the Keeping Children Safe Child Safeguarding Standards.

The applicable national and international laws protecting the rights and welfare of children are as follows:

- Convention on the Rights of the Child;
- European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms;
- European Convention on the Exercise of Children's Rights;
- Directive 2011/93/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 December 2011 on combating the sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of children and child pornography;
- Directive 2012/29/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2012 establishing minimum standards for the rights, support and protection of victims of crime;
- Constitution of the Republic of Slovenia, as well as a number of laws dealing with the rights and welfare of children (Act on the Prevention of Domestic Violence, Family Law, Criminal Code, Criminal Procedure Act, Act on the protection of children in criminal proceedings and their comprehensive treatment in a children's home, Personal Data Protection Act etc.).

VI. Principles of working with children:

- Children's health, safety and well-being are priorities in the work of the Synagogue Maribor.
- The Synagogue Maribor encourages children to express their opinion, calls for giving their opinion due consideration and for improving the status of children in the society.
- The Synagogue Maribor acknowledges and respects the rights of all children without discrimination on any grounds such as gender, race, color or ethnic origin, age, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, socioeconomic status, parental status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or other grounds.
- The Synagogue Maribor considers every child to be special and advocates the rights of children with developmental disabilities and the rights of other vulnerable child groups.
- The Synagogue Maribor advocates the prohibition of all forms of violence and discrimination.
- The Synagogue Maribor encourages the right of children to be heard and to have their views taken into account.
- The Synagogue Maribor ensures that employees, associates, volunteers and any others who come in contact with children are accountable for the safety, health and well-being of children, and will report any form of child abuse.

VII. Protection of children's rights

The protection of children's rights is realized by:

- Preventing violence against children;
- Preventing peer violence among children;
- Protecting children's personal data;
- Cooperating with children, their parents, guardians and other persons taking care of children;
- Monitoring children's rights and reporting violations of children's rights to competent institutions;
- Cooperating with relevant institutions in the case of a suspicion of violation of children's rights;
- Ensuring support for children and their family members in the case of violation of children's rights;
- Actions and procedures aimed at assessing the impact, effects and results of the protection of children's rights (reports and evaluations).

VIII. Code of conduct

The Child protection policy prescribes the obligations and responsibilities of employees, associates, volunteers, trainees and others who come in contact with children due to their association to the Synagogue Maribor. It has been developed with the best interests of the child as the primary consideration and has to be interpreted in a spirit of transparency and common sense. Those who come in contact with children must always:

- Report and record any form of child abuse or concerns relating to the safety of children;
- Plan and organize the work and the workplace so as to eliminate risks to children and to always be aware of situations that may present a risk for children;
- Be involved and transparent whilst working with children;
- Ensure that personal data of children and their families are confidential and fully respected;
- Encourage and empower children to feedback on their experiences, to share their opinions and concerns, including raising awareness about their rights and acceptable and unacceptable behavior;
- Respect the Child protection policy and be aware of procedures for reporting and responsibilities in reporting.

Employees, volunteers, trainees and external associates of the Synagogue Maribor shall never:

- In any form abuse (physically, emotionally, sexually) a child, that is exploit and neglect the needs of children, or more precisely:
 - To hit or otherwise physically injure children, including the potential risk of physical injury, the consequences of which may or may not be apparent;
 - Humiliate, shame, belittle or degrade children, or otherwise apply any form of emotional abuse;
 - Physically behave in an inappropriate or sexually provocative manner;
 - Have unnecessary physical contact with children and treat children too personally;
 - Be alone with a child in any circumstances that might be questioned by others;
 - Develop such a relationship with children that could in any way be considered exploitative or abusive.
- Use language expressions, make suggestions, or offer advice to children which are inappropriate, offensive or in any way degrading;
- Not report or participate in the unlawful, dangerous or abusive behavior of children;
- Take photos, film or request personal information if not required for Synagogue's activities;
- Discriminate, treat differently or favor certain children, excluding other;
- Participate in the behavior of children which are considered illegal, unsafe or considered as abuse.

a) Safety and professional aspects of working with children

Employees, volunteers and trainees of the Synagogue Maribor are subjects to safe recruitment procedures (vetting). This includes in the recruitment and appointment process:

- Employees, volunteers, trainees etc. are recruited to clear role descriptions that include a statement on the position or role's responsibilities to meet the requirements of Synagogue's Child protection policy;
- All recruitment interviews must include a discussion on child safeguarding and protection;
- Satisfactory clearance must be done through a criminal background check in the form of an official certificate which proves that employees, volunteers or trainees are not subjects of criminal prosecution;
- Prior to the start of their work, employees, volunteers or trainees will receive instructions and information on where, how and to whom they can report the possibility of abuse and exploitation of children with the aim of establishing an efficient and operational procedure that will ensure a quick and coordinated process of protecting the child from further abuse and neglect.

b) Protection of children's personal data

Employees, associates, volunteers and trainees of the Synagogue Maribor are obliged to act in accordance with data secrecy and protection legislations during and after the termination of their

work for the Synagogue, irrespective of how they gained knowledge of these data. They are also obliged to treat data on children in accordance with the best interest principle and to comply with the obligation of professional secrecy regarding all data on children of which they become aware in the course of performing their tasks and responsibilities.

This section is providing guidelines on the use of images, films and stories of children for media and communication purposes to ensure data protection and to protect children themselves.

In the Synagogue's communications about children, the following principles will apply:

Dignity: The child's dignity must be preserved at all times. Languages must not degrade, victimize or shame the child. In images, children must always be dressed appropriately and must never be depicted in any poses that could be interpreted as sexually provocative.

Accuracy: The portrayal of children must not be manipulated or sensationalized in any way. Communications must avoid making generalizations which do not accurately reflect the nature of the situation and pictures are not be taken and used out of context.

Privacy: Any information that could be used to identify a child or put them at risk will not be used. The Synagogue will:

- Only use first names of children: be careful not to reveal details about the place where they live, their school and other information that would lead to their place of residence;
- Information about a child/children's life and photographs of children (including information stored on the computer) will be kept in secure files. Access to these will be limited to those that need to use them during the course of their work;
- The recorded images will focus on an activity and, where possible, feature groups of children rather than individuals.

Complaints procedure: Any complaints or concerns about inappropriate or intrusive images must be reported like any other child protection concern.

c) Child protection reporting procedure

Every employee, associate, volunteer or trainee of the Synagogue Maribor is obliged to report a suspicion of violation of the rights of the child. All witnessed, suspected or alleged violations of the Child protection policy must be immediately reported to the reporting authority of the Synagogue – using the safeguarding reporting form (Annex 1).

The guiding principle here is that the safety of the child is always the most important consideration. The person suspected of violation will not be allowed to work or be in contact with children until the termination of official investigation proceedings. If the suspicion concerns an external associate or another person who is not part of the institution, the Synagogue will suspend cooperation with such a person until the termination of the official investigation proceedings.

The reporting authority of the Synagogue will act on the concerns or allegations in a confidential manner in the best interests of the child, irrespective of the nature of the referral, who the allegations are about or who the referrer is or where she/he is from. The reporting authority will take appropriate action to protect the child in question from further harm during and following an incident or allegation. The reporting authority will be responsible to contact the child's family (or guardian) and inform them of the incident and assistance provided. A safeguarding report (Annex 1) must be compiled to document details of the incident.

After receiving a report, the reporting authority of the Synagogue makes an initial assessment of the complaint and immediate risks to the safety and wellbeing of the child and takes measures to address such risks (such as suspension of an employee/volunteer/trainee from their position, or referring a child to other support mechanisms). The reporting authority makes an assessment whether authorities should be immediately notified about the issues raised (the police, social work center).

If the complainant is not the affected child, the reporting authority develops a plan for involving the affected child and their carer in the procedure.

After the initial assessment, if necessary, the reporting authority takes steps to collect all necessary additional information and makes inquiries with the persons involved. If the reported issues required that the authorities are informed, the reporting authority cooperates in the investigation conducted by the responsible authorities.

Given that child abuse represents a serious violation of children's rights and often has long-term consequences on the child's future emotional and physical development, urgent action must be taken to provide counseling and support to children without delay. Therefore, the Synagogue Maribor is obliged to provide children and their parents/carers with information on where to seek help and advice related to abuse, harassment, and peer violence.

The Synagogue Maribor is not a law enforcement agency or organization and it does not have the expertise to investigate or deal with criminal allegations of child abuse. Its responsibility is to take action to ensure the safety of the child by passing relevant information to the appropriate authorities.

d) Child protection education

The Synagogue Maribor will ensure that all employees, volunteers and trainees of the institution are informed of the Child protection policy and that they act in accordance with its provisions when they are in contact with children, and do no harm to children within or outside their work.

Education and training are essential to implement the Child protection policy. This includes:

- At the beginning of the induction period (within 6 months of taking up the position) of employees/volunteers/trainees they will receive an introduction to the Synagogue's Child

protection policy and procedures from the reporting authority. This will include training on behavior guidelines for those in direct contact with children, and guidance on the acceptable and unacceptable sharing of information on children. Training will also allow them to be able to identify sources of support for children and their families.

- Child safeguarding training will be given to all employees, volunteers or trainees, if necessary to their roles and responsibilities. The Synagogue will enable persons working with children to attend professional seminars / roundtables / conferences and trainings for the purpose of professional development and acquiring new skills and knowledge related to child protection.

The Child protection policy is published on the Synagogue's website **sinagogamaribor.si** so that all persons coming into contact with children while participating in the activities of the institution can be informed of its content and of the mechanism in place for the protection of children.

e) Management

The director of the Synagogue Maribor is the person in charge for the implementation of this policy. As the reporting authority, he will be responsible for:

- Promoting awareness and implementation of the Child protection policy throughout the institution;
- Monitoring implementation of the policy and reporting on developments;
- Maintaining knowledge of best practices and statutory requirements;
- Acting as a source of support and information for employees, volunteers or trainees on safeguarding issues.

Employees, volunteers and trainees will be made aware of the director's role as the reporting authority, as well as his contact details.

The Synagogue Maribor will regularly monitor the application of the Child protection policy. The monitoring and evaluation will be implemented by verifying if the standards of the Child protection policy are being applied, if protection measures are effective and to what extent, and what needs to be improved. This document will be periodically reviewed and approved by the director of the Synagogue Maribor every 4 years.

Boris Hajdinjak

director of the Synagogue Maribor



Annex 1: Safeguarding report form

If you have knowledge that a child might be at risk of harm, please complete this form to the best of your knowledge. Please note that child protection concerns must be immediately reported (orally or in writing) directly to the reporting authority at the Synagogue Maribor – depending on the urgency, you may wish to complete this form before contacting the reporting authority or you may wish to complete the report afterwards.

Also use this form to report an accident or incident. An accident is an unplanned event that results in an injury or could have resulted in an injury or results in damage to equipment or property OR harm to the environment. An incident is an unpleasant or unusual event.

The report should be written and signed only by you to guarantee confidentiality. It should be sent only to the reporting authority, who will hold it in a safe and secure place and treat it with the strictest confidentiality.

1. About you

Your name: _____

Your job title: _____

Organisation you work for: _____

Nature of your contact with the child: _____

Contact details: Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

2. About the child

Child's name: _____

Child's gender: _____

Child's age: _____

Child's address: _____

Child's parents/guardians: _____

Has any treatment been given to the child?

Treatment given by _____

Taken to hospital YES _____ ; NO _____ ;

If yes, which hospital and how taken _____

3. About your concern; details of incident

Was the incident:

1) Observed by you

2) Suspected

3) Disclosed by someone else

If the concern was shared by someone else, please state who and their relationship to the child:

What happened? Give cause (how and why) if known - If you include personal observations, please make a distinction between what is a fact and what is opinion or hearsay (e.g. child's emotional state, visible injuries, etc.):

Did the child or another source say anything to you [if relevant] and how did you respond to him or her:

Date of the alleged incident: _____

Time of the alleged incident: _____

Location of the alleged incident: _____

Name of the alleged perpetrator (if applicable): _____

Were there any other children/people involved in the alleged incident?

Are any other children at risk of harm? _____

Action taken by you:

Signature: _____

Date: _____

For completion by the reporting authority:

Investigated by:

Conclusion:

In order to determine the cause of the incident or accident, it may be appropriate to interview parties who were involved. Witness detail, statements, etc. can be added here

Child protection systems contact information

Human Rights Ombudsman: 080 36 86; otroci@varuh-rs.si

Emergency Number (police): 113

Emergency Number (ambulance): 112

Tom telefon (Slovenia): 116 111; tom@zpms.si

SOS telefon: 080 11 55; sostelefon@drustvo-sos.si

Zaupni telefon Samarijan: 116 123; samarijan@gmail.com

Contact:

Director: Tomaz Hladnik
Phone: +386 (0) 21 080 204
E-mail: otroci@varuh-rs.si

<http://www.varuh-rs.si>

SINAGOGA

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