

## **L'ARCHE GREATER VANCOUVER CODE OF ETHICS & CONDUCT**

### **Introduction**

The 'Code of Ethics & Conduct' of L'Arche Greater Vancouver grows out of the "...principles on which the community's life and action are based." Inherent in these principles are the core values recognized in the "Charter of the Communities of L'Arche". Among these values are respect, dignity, trust and the rights of each person to live, to care, to a home, to education, to work, to friendship and to a spiritual life.

As a community, we make a commitment to applying these values in our work and in our relationships. The community of L'Arche Greater Vancouver includes our core and SIL (Semi-Independent Living) members, tenants, assistants, administrative personnel, leadership team, board members, volunteers, community members and associate members as described in the L'Arche Canada Membership Document.

Each person who works, lives and volunteers within L'Arche Greater Vancouver is required to adhere to and to uphold this Code of Ethics & Conduct based on a sound knowledge of its stipulations. The Code will then stand as the basis for all community activities and interactions. A copy of the Code of Conduct, signed on joining the community and annually thereafter, will be kept in each individual's personnel file.

**The following principles are the foundation of the L'Arche Greater Vancouver Code of Ethics and Conduct:**

**Principle 1: Respect for the Dignity of Persons**

We accept as fundamental, the principle that all persons have an innate dignity that demands respect. In doing so, we acknowledge that this respect is not enhanced or reduced by their culture, nationality, ethnicity, race, religion, gender, role in the community, marital status, sexual orientation, physical or mental abilities, age, socio-economic status, and/or any other preference or personal characteristic, condition or status.

**Principle 2: Responsible Caring for Core and SIL members**

We, at L'Arche Greater Vancouver, are responsible for any of our actions that may affect, directly or indirectly, our core and SIL members. In the performance of our duties, we are guided by the Charter of the Communities of L'Arche.

Because of the vulnerability of our core and SIL members, our activities are driven by an active concern for their welfare. We seek to maximize benefit for our core and SIL members, while at the same time being alert to any actions that might be potentially harmful.

**Principle 3: Integrity in Relationships**

The relationships formed within the community of L'Arche Greater Vancouver embody explicit and implicit mutual expectations of integrity vital to the Mission of L'Arche. Individuals are not expected to be value free in conducting their activities. However, they are expected to understand how their backgrounds or values might affect their activities and to be aware that these activities might have a detrimental impact on community relationships.

**Principle 4: Responsibility to Society**

We at L'Arche Greater Vancouver, recognize that we do not exist in isolation, but are part of an extensive network of relationships within our society. Beyond our primary focus of responsibly caring for our core and SIL members, we recognize and respect the members of these other societal groups. We acknowledge that many of the social structures have evolved over time in response to human need, are valued by society, and are primarily beneficial. On the other hand, if these structures ignore or contradict the principles of respect for the dignity of persons, responsible caring or integrity in relationships we have a duty to advocate for change to occur.

**Intent**

This Code of Ethics and Conduct applies to all people who are part of, or who interact with members of, the L'Arche Greater Vancouver community. It is intended to:

- a) Provide practical guidelines and standards of conduct for community members.
- b) Foster relationships among community members that are based on mutual respect, safety, security and trust. Such relationships provide the foundation on which can be built the confidence and competence needed to fulfill the mission of L'Arche Greater Vancouver.

**CODE OF CONDUCT****In my community activities:**

- a) I will uphold the Identity of L'Arche and seek to assist L'Arche to fulfill its Mission.
- b) I will carry out my role and responsibilities with integrity, objectivity and commitment.
- c) I will assist L'Arche Greater Vancouver in providing the highest quality of care, leisure activities, spiritual support, and work, to enhance the quality of life of our core and SIL members.
- d) I will make the effort to inform myself of, and comply with, applicable policies and procedures.
- e) I will ensure that each individual's rights and privileges are respected at all times.
- f) I will cooperate and collaborate with decision-making bodies in the community and with my supervisors.
- g) I will promote a positive image of L'Arche Greater Vancouver in the wider society through friendly, respectful, professional and cooperative interactions. I will not make any unauthorized representations to external bodies in the name of L'Arche Greater Vancouver.
- h) I will take responsibility to exercise good stewardship of all Community property and resources. I will not borrow, misuse or steal money from Community funds, nor steal or misuse Community property, nor borrow Community property without the permission of my supervisor.
- i) I will respect the property of all personnel, volunteers and visitors and will not borrow without the individual's permission. In the case of core and SIL members, I will not borrow money from core or SIL members and will only borrow personal property with the permission of both the core or SIL members and the House leader or SIL Assistant. If the item is lost, stolen or broken, I will be responsible for replacing it. I will not misuse or steal the property of others.

**In my relationships with core and SIL members:**

- a) I will treat core and SIL members with respect and dignity at all times.
- b) If I am concerned or aware of any situation where the rights of core or SIL members are compromised, I will bring it forward to my direct supervisor, one of the Coordinators in the Leadership Team, or the Executive Director / Community Leader.
- c) I will maintain the best interests of the core and SIL members and advocate for those interests as circumstances require. I will promote self-esteem and foster self-determination of the core and SIL members. I will encourage the individuality of each person, accepting them as unique and recognizing their gifts and limitations
- c) I will protect core and SIL members from any kind of abuse or neglect and avoid participation in practices which are disrespectful, degrading, intimidating, psychologically damaging or physically harmful to the core or SIL members. Abuse and neglect may or may not be deliberate, but I understand that in all cases it is unethical, illegal, and grounds for dismissal.
- d) I will not initiate or participate in any sexual act or sexual relationship with core or SIL members. It is a serious and reportable form of abuse of a core or SIL member. I understand this behavior is unethical, illegal and grounds for dismissal.
- e) If I have any reason to believe, know or suspect that a core or SIL member in our care is being sexually abused by someone, it is my duty and responsibility to immediately report this to my direct supervisor, Coordinator or the Executive Director/ Community Leader (or designate) and ensure it gets reported to the Community Care Facilities Licensing office and to Community Living BC authorities. I will follow all policies and procedures in place about “Abuse of core and SIL members” and all procedures on “Reportable Incidents involving core and SIL members” to ensure proper reporting and follow-up will take place.
- f) I will ensure that my relationships with core and SIL members are acceptable and maintain healthy boundaries.
- g) I will respect and maintain privacy and confidentiality in relation to all personal information (whether in spoken, written, picture or electronic form) about the lives of core and SIL members. I will not post visual images of or information about core or SIL members on Facebook, YouTube, web pages or any sites on the Internet.
- h) I will follow all financial policies that are in place regarding the handling of core and SIL member’s money and finances.

**In my relationships with other personnel, community members, volunteers:**

- a) I will establish and maintain relationships of trust and cooperation with other members, personnel, and volunteers. I will treat other individuals with respect, courtesy, fairness and act in good faith. I will act as a team member, supporting other members of the team and the administration, by offering and receiving support, especially in times of crisis.
- b) I will respect and maintain privacy and confidentiality in relation to all personal information (whether in spoken, written, picture or electronic form) about personnel and volunteers. I will not post visual images of or information about personnel or volunteers on Facebook, YouTube, web pages or any sites on the Internet without the consent of the individual. I will observe confidentiality during discussions with personnel and volunteers about their problems and difficulties, except where there is an overriding concern and responsibility for the care of core and SIL members.
- c) I will maintain clear and open communication with all individuals, team members and the leadership of the organization. I will refrain from gossip and “third-partying”. Should I have a disagreement or difference of opinion or there seems to be a problem between myself and another person that could affect our ability to effectively live together and/or work as a team, I will commit to make every effort with openness, honesty, patience and trust to resolve the issue in the best interests of all parties.
- d) I will not engage in sexual activities with other members, personnel, volunteers or visitors while on L’Arche’s premises. I will maintain professional boundaries. I will follow all guidelines in place regarding sexuality and exclusive relationships that may develop between two persons employed by L’Arche Greater Vancouver. I understand that, if I become involved in a sexual and/or romantic relationship with a colleague who is in my home, SIL Unit or CLIO program, L’Arche Greater Vancouver may ask one of us to move to a different work area in order to help me keep my focus when on duty and to avoid a conflict of interest within the dynamics of my team or with the core or SIL members with whom I live/work.
- e) If a sexual and/or romantic relationship develops between supervisors and subordinates, there is the potential for the abuse of power and authority with the added potential for allegations of conflicts of interest, abuse or harassment. Therefore, the initiation of such relationships between those in supervisory positions and subordinates is unacceptable.
- f) I will respect the human rights of others and will not engage in sexual or any other form of harassment towards members, personnel, volunteers or visitors of the L’Arche community. I will abide by L’Arche Greater Vancouver’s Human Rights policy.

**In matters relating to health & safety:**

- a) I will not smoke inside or outside any L'Arche facilities/premises, including my bedroom (or near doorways or open windows that may intrude upon another person). Nor will I smoke when in the company of core and SIL members or in L'Arche vehicles.
- b) I will abstain from using alcohol or any drugs (legal or illegal) that cause mental and/or physical impairment when I am on duty as a caregiver or while operating a L'Arche vehicle.
- c) I will not bring any illegal drugs onto L'Arche's premises or into a L'Arche vehicle.
- d) I will maintain standards of health and safety through the use of appropriate procedures, equipment, and proper clothing.

**In matters regarding business:**

- a) I understand that L'Arche Greater Vancouver will conduct any business matters within the L'Arche Community and in the wider community with integrity, honesty and transparency.

**In matters regarding contractual relations:**

- a) I understand that L'Arche Greater Vancouver will conduct all contractual relations with impartiality and integrity based only on the qualifications and merit of the contractor.

**Regarding human resources:**

- a) I understand that human resources management will be conducted in a fair and impartial manner without bias to any employee of the organization.

**Regarding gifts, money and gratuities:**

- a) I will not accept any money, gifts, or gratuities for personal gain from outside agencies, such as vendors, etc. In general, I will not accept any money or gifts from core or SIL members. Occasional gifts of nominal value from core or SIL members, specifically, \$10.00 or less, are acceptable.

**Regarding fundraising:**

- a) I will not engage in fundraising for other organizations during work hours. Nor will I use the resources of L'Arche Greater Vancouver at any time to solicit funds for other organizations.
- b) I will not initiate or engage in fundraising activities for L'Arche Greater Vancouver without getting approval from the Director of Philanthropy and Communications.

**Regarding confidentiality:**

- a) I will follow all policies on privacy and confidentiality that are in place for L'Arche Greater Vancouver.
- b) I will access files and records of core and SIL members and/or personnel only as authorized in the "Confidentiality & Release of Information" and "Informed Consent" policies.

**In the matter of conflict of interest:**

- a) I will avoid situations where there is potential for conflict of interest. I will inform my supervisor when a real or potential conflict of interest arises. Reasonable steps will then be taken to resolve the issue in the best interests of all parties involved.

**Regarding witnessing of documents**

- a) I understand that the Executive Director/Community Leader (or designee) is the only individual who can authorize a person to witness a document signed by core or SIL members.

**VIOLATIONS OF THE CODE OF ETHICS AND CONDUCT:**

Violations of the Code of Ethics and Conduct may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

Members, personnel and volunteers have a duty to report violations of L'Arche Greater Vancouver's 'Code of Ethics & Conduct.' Retaliation against any person reporting a violation is strictly prohibited. Should any form of retaliation take place, the person responsible can face disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal

The Executive Director/Community Leader will initiate an investigation of an allegation of violation of the L'Arche Greater Vancouver Code of Ethics and Conduct in a timely manner, usually within 24 hours.

**STATEMENT OF UNDERSTANDING AND ACCEPTANCE:**

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (print name) have read, understand and accept the

**Code of Ethics & Conduct** of L'Arche Greater Vancouver.

I agree to abide by the standards that have been set in this policy. This policy has been explained to me in a manner that I understand. I agree to ask for clarification and explanation of anything I am unsure of in this policy.

This document will be a part of my personnel file and will remain in effect for the period of my employment or volunteer services with L'Arche Greater Vancouver regardless of any change in my role in a Home, SIL, CLIO Program or Work area.

This document will be read and signed annually and will be kept in my personnel file.

I will receive a copy of this document for my own reference.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Person (print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Person

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date