



MS 648 Child Protection Policy

FAQs for Staff

Purpose of MS 648

The U.S Peace Corps is committed to providing a safe and positive environment when working with children at Peace Corps posts. The Peace Corps strongly supports measures to reduce the risks of child abuse and exploitation caused or perpetrated by an employee or Volunteer. MS 648 Child Protection outlines proper conduct while working or engaging with children during Peace Corps service or employment.

The following highlights specific Q&A's for Staff to aid in the understanding and implementation of MS 648.

If I am a part-time employee, do I have to adhere to this policy?

Yes. In regard to MS 648 employee means any individual hired by the Peace Corps, whether full-time or part-time, permanent or temporary, and includes individuals performing duties as experts, consultants, and personal services contractors.

Does this policy extend to my home life?

No. MS 648 only covers your time on official duty for Peace Corps. It does not extend to your personal life or any time off-duty, although other U.S. and host country laws may apply.

What if my post needs stricter guidelines on child protection?

MS 648 Child Protection is the minimum child protection standards that all Peace Corps employees and Volunteers must follow. Peace Corps posts are encouraged to create stricter child protection guidelines if the Country Director deems it necessary based on post specific issues.

As an employee, why do I have to work in a visible space and avoid being alone with children?

To avoid any unnecessary rumors that affect the reputation of the Peace Corps, it is recommended to have more than one adult present with a child and work in a visible space for all child/employee interactions. Peace Corps promotes this as a precaution for employees because regardless of what is actually happening, spending time alone with a child or children may be perceived negatively in the communities we serve. Due to the nature of Peace Corps' work, this may be difficult to achieve at all times, however, employees should comply to this guidance when possible and always be aware of the image they project to others when working with children.

What if I have strong reason to believe another Peace Corps employee is abusing a child?

If you believe a Peace Corps employee may be abusing a child you must report those allegations of child abuse by an employee to Peace Corps. You may report those concerns of child abuse by an employee to any of following: the Country Director or other senior staff at post, the appropriate Regional Director, the Associate Director for Safety and Security, the Associate Director for Global Operations, the Office of Inspector General, or other appropriate offices at Headquarters.

What if I have strong reason to believe a Volunteer is abusing a child?

If you believe a Volunteer may be abusing a child you must report those allegations of child abuse by a volunteer to Peace Corps. You may report those concerns of child abuse by a volunteer to any of following: the Country Director or other senior staff at post, the appropriate Regional Director, the Associate Director for Safety and Security, the Associate Director for Global Operations, the Office of Inspector General, or other appropriate offices at Headquarters.

Who is responsible for ensuring Volunteers and post Staff receive training?

The Country Director is responsible in ensuring that Volunteers and post Staff receive training on MS 648, however they are not responsible for creating the training. Peace Corps Headquarters is responsible for developing the training materials for both staff and Volunteers at all Peace Corps posts.

Who is responsible for ensuring new overseas staff receives training on MS 648?

The Office of Overseas Programming and Training Support is responsible for ensuring that new overseas U.S. direct hires receive appropriate training on child protection issues and on their obligations under this Manual Section during Overseas Staff Training .

Who is responsible for ensuring new employees receive notification on MS 648?

Human Resource Management is responsible for ensuring new Headquarters and Regional Recruiting Offices employees receive appropriate training on MS 648. They are also responsible for providing the policy notification to current Headquarters and Regional Recruiting Offices employees.

Where can I go for more information?

If you would like more information on MS 648 contact the Office of the General Counsel or your respective regional office at Peace Corps Headquarters.