



**Jewish (Litvak) Community of Lithuania**  
**CHILD PROTECTION POLICY**  
**2023**

## **ASSOCIATION Jewish (Litvak) Community of Lithuania**

### **POLICY GUIDELINES, PRINCIPLES AND PROCEDURES ON THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN**

The Jewish (Litvak) Community of Lithuania (JCL) confirms that it hardly protects the rights of all children, including the right to be protected from all forms of abuse, neglect, exploitation, and violence and to fully exploit their potential to be healthy and happy, as set out in the 1989 UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and the Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse (Lanzarote Convention, 2007).

The JCL takes the prevention of child abuse very seriously. The JCL understands that child abuse and misconduct with children are globally prevalent problems that need to be curbed. Therefore, these guidelines reflect the JCL commitment to take active steps to protect children participating in community activities and events.

The JCL undertakes to make decisions and take action in accordance with the principle of the "best interests of the child".

This child protection policy document sets out a policy that regulates the conduct and methods of JCL employees in the performance of their professional duties.

The aim of this policy is to reduce the risk of child abuse and mistreatment of young people and, among other things, to properly prepare staff for youth work, as well as to identify dangerous situations early on and develop procedures that protect young people as much as possible.

The JCL shall seek to minimize the damage that may unintentionally result from the planned youth activities and shall ensure that any concerns regarding the safety of children are notified in a timely manner to the relevant authorities.

#### **Principles and values**

The LJC is committed to the following values and principles, which are respected and promoted by all its employees:

- The JCL assesses and treats every person without discrimination of any kind, regardless of age, race, color, sex, language, religion, political or any other opinion, national, ethnic, or social origin, language, gender identity, or sexual orientation, property status, disability, birth, or other status.
- The JCL recognizes the right of every child to be protected from harm and abuse. The organization takes all necessary actions and measures to prevent any harm to children and to report child abuse.
- The interests of the child are always primary in the activities of our organization.
- The JCL promotes the right of children to be heard, participate, and share their views and promotes this view in its activities.
- The JCL wants to provide all the necessary advice to its employees who work in close contact with children.

## **Principles of behavior when communicating / working with children**

Each employee of the Association of Lithuanian Jewish (Litvak) Community, working and being associated with the organization, agrees and undertakes to:

1. Report to the JCL Reporting Officer (Executive Director) any concerns they may have or suspect regarding child abuse. Report anything where protocol requirements are not followed in practice.
2. Inform JCL Reporting Officer (Executive Director) and/or the competent authorities of any negative, concerning facts about possible violations of children's rights. In any activity involving children (under the age of 18), accurately comply with the requirements for the protection of the rights of the child, definitions, principles, and other provisions established in the documents of the European Union and National Law.
3. In any activity involving children (under the age of 18), accurately comply with the requirements for the protection of the rights of the child, definitions, principles and other provisions established in the documents of European Union and national law.
4. Communicate and treat all children and young people with equal respect, regardless of race, colour, gender, language, disability, religion, political or any other opinion, nationality, ethnic or social origin, birth or other status.
5. Provide a safe, friendly, welcoming environment for all children, young people and their parents.
6. Ensure the protection of the data of children participating in activities.
7. To promote children's freedom of expression.
8. To encourage children, young people and their parents to speak openly about all the events that have a negative impact on them.
9. In no case do not use physical and other punishments for children.
10. As far as possible, ensure the participation of another adult by direct contact between the staff of the parties and the children involved in the activities of the JCL.
11. To ensure the consent of parents or their authorized representatives before their children participate in the activities of the Jewish (Litvak) Community of Lithuania.
12. Not to use inappropriate words/language that are offensive, discriminatory, humiliating, or have a sexual connotation when speaking and communicating with or in front of children.
13. When communicating with the child, make sure that the behavior will be non-humiliating and psychologically harmless to the child.
14. Not to act sexually provocatively and/or to exclude children from any sexual activity, including payment for sexual services.
15. Not to hug, kiss or caress children in an inappropriate, unacceptable or culturally insensitive way or in any way unpleasant and disturbing for the child.
16. Not to participate in any activity and in no way contribute to the activities and such treatment of children that is illegal or endangers the safety and well-being of the child.
17. Not to discriminate against any child and / or to exclude one child from another, giving him more privileges.
18. When photographing or filming a child for work purposes, to evaluate and comply with the requirements of the legislation, local traditions or restrictions related to the restoration of the image of a person.

19. Obtain the written consent of the child and his parents or legal representatives regarding the use of the photo or video material and explain to them how the photos or videos will be used.
20. Make sure photos, movies, videos, DVDs, etc. portrays the child with respect and dignity, and not as a vulnerable and humble person.
21. Make sure that photos and images objectively depict the situation and facts.
22. Make sure that publications comply with child protection policies before they are made public or shared.

**Child protection protocols:**

1. The Jewish (Litvak) Community of Lithuania (JCL) has its own child protection protocols, which are based on Lithuanian and EU laws on violence against children, procedures required by local laws.

2. The JCL shall have a list of the relevant local authorities to which cases of violence against children are reported, as well as a list of the partner organisations that can be contacted and that can provide appropriate victim support services.

**The rules of the protocol for the protection of the child are as follows:**

1. Complaints (notices) by the applicant and/or the informant regarding child abuse must be submitted confidentially to the Executive Director of the JCL in writing, including by e-mail, orally by telephone or in person, directly to the Executive Director and/or to the child rights protection officer appointed by the governing body of the JCL.
2. The Executive Director of the JCL is Michail Segal and is responsible for the implementation of the Child Rights Protection Policy in the JCL, he can be contacted by e-mail: [michails@sc.lzb.lt](mailto:michails@sc.lzb.lt) and/or by phone +370 5 261 30 03, and immediately submit a complaint about child abuse.
3. The recipient of the complaint must immediately record in the relevant JCL journal (register) the date(s), time(s) of suspected (possible) violence against the child, the facts of the suspected violence against the child and other relevant information.
6. Upon receipt of a complaint, if signs of a criminal offense, misconduct are observed, the executive director immediately transfers the complaint of violence against the child to the police and / or the prosecutor's office for further state investigation.
7. The Executive Director shall also be obliged to inform the Complainant and the parent(s) or guardian(s) of the Complainant that the Complainant has the right to submit the same complaint to the police or other law enforcement agency.
8. In addition, the Child Rights Protection Officer and/or the Executive Director may appoint an official responsible for the case, who, subject to the strictest confidentiality, shall immediately conduct a further internal investigation into the complaint in the JCL and prepare a report on the preliminary investigation to the Executive Director of the JCL.
9. The Child Rights Protection Officer and/or Executive Director is the case officer responsible for investigating a child abuse complaint within the JCL.
10. The investigating officer must ensure that all information and records relating to a complaint of violence against a child are confidential.
11. The investigating officer must ensure that, during the examination of a complaint about

violence against a child, the complainant and the complainant's parents or guardians are informed and understand the relevant procedure for handling a complaint of violence against a child.

12. After receiving a complaint of violence against a child and having prepared a preliminary investigation report, if there is sufficient evidence to continue the case, the case officer must follow the "misconduct" procedure until the guilt of the suspected perpetrator(s) is finally established.

13. A complainant and/or an informant who has submitted a false and/or intrusive complaint of violence against children commits a "misconduct" and is subject to appropriate disciplinary proceedings in accordance with the requirements established by law.

### **Mandatory checks:**

In order to ensure proper treatment when working with children, the JCL informs that before recruiting persons to work with minors, their past checks will be carried out (applicants for employees will have to submit certificates of criminal record from the relevant state authorities / state registers). When working with vulnerable groups, such as children and vulnerable persons, verification of the relevant personal data of applicants for employees is mandatory. In addition, Lithuanian employers are obliged by law to recruit employees who do not have a corresponding criminal record to specific positions, especially those related to minors and vulnerable persons. Employers who employ inappropriate employees may face legal actions and penalties.

### **In the context of the past check, the following shall be checked in particular:**

(1) a person's criminal record check, which is usually carried out before the person takes up office, which includes working with children. It is used to ensure that a person is of good repute, has no previous criminal records that could lead to distrust, and does not endanger the safety of minors. When it comes to working with children, one of the most important aspects is their safety. Employers can increase safety in the workplace by avoiding hiring someone with (who had) a criminal record or a history of violence.

2) Professional social media screening that reduces risk and looks for behaviors such as bullying, racism, nudity, and overly harsh words in the candidate's online space. Summing up, we can say that all potential candidates for positions that include working with children should be checked on social media before the interview stage.

The CIA will provide all external co-workers and partners with a child protection policy and ask for their signature if they work or can interact with children and young people under the age of 18. Before starting their work, JCL employees are given introductory seminars (internal trainings) on child protection standards. After employment, seminars (internal trainings) on child protection standards are held on a mandatory basis for JCL employees working with children and young people under the age of 18 at least 1 time in a calendar year in order to constantly improve the qualifications of these employees (to deepen their knowledge).

Rules and expectations will be shared with each new employee and will be strengthened regularly. This will be done through new training for staff, teaching children's rights and using a comprehensive code of conduct.

Any employee who violates the code of conduct or the child protection policy on which the code

is based will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Disciplinary measures will be taken, including termination of the employment contract / termination of professional work by the JCL and appeal to the authorities and / or pre-trial investigation bodies (depending on the case).

### **Cooperation with other organizations and agencies**

1. When selecting partners, efforts will be made to take into account the history of 'child protection' of the partner organization.
2. The JCL reserves the right to conduct an information check on the partner's previous history related to the protection of children and its policy towards children.
3. The JCL will not tolerate any inappropriate communication with children.
4. The JCL must take serious action against any partner convicted of child abuse in the implementation of its projects and programs.

Executive director  
Michail Segal

Signed on 01.06.2023

