

**Guidelines
on child protection at
Kindermissionswerk 'Die Sternsinger' e.V.**

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Foreword

Kindermissionswerk 'Die Sternsinger' e.V. works worldwide to ensure that the rights of children are protected and their dignity is respected. Kindermissionswerk's mission is to enable children to develop holistically in a safe environment. For this reason, Kindermissionswerk places the protection of children's physical and mental integrity and the fulfilment of their age-appropriate needs at the centre of its work. In implementing its mandate, Kindermissionswerk is guided by the Christian conviction that every human being is made in the image of God. Children are particularly vulnerable and need the care and attention of others. Kindermissionswerk is actively committed to overcoming the systemic causes of violence against children.

Please note: The specifications described in the guidelines, including the use of technical terms, refer to the relevant legal basis of the Federal Republic of Germany, in particular the German Criminal Code and the German Social Code.

Further handouts mentioned in the guidelines are not available in translation.

1. Legal framework

In all areas of its work, Kindermissionswerk is actively committed to child welfare and protection. Kindermissionswerk's child protection standards and regulations are based on the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child of 1989 and the pertinent legal and episcopal provisions. The key elements are:

- The human rights treaties of the United Nations, first and foremost the Convention on the Rights of the Child together with the three supplementary protocols.¹
- The laws of the Federal Republic of Germany on the protection of children and young persons, in particular Book VIII of the German Social Code on Child and Youth Welfare.
- The Framework Regulation – Prevention of sexualized violence against minors and vulnerable adults within the domain of the German Bishops' Conference, published by the German Bishops' Conference, November 2019²
- The provisions on the prevention of sexualised violence in the works of the church around the world, published by the German Bishops' Conference, Kommission Weltkirche (Commission for Global Church Affairs), May 2020
- The Regulation for dealing with sexual abuse of minors and of vulnerable adults by clergy and other church staff³
- The procedures and reporting obligations set out in the *Vademecum* of the Congregation of the Doctrine of the Faith and the corresponding provisions in the code of canon law CIC⁴ (*Codex Iuris Canonici*), updated in 2021, which govern how the church deals with cases of suspicion involving religious and clerics.

¹ Online at: <https://www.unicef.org/child-rights-convention/convention-text#>

² Framework Regulation – Prevention of sexualized violence against minors and vulnerable adults within the domain of the German Bishops' Conference, approved by the Permanent Council of the German Bishops' Conference on 18 November 2019 in Würzburg, online at: https://www.dbk.de/fileadmin/redaktion/diverse_downloads/dossiers_2020/2019-engl-Rahmenordnung-Praevention-2020.pdf

³ Regulation for dealing with sexual abuse of minors and of vulnerable adults by clergy and other church staff, approved by the German Bishops' Conference on 18 November 2019, online at https://www.dbk.de/fileadmin/redaktion/diverse_downloads/dossiers_2020/2019-engl.-Ordnung-fuer-den-Umgang-mit-sexuellem-Missbrauch-Minderjaehriger.pdf

⁴ Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, *Vademecum*. On certain points of procedure in dealing with cases of sexual abuse of minors committed by clerics, Vatican 2020, and Codex Iuris Canonici with the reforms from 2021

2. Objective

Through the regulations and measures described, the aim of these guidelines is to protect children, young people and vulnerable adults against all forms of risk outlined below (see Section 4). In these guidelines, Kindermissionswerk defines “child” as all persons who have not yet reached the age of eighteen. “Vulnerable adults” in these guidelines are persons in someone’s charge in the sense of Section 225 (1) of the German Criminal Code.⁵ In the following, when the term “child protection” is used, all regulations apply *mutatis mutandis* to vulnerable adults.

Protection includes preventive measures that reduce risks to a minimum. Furthermore, these guidelines contain instruments to ensure that appropriate and prompt action is taken in the case of violations.

The guidelines also have a case management function. They provide orientation on what action to take if children or vulnerable adults are suspected of being at risk, and how such cases are to be dealt with. The guidelines also help to protect persons against unsubstantiated accusations and to rehabilitate these persons if necessary.

3. Scope

The guidelines lay down rules of conduct for all of Kindermissionswerk’s activities: for Kindermissionswerk as employer, as joint legal holder of the Carol Singers’ Campaign (*Aktion Dreikönigssingen*), as partner in international development cooperation and as an actor in the field of public relations. They form the framework for the protection of children and vulnerable adults with whom Kindermissionswerk comes into direct and indirect contact.

The rules set out in the guidelines and the associated training events are designed to raise awareness of child protection among staff and persons working on behalf of Kindermissionswerk and to empower them to act.

The guidelines apply to the following groups of people:

- Kindermissionswerk staff, including members of its official bodies (Board of Directors, Governing Board, Annual General Meeting), trainees, contracted staff, temporary student workers, interns, freelance staff, volunteers in the weltwärts programme and other volunteers
- persons directly commissioned by Kindermissionswerk to organise and conduct events and campaigns
- external service providers insofar as they come into direct contact with children and vulnerable adults or gain access to their personal data through Kindermissionswerk.

Kindermissionswerk’s project partners must comply with the child protection provisions in the project guidelines and agreements.

The Board of Directors of Kindermissionswerk is responsible for implementing these guidelines. It can delegate the tasks associated with implementation to the HR Department, the Child Protection Unit or to other departments at Kindermissionswerk.

⁵ See Section 225 (1) of the German Criminal Code

4. Definition of risks to child welfare

- Physical violence encompasses all forms of actual or potential violence against children and vulnerable adults that lead to physical injury. This also includes failure to safeguard a child or vulnerable adult from physical injury. Physical violence also includes traditions that are injurious to health (e.g. female genital mutilation).
- Psychological or emotional violence originates from attitudes, comments or actions by persons with whom children or vulnerable adults interact that belittle, reject, isolate, ignore, humiliate, threaten, terrorise or adultify (i.e. push into an adult role) them and which make them feel rejected or worthless.
- Sexual violence means sexual acts in front of, performed on or involving children or vulnerable adults either against their will or to which they cannot knowingly consent due to physical, psychological, cognitive or linguistic inferiority.
- Neglect is the repeated or persistent failure by persons responsible for care to provide the attention and care needed to meet the basic needs of the child or vulnerable adult.
- Exploitation is the economic or other form of exploitation of a child or vulnerable adult through activities undertaken for the benefit of a third party. These activities include exploitative child labour, producing images of sexualised violence against children and vulnerable adults, child prostitution as well as any other activities involving risks that could impede the child's development, harm the child's or vulnerable adult's health or be detrimental to their physical, intellectual, psychological, moral or social development.
- Media violence encompasses forms of violence against children and vulnerable adults inflicted by perpetrators who use media and communications technologies (such as social media, webcams and chatrooms) to sexually exploit, harass, insult or expose children or vulnerable adults. This includes the distribution and consumption of recordings of acts of sexualised violence against children and vulnerable adults.

5. Prevention in the HR Department

Kindermiissionswerk contributes to child protection through its careful recruitment and personnel development procedures and with its transparent working structures.

5.1. Job advertisements

Job advertisements make clear that Kindermiissionswerk follows these guidelines on child protection in its work. The job advertisements also specifically point out that successful applicants will be required to submit an extended certificate of good conduct.

5.2. Personnel selection

Child protection is an assessment criterion when reviewing applications (e.g. information in references). The subject of child protection is addressed in all job interviews.

5.3. Employment contracts

Child protection is an integral part of employment contracts. By signing the contract, future staff members agree to comply with these guidelines, which are handed out to them in advance. In addition, they must sign the self-commitment declaration on child protection and the self-disclosure statement as well as submit an extended certificate of good conduct.

5.4. Extended certificate of good conduct

All new and existing staff members are obliged to submit a current extended certificate of good conduct (not older than six months) in accordance with Section 30a of the Act on the Central Criminal Register and the Educative Measures Register (BZRG). With the extended certificate of good conduct, the employer can see whether the employee has been convicted of a sexual offence against children and young people (see Section 72a (1.1) of the German Social Code [SGB] VIII and Section 75(3) of the German Social Code [SGB] XII).

The certificate must be re-submitted every five years. The employer assumes the costs incurred. An extended certificate of good conduct without any record of a previous relevant criminal offence is a prerequisite for recruitment and continued employment. Kindermiissionswerk ensures compliance with statutory data protection regulations in all procedures relating to the certificate of good conduct.

5.5. Personnel files

Kindermiissionswerk observes the standards of professional personnel file management and continues to develop these in order to ensure that all circumstances relating to child protection are fully documented.

5.6. HR development

All staff members are informed about and receive training on child protection and are involved in the further development of the guidelines. In consultation with the Child Protection Unit, the HR office ensures the provision of training on guideline implementation and special training courses tailored to the needs of staff members with specific functions and tasks.

All staff members are required to undergo basic training. Members of the extended management conference and staff members who have closer and more intensive contact with minors as a result of their areas of responsibility attend an intensive two-day training event. In consultation with the Child Protection Unit, the administrative manager decides which of the various groups are to participate.

Previously completed training may be credited retroactively after consultation with the HR office. Every five years, staff attend an in-depth refresher seminar.

5.7. Participants in the volunteer service

In preparation for their assignments abroad, volunteers in the weltwärts programme or in other programmes receive training on child protection and on dealing with suspected cases of suspicion. They must sign the code of conduct and submit an extended certificate of good conduct. Further rules are set out in the corresponding provisions for the weltwärts programme.

5.8. Service providers

External service providers who come into direct contact with children and vulnerable adults or who gain access to their personal data through Kindermissionswerk undertake to comply with the rules of conduct by signing the contract, which contains a corresponding (child protection) clause. If intensive contact with children and vulnerable adults is expected in the context of a contract award, Kindermissionswerk must demand submission of an extended certificate of good conduct.

6. Child protection in press, education and public relations work

In presentations of its own work in the media and in education work, Kindermissionswerk ensures compliance with the rules on child protection. This applies to imagery, photography, all publications in print and online media (websites and social networks such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube) as well as on radio and TV.

Reports on projects abroad supported by Kindermissionswerk and on events and campaigns in Germany are indispensable for the organisation's press and public relations work. As a rule, reports focus on children and young people. In order to safeguard their dignity and to adequately protect the children themselves at all times, Kindermissionswerk and all persons working on its behalf undertake to observe the following principles:

- Every report respects the dignity of the persons portrayed. Degrading, one-sided and sensational portrayals of hardship and misery are not permitted.
- Children and their guardians as well as vulnerable adults in Germany and abroad should be requested to give their express consent to the use of photographs and films etc. Appropriate procedures and instruments are to be developed and used for this purpose.
- Children and vulnerable adults are not depicted posing in an inappropriate manner; in addition, no photographs or film recordings are used that show the genital areas of children and vulnerable adults or which could have sexual connotations.
- Children and vulnerable adults and their extended families must not be placed in danger or subjected to discrimination as a result of the reports. Under certain circumstances, it may be necessary to protect the identity of the persons concerned and to use fictitious names in order to protect children and vulnerable adults from possible persecution, trauma and stigmatisation.
- Before commencing journalistic work on behalf of Kindermissionswerk, photographers, journalists and all members of film crews are provided with a handout on Kindermissionswerk's child protection standards and make a written commitment to observe a corresponding code of conduct.

- The most recent versions of the data protection guidelines as laid down in the church-based data protection regulations and the European General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) also apply.
- On the internet, Kindermissionswerk does not work with games or other tools that allow unmoderated communication between children or vulnerable adults.
- In its annual report, Kindermissionswerk provides regular information on current developments in the field of child protection, on exemplary child protection initiatives implemented by project partners and on child protection measures and campaigns in Germany for which Kindermissionswerk is jointly responsible.

6.1. Press and public relations work for events

When Kindermissionswerk organises large-scale events, it informs participants in advance that photos will be taken and videos produced. By participating in the event, participants consent to the further use of photographs and video material etc.

7. Child protection in the area of donor communication and fund-raising

By portraying people's life situations, the purpose of donor communication is to appeal for donations. In the contact with donors and people interested in the work of Kindermissionswerk, donor communication conveys a deeper understanding of child protection. As far as possible, staff responsible for donor communication, the PR and Media Department, the diocesan teams and editorial staff explain to supporter groups how to respect and promote child protection in their work, for example through the use of appropriate pictorial material in public relations work.

Before setting out on donor trips organised by Kindermissionswerk, all participants must take part in basic child protection training or attend an introductory event run by the Child Protection Unit in preparation for the trip. They also receive the "Handout for people travelling to projects supported by Kindermissionswerk" and learn how to conduct themselves appropriately *vis-à-vis* children and vulnerable adults in the projects. Before departure, all participants are given a copy of the "Code of conduct for visits to projects supported by Kindermissionswerk". By signing and forwarding this document to Kindermissionswerk, travellers undertake to respect child protection and to conduct themselves accordingly. In the case of digital project visits, the information in the respective handout must be observed, especially in the preparations with the host organisation.

Donors often visit partnership projects in a private capacity. Kindermissionswerk has no influence on such privately organised trips. If donors inform Kindermissionswerk of their planned project visits in advance, Kindermissionswerk will provide the corresponding child protection documents. As Kindermissionswerk has no influence on private project visits, the child protection concepts of the partners should contain appropriate rules for visitors.

8. Child protection in the Carol Singers' Campaign (*Aktion Dreikönigssingen*)

In the parishes of the German (arch)dioceses, the Carol Singers' Campaign is organised by and the responsibility of full-time staff and volunteers. They determine the size of the groups and the type of care and support provided for the children. As a rule, adults and/or older young people accompany the carol singer groups.

To ensure the protection of the carol singers, the following principles are applied during the campaign:

- In all parishes, the prevention regulations of the respective (arch)diocese apply.
- The competent (arch)diocese is responsible for training and raising awareness among adults and accompanying persons and for other instruments designed to avert and prevent endangering children's welfare or the maltreatment and sexual abuse of children and vulnerable adults.
- Furthermore, in its publications and communication platforms and especially in the materials and information relating to the Carol Singers' Campaign, Kindermissionswerk draws attention to the issue of child protection and gives tips and recommendations on the aspects that should be considered in this connection during the campaign.

9. Events with children and young people

The following rules apply to events organised by Kindermissionswerk that involve the participation of children and young people:

- Kindermissionswerk informs all adult participants (i.e. over the age of eighteen) about the contents of the child protection guidelines that are relevant to the event in question.
- By signing the document, all participants over the age of eighteen undertake to comply with the code of conduct.
- In the case of overnight stays, it is necessary to ensure in advance that the supervisors/carers have participated in basic training on child protection.
- A sufficient number of support persons must accompany children to events and on trips.
- The two-adult rule applies: at least two adult support persons must be present at all times.
- At events involving overnight stays, if the group of children comprises both boys and girls, they must be accompanied by both men and women.
- In the case of overnight stays with children and young people, the accompanying adults and older young people must be accommodated in separate rooms. Single-sex bedrooms are to be provided for both the children/young people as well as for the accompanying persons.
- Overnight stays with children and young people in the private accommodation of full-time and part-time staff and volunteers are not permitted.
- Wherever possible, a carer/supervisor must not be alone with a minor in bedrooms, sanitary facilities and similar spaces.

- At the start of the event, all participants are briefed on the child protection rules that apply to the event. Information is also made available on where to report cases of suspicion in which children's welfare is endangered.

In the case of events held jointly by Kindermissionswerk and other organisations and which involve the participation of children and vulnerable adults, the organisers decide among themselves in advance how the child protection guidelines are to be implemented.

10. Child protection in the context of project support

The basis for project support is the project agreement, which is signed by Kindermissionswerk and the legal holder (of the project). A project that is deemed eligible for support by Kindermissionswerk must meet the child protection standards as set out in the project guidelines and agreements. However, Kindermissionswerk itself is generally not the legal holder of the projects it supports: responsibility for personnel therefore lies with the partner organisations. Kindermissionswerk values sensitivity and dialogue with the partners in this area. The following applies to cooperation with project partners in this connection:

- Kindermissionswerk's project guidelines make clear that the protection of children, young people and vulnerable adults is an essential component of project support.
- In the applications procedure, Kindermissionswerk requests submission of existing child protection concepts and draws attention to Kindermissionswerk's regulations.
- Kindermissionswerk staff, in particular the country officers, raise the subject of child protection with the partners, support the sharing of lessons learned and develop a deeper awareness of child protection.
- Project agreements contain a separate clause on the protection of children and vulnerable adults. On entering into the agreement, partners undertake to implement a protection concept. For implementation, a transition period of one year is allowed after the agreement is signed. In the interim period, a transitional commitment applies containing – at the minimum – a code of conduct that must be signed by all staff. Funding for follow-on applications from the same partner organisation is not possible without submission of a child protection concept.
- The child protection concept must meet international protection standards, i.e. it must contain the following elements:
 - preventive measures (code of conduct for staff and volunteers; standards relating to personnel recruitment, employment, education and training)
 - communications standards (press, social media, fundraising)
 - appointment of a child protection officer
 - complaints procedures/channels for children, vulnerable adults, staff and others
 - system for reporting, lodging a complaint and following up on cases of suspicion
 - protection system for affected persons
 - the concept must be available in the local language.

In their reports to Kindermissionswerk, project partners must document the progress made in implementing the child protection concept.

If staff at Kindermissionswerk become aware of a case of suspicion in a project, the rules of procedure set out in Section "11.5. Suspected cases in projects abroad" apply.

10.1. Building on-site capacity

Kindermissionswerk undertakes in particular to support specific measures relating to prevention work and corresponding training programmes for multipliers on the issue of child protection at partner organisations. This includes establishing regional and supraregional centres of competence.

10.2. Visiting projects abroad

All unaccompanied visitors to projects abroad are provided with the relevant handout on foreign travel as well as the rules on appropriate conduct *vis-à-vis* children and vulnerable adults in the projects.

Any person visiting partner projects in the name of or on behalf of Kindermissionswerk must fulfil the following requirements before commencing the trip:

- Sign the code of conduct on foreign travel
- If the visit involves one or more overnight stays in a project:
 - Submit an extended certificate of good conduct
 - Participate in basic training or one-day prevention training on child protection, or take part in instruction by the Child Protection Unit at Kindermissionswerk, or submit proof of having completed this training elsewhere with an accredited provider

For project visits by donors, please refer to the relevant passages in Section “7. Child protection in the area of donor communication and fundraising”.

11. Dealing with cases of suspicion

If there is reason to suspect that children's welfare may be endangered in the context of Kindermissionswerk's activities, the procedures outlined below ensure that a standardised and transparent course of action is taken.

We distinguish here between two basic scenarios:

- a) Cases of suspicion involving Kindermissionswerk's staff or persons contracted by Kindermissionswerk
- b) Cases of suspicion involving a project supported by Kindermissionswerk.

11.1. General

All staff members have a duty to notify the persons listed below immediately if they have reason to suspect that the welfare of children or vulnerable adults in the fields of activity of Kindermissionswerk is endangered, whether through the action of other staff members, project partners or other persons. In such cases, all staff members are released from their contractually agreed confidentiality obligation.

Kindermissionswerk takes all concerns and reports seriously and acts in line with the following principles:

- With due regard to civil and canon-law provisions, the protection of children and vulnerable adults takes precedence over the clarification of suspicion in all procedural steps of the case.
- All cases of suspicion in which boundaries are overstepped are taken seriously, followed up and documented. When presenting or describing the circumstances, it is important to distinguish carefully between a suspicion and a proven case. The protection of the potential victim is paramount. In the processing of the case, the accused must not be prejudged.
- Equally, every care must be taken to protect the whistleblower/informant.
- Reported allegations and all investigations are treated with strict confidentiality. Appropriate steps are to be taken to protect the identities of affected children and vulnerable adults, whistleblowers/informants and accused persons. Only persons responsible for processing have access to the information on the case.
- The need to protect the victim and/or the whistleblower/informant is assessed (e.g. against physical threats, blame, insults). Protection must also be given to the accused until the allegation is clarified.
- All staff members are provided with the guidelines and as such are familiar with the reporting and advisory procedures.

11.2. Advice and support

In cases of uncertainty or in difficult and/or unclear situations, victims, whistleblowers/informants and staff members can seek advice unbureaucratically in advance from the following contacts, who are obliged to observe strict confidentiality:

- The Child Protection Unit at Kindermissionswerk, Susanne Brenner-Büker, brenner@sternsinger.de, +49 241 / 44 61-71
- The external advisory service on sexual violence: RückHalt e.V.:
www.rueckhalt-beratung.de/rueckhalt/
- Sexual Abuse Help Portal:
<https://www.hilfe-portal-missbrauch.de/en/home>
The portal offers initial guidance for people seeking help and support. In addition to providing comprehensive information (e.g. on counselling, self-help and legal questions), the portal helps users navigate a German-wide database in which they can search for suitable support and assistance services in their area as well as for telephone and online services.
People in need of assistance can also call the sexual abuse hotline anonymously (+49 800 22 55 530) or seek advice online:
www.hilfe-telefon-missbrauch.de or www.hilfe-telefon-missbrauch.online
- Aachen diocese: the qualified staff at the PIA Unit (prevention, intervention, contact person) (<https://www.bistum-aachen.de/aufarbeitung-konsequenzen/Schon-umgesetzt/Unabhaengige-Ansprechpersonen/>) are a first point of contact for victims. They offer consultations and help staff in church institutions resolve reported cases of suspicion. In the process, they also provide information on the possible procedures and on independent external counselling centres.

11.3. Cases of suspicion involving risks to children's welfare in Germany

11.3.1. Reporting channels

Whistleblowers/informants contact the Child Protection Unit, their manager or the Board of Directors. If either the Child Protection Unit or the manager has been notified, they then document the details of the case and inform the Board of Directors. However, if one of the members of the Board of Directors is under suspicion, the Chair of the Governing Board is informed rather than the Board of Directors.

11.3.2. Clarification, decision-making, sanctions

The general procedure is governed by the "Regulation for dealing with sexual abuse of minors and of vulnerable adults by clergy and other church staff"⁶, which Kindermissionswerk is obliged to observe under these guidelines.

The Board of Directors ensures that the details of the case are compiled. Based on the information gathered, the Board of Directors makes an initial assessment. The Child Protection Unit is not responsible for processing cases of suspicion in Germany involving Kindermissionswerk staff.

⁶ see https://www.dbk.de/fileadmin/redaktion/diverse_downloads/dossiers_2020/2019-engl.-Ordnung-fuer-den-Umgang-mit-sexuellem-Missbrauch-Minderjaehriger.pdf

The employer can arrange for the accused person to be temporarily released from their work duties and tasks until the circumstances are clarified. The accused person can call in a person of trust, the staff representative body or a legal advisor.

a) Suspicions are substantiated: If there are indications that a criminal offence has been committed in the meaning of Sections 174-184 of the German Criminal Code (StGB), the Board of Directors or the Chair of the Governing Board must instigate legal proceedings, either by requesting the accused person to report themselves (to the authorities) or, if they are not willing to do so, by reporting them to the responsible public prosecutor's office.

Apart from the criminal law consequences, statutory labour and employment measures will be initiated. Kindermissionswerk ensures that accused persons receive assistance and support. Persons are presumed innocent until proven guilty in a court of law. If a conviction is obtained for corresponding criminal offences in a court of law, the contract of employment of the person in question will be terminated immediately.

b) Infringement of the self-commitment declaration: In the case of a violation of the rules of conduct set out in the declaration that does not constitute a criminal offence, appropriate disciplinary measures will be taken, e.g. explanatory talk, training or reprimand. If, in the course of the proceedings, the employment contract of the staff member is subject to either regular or extraordinary termination, the staff representative body must be consulted in accordance with the regulation on employee representation for the Aachen diocese.

c) Suspicions are not substantiated: If it is not proven that the accused staff member has committed a relevant offence, the suspension from duties is revoked. The Board of Directors must ensure that the staff member is fully rehabilitated.

11.4. Cases of suspicion in the Carol Singers' Campaign

If suspicion arises with regard to the welfare of children in the context of the Carol Singers' Campaign, the points of contact for sexual abuse in the (arch)dioceses as well as the responsible offices in the individual dioceses are available for consultation and reporting purposes.

If information is sent directly to Kindermissionswerk, the Child Protection Unit – in consultation with the Board of Directors of Kindermissionswerk and the Board of Directors of the Federation of German Catholic Youth (BDKJ) as joint legal holders of the campaign – forwards this to the responsible bodies for follow-up and clarification.

If the case lies in the immediate area of responsibility of Kindermissionswerk, the procedure described above applies.

11.5. Suspected cases in projects supported by Kindermissionswerk outside of Germany

The reporting channels are as follows:

- Reports of sexual abuse and cases in which boundaries are overstepped can originate from many sources. Staff at Kindermissionswerk who receive information about cases of suspicion contact the Child Protection Unit directly or the Head of the International Department.
 - Volunteers in the weltwärts programme inform the responsible contact in the Volunteer Services team or the Head of the Department responsible for Germany. They, in turn, inform the Child Protection Unit.
- All actors must be vigilant about special protection for volunteers as whistleblowers/informants.

11.5.1. Procedure

- The Child Protection Unit documents the case and submits the documents to the Board of Directors with a proposal for further action.
- In cases requiring particularly urgent action, the approval of two members of the Board of Directors suffices. If none of the members of the Board of Directors can be reached, the Head of the International Department is charged with taking the necessary emergency measures.
- The Child Protection Unit implements the measures decided upon by the Board of Directors. It informs the persons concerned, delegates any necessary steps, documents the case in full and supports further investigations.
- The staff member responsible for the project in question or the Head of the International Department informs the legal holder of the project without delay about the case of suspicion and requests the legal holder to provide information on the case and any steps already undertaken.
- If there are reasons to suspect that wards (persons under protection) are in acute danger, the legal holder is required to release the persons under suspicion from their duties and activities in the project until the allegations have been resolved and to prohibit them from having any contact with the alleged victim.
- If necessary, an on-site meeting is arranged with the partner or in the project; alternatively external specialists are called in to investigate.
- In addition to ensuring the protection of the alleged victim(s), care is taken to uphold the rule-of-law principle regarding the presumption of innocence until proven guilty in a court of law. In this context, it is particularly important to observe the respective legal provisions in the country in question with regard to the duty to notify the responsible criminal prosecution authority.
- The legal holder is expected to inform Kindermissionswerk as contract partner about the progress and results of the measures that are initiated.

11.5.2. Possible sanctions

If the legal holder does not adequately manage the case or is unwilling to implement measures to improve child protection, Kindermissionswerk reserves the right to:

- block payment of approved funding;
- terminate the project agreement and cease project cooperation;
- withhold approval for follow-on funding.

In order not to endanger a project or institution unnecessarily, the proportionality of the measures must be taken into account or consideration given to measures that promote child protection. This includes prevention training.

All cooperation partners and organisations that co-finance the project or the legal holder are informed about the case of suspicion while maintaining compliance with the data protection regulations.

11.5.3. Documentation

The responsibility for documenting cases of suspicion abroad lies with the Child Protection Unit.

12. Further development of the child protection guidelines

The guidelines on child protection and the processes associated with these guidelines are to be reviewed and adapted no more than three years after adoption.

The relevant report is to contain the findings and lessons learned in the implementation of the guidelines, experiential knowledge gained in ongoing work as well as suggestions for improving the management of future cases.

13. Entry into force

These guidelines enter into force upon approval by the Board of Directors of Kindermissionswerk.

The Board of Directors of Kindermissionswerk 'Die Sternsinger' e.V.