

# CODE OF CONDUCT

Chios Eastern Shore Response Team  
(Offene Arme e.V.)



Offene Arme e.V.

## GENERAL INFORMATION

Since the formation of the very first team, hundreds of volunteers have contributed their time, energy and resourcefulness to provide direct humanitarian aid that meets immediate needs for refugees and asylum seekers arriving after long journeys from war-torn countries or countries where oppression has been untenable and equally life threatening. Refugees arrive in the European Union on the Chios' Eastern Shore or at Chios Port after a short but no less fear-filled, life threatening crossing of the Aegean Sea from Turkey.

On arrival, they are met by a warm CESRT welcome, albeit in very challenging conditions: our team provides water, food, immediate basic care, warm blankets and clothes with warm smiles engaging in friendly exchanges discretely listening to and with an observant eye to identify the most vulnerable individuals for the immediate first care by accompanying doctors, one of our own and others from Salvemiento Maritimo Humanitario (SMH). It is the warmth of welcome and the direct and immediate aid that is the very foundation of CESRT's work.

Over time CESRT work has evolved and diversified to include various post-arrival social and support services responding to needs created by the extended 'detention' of refugees pending the resolution of their applications – The Warehouse continues to be central to the preparation and provision of food, water, clothes, hygiene and other essentials to new arrivals and on an on-going basis to all refugees detained on Chios through regular distributions to those accommodated in apartments and directly to Vial Camp. The Language Centre provides English, Greek, French and German classes and a community garden between students and volunteers growing, taking care and harvesting fruit and vegetables.

As a team, we value our independence, solidarity and flexibility in our response to this humanitarian crisis. Most of all we value the collaborative spirit of our volunteers made possible through our shared commitment, mutual trust and respect. At times the work can be emotionally challenging as we respond to the needs of people who find themselves in very difficult circumstances and we must at all times show respect for the worries that they may have for their futures, and those of their loved ones.

We are also acutely aware of our role and its limitations. We do not pretend, nor can we aspire to meeting all the needs of the refugees and asylum seekers in an ever-changing and confusing regulatory environment. We must focus our efforts, adjust our engagement in an increasingly fraught environment. We do what we can to make the best out of our abilities within a realistic framework.

To this end, we are seeking the trust and understanding of all previous and aspiring volunteers. In order to continue our work in the most efficient and effective way, we request that all persons proposing their service to CESRT, those wishing to return and those wishing to offer their services for the first time, adhere to the following procedures:

- 1. Please read and sign the attached code of conduct then**
- 2. Complete the attached application.**
- 3. Please await a written confirmation of acceptance of a place on the Team prior to making travel arrangements.**

It is with regret that we must advise that, if these procedures are not followed, we cannot guarantee returning or new volunteers a place on the team.

Given the number of requests that we receive and the number of volunteers currently on our team, it is of critical and increasing importance for the effective delivery of our services that we manage the number of Team members working at any given time. We believe that this approach will achieve best results for the people we support while ensuring that the experience and skillsets of team members match those required for the services being provided.

We thank you in advance for your understanding and look forward to welcoming old friends and new volunteers to further our efforts and strengthen our team.

## **OUR CODE OF CONDUCT**

Thank you for making the decision to volunteer with CESRT.

Our main objective is to provide effective direct humanitarian aid for refugees currently detained on Chios Island, Greece. While doing so, we would like to uphold and promote the highest standards of conduct and professionalism. Everybody in the team is an independent volunteer working under the CESRT umbrella. We ask that out of respect to the refugee community, fellow team members and for the reputation of CESRT, you affirm your willingness to adhere to this Code of Conduct.

Even though we are a small group, we strive to demonstrate integrity, truthfulness, dedication, solidarity and honesty in our work at all times. We ask the same of all volunteers representing **CESRT** on the Island.

Here's what we ask of all volunteers joining or re-joining the Team.

# PRIOR TO DEPARTURE

1. Confirm acceptance of our offer to become a member of the team.

Ensure that you are in good physical and sound mental health. Volunteering may be physically and psychologically demanding. We are not asking for professional athletes. Simply declare honestly if you have any health problems and this will be taken into consideration in the choice of tasks you may wish to take up onsite.

2. Ensure you have sufficient funds to sustain your trip.

Unless agreed prior, be prepared to pay for your flights, own transport on site, accommodation and food. If you choose not to rent a car, we will ask you to contribute 30€ a week towards our car pool. Please let us know if you are prepared to share accommodation, this can help to keep your costs down.

3. Ensure all personal insurances are valid before embarking on any trip.

CESRT will not be liable for any injuries/damages/loss that occur during the trip.

4. Ensure all visas and travel documents are updated and valid to ensure freedom of movement.

Greek law requires that you carry some form of ID at all times, and show it when asked by police, army and border security.

5. A DBS (Police background) is required to volunteers with CESRT.

6. Majority

To be able to work in all the activities of CESRT you have to be 18 years or older. If you are under aged, you can come with a tutor that takes the responsibility for you. But, in this case you will only be able to work in our warehouse. Legally an under aged person can not work in our other projects.

# ON SITE

An induction to CESRT activities and services is provided as soon after arrival as possible.

In collaboration with other team members, tasks are shared amongst team members, all team members should be willing to share in different activities to meet the priority needs of the refugees. There can be no guarantee that team members can choose their preferred activities.

# SCOPE OF WORK

1. Be prepared to work in shifts.

2. Be prepared to get your hands dirty. Work on site not only entails tending to refugees' needs but also the sorting of donations arriving from other places in Europe, picking trash, cleaning tents, toilets, just to list a few.

3. Be flexible and a team player by following the lead coordinator's instructions when you are assigned a task/role. Understand that a job you've been assigned by your team coordinator may not have direct contact with the refugees but is just as important within the entire volunteer system on site.

4. We are working between 30- 40 hours a week.

## INTERACTION WITH ORGANIZATIONS ON SITE / HOST COUNTRY

1. Treat everyone, including fellow volunteers, authority figures, and refugees with respect and act professionally at all times.

2. Excessive consumption of alcohol will not be tolerated. One or two after your shift is fine. No alcohol is to be drunk when on call.

3. Absolutely no drugs are to be bought or consumed at any time.

4. Never engage in behaviors deemed illegal by the host country (for example: offering car rides to unregistered refugees). When in doubt, check with the lead coordinator.

5. Never engage in disorderly and belligerent behavior that will aggravate any situation, especially when it is related to authorities. You are more useful outside a jail cell than in one.

6. Treat all communication within the team as confidential. If you feel that information requires to be shared beyond the team, please discuss this with one of the team coordinators first.

7. To have contact with other organizations we prefer to do this by the coordinators, If you have something to share with an other organization, talk with the coordinator of CESRT, he/she will handle this.

## INTERACTION WITH REFUGEES

8. Respect all refugees by being culturally sensitive, polite, and empathetic at all times.

9. Protect the confidentiality of information shared by a refugee. This includes their identity, location, refugee claims, and status.

10. Never engage in unauthorized and frivolous photo-taking on site. Adopt a sensible attitude when you wish to share or post photos on social media platforms when on site. ALWAYS ask a refugee for permission should you want to post their photo. Any photo taking of children must be done with express permission from their parents.

11. Respect the dignity of refugees and their vulnerable moments. Never take photos of anyone in distress.

12. Refrain from using supplies meant for the refugees.

13. Never perform any action that might be perceived by others as favoritism that might isolate or endanger the welfare of the refugee.

14. Never engage in any form of sexual activity with refugees as it may exploit power relations.

15. Any form of emotional abuse like shouting, insulting or shaming children is strictly prohibited.

16. Never give out any unverified travel information related to any refugee or asylum seeker without verifying with the NGOs and team leader of the volunteer group.

17. Be prepared to work hard but do be mindful that you are ultimately responsible for your own personal welfare and safety. We need to take care of ourselves in order to help to others.

18. It is not allowed to go to the camps/accommodation of the refugees/asylum seekers, only if it is for a team activity like distribution etc.

## The Language Centre

1. Private/ personal distributions are not to be given to students. Everyone is to be treated equally and fairly.

2. Always ask a student for permission should you wish to take their photo. If you are going to post the photo online, explain why and what it will be used for, where it will be uploaded to and who it will be seen by. If a student does not feel comfortable or understand, do not pressure them or upload the photo. They may ask for their identity to be hidden. If so, make sure you cover their faces with an editing tool using an emoji, pen etc.

3. When in the centre teaching (or not) and during the Saturday workshop please wear appropriate clothing:

- ❖ Cover your shoulders and lower chest
- ❖ Trousers that are below the knee and nothing too tight
- ❖ Make sure logos or clothing designs are not offensive or open to misinterpretation
- ❖ Be respectful by not wearing clothing that is dirty or torn/ripped

4. Ensure that you hold a clean and clear DBS check.

Any breach of this code of conduct may result in you being asked to leave the team.

By returning this signed document together with your application form, you are confirming your understanding of, and agreement to, the above-mentioned terms of volunteering with CESRT.

**Name** .....  
**Signature** .....  
**Date** .....

**Return address:**  
[chiosert@gmail.com](mailto:chiosert@gmail.com)