



World Scout Committee's Ethics Committee

Terms of Reference

Membership: The Ethics Committee shall comprise:

- **the Chairperson (with voting rights)**, appointed by the World Scout Committee (WSC) on the recommendation of the WSC Chairperson
- **five other members (with voting rights)**, appointed by the WSC Chairperson on the recommendation of the Chairperson of the Ethics Committee
- **the WSC Chairperson (Ex-officio, Non-voting)**
- **the WOSM Secretary General (Ex-officio, non-voting)**

In addition, the Ethics Committee may call on relevant experts to inform discussions/decisions as and when necessary. The Ethics Committee may, at its discretion, appoint external experts or consultants to specific cases. Such decisions will be recorded in the minutes of the Ethics Committee.

Staff members (generally including a staff member overseeing legal affairs) designated by the Secretary General will provide staff support to the Ethics Committee.

Explicit consideration in the appointment process of the voting Ethics Committee Members will be given to the following:

- Competence, in light of the profile described below
- Regional balance
- Gender balance
- Age balance

The profile of the different members of the Ethics Committee will aim to cover the following skills and expertise:

- Experience in a National Scout Organization (NSO) at the national level
- Experience in WOSM structures, either as an appointed or elected member
- Experience in handling ethical and harassment cases
- Experience in mediation and/or business (financial) ethics
- Legal background

The profile of each member of the Ethics Committee must possess the following characteristics to be assessed by the respective endorsing NSO, World Scout Bureau (WSB), and the WSC during the appointment process:

- Exemplify the highest ethical standards
- Be completely independent and not hold a volunteer position within any other substructure at the World, Regional, or Zonal levels of WOSM

Term of office:

All members, unless filling a vacancy, are appointed until the end of the ongoing triennium. A member who fills a vacancy will serve the remaining term of the person being replaced. The Chairperson of the WSC and the WSB staff member so designated by the Secretary

General will review membership and performance of the Ethics Committee in accordance with processes established by the WSC.

Frequency: The Ethics Committee will, if the WSB budget permits, meet physically once per year with additional virtual meetings taking place based on the workload.

Quorum: The presence of more than half of the members with voting rights shall constitute a quorum. Where a meeting is not quorate, it can still proceed. However, all decisions must be ratified after the meeting by post or electronic communication by a majority of Voting Members.

Attendance: Apart from the Voting Members, the following have right of attendance in a non-voting capacity:

- **the WSC Chairperson**
- **the WOSM Secretary General**
- **designated staff members**
- **relevant experts or consultants**

Called on by the Chairperson to participate in discussions as and when necessary

Purpose: The purpose of the Ethics Committee is:

- to advise and assist the WSC on ethical matters, including the enforcement of the WOSM Code of Conduct according to the process and procedural requirements established in WOSM's Complaints Policy
- to provide assistance in mediation of ethical and leadership conflicts to World, Regional, National, and Zonal levels where requested

Remit: In line with the Constitution, Standing Orders, 2017-2020 Triennial Plan, Vision 2023, and the scope of work approved by the WSC, the Ethics Committee will:

- receive and review potential breaches against the WOSM Code of Conduct and recommend appropriate sanctioning to the WSC and follow up within the authority of the WOSM Constitution and the relevant WOSM policies whenever they are proven to its satisfaction
- facilitate information and training to relevant stakeholders in the organisation and provide the necessary training resources
- provide mediation services to World, Regional, Zonal, and National levels where requested

Authority: The Ethics Committee has delegated authority from the WSC to:

- enforce WOSM Code of Conduct by investigating potential breaches of individuals and Member Organizations and proposing sanctions
- follow up on any perceived breaches to the WOSM Code of Conduct at any time
- review from time to time the WSB's administrative handling and reviewing of incoming complaints, based on the WOSM Complaints Policy
- receive and review such complaints that
 - fulfil the below criteria:

- adhering to the basic principles outlined in the WOSM Complaints Policy
- considered as not being vexatious, and
- pertain to a potential breach of the WOSM Code of Conduct
- o and are received as follows:
 - through the WSB; or
 - raised directly by the WSC or the Chairpersons of other Standing Committees; or
 - addressed directly to the Chairperson of the Ethics Committee (EC) (without intervention of the WSB) if the complaint pertains directly to members of the World or Regional Scout Committees (including ex-officio members that are not WSB staff). WSB staff is not included here, as they are subject to the WSB's internal Code of Conduct.
- review the complaint as appropriate using reasonable resources, in accordance with the Complaints Policy. In case the EC deems that there might be a requirement to refer the case to appropriate legal authorities, it will immediately consult on the case with the legal counsel of the WSB for appropriate action.

Practicalities: The following practicalities will apply to the work of the Ethics Committee:

- the Ethics Committee shall report directly to the WSC
- a Conflict of Interest Policy, in line with the WSC Conflict of Interest Policy, will be adopted by the Ethics Committee. The Conflict of Interest Policy will include a specific provision stating that, if a complaint pertains directly to a member of the Ethics Committee, the member will be provisionally suspended from the Committee for the duration of the investigation. The Conflict of Interest Policy will also include a specific provision stating that if a complaint pertains to individuals from an Ethics Committee member's NSO, such member should not be involved in the investigation of the respective complaint)
- the WSB staff in charge of legal affairs and any other staff designated by the Secretary General will coordinate staff support to the Ethics Committee
- an agenda and accompanying papers will be circulated to members seven days in advance of a meeting taking place
- the minutes and actions of a meeting will be circulated to members within seven days after a meeting takes place
- in the event of the establishment, by the WSC, of special task forces or other bodies with subjects which have, in whole or in part, an ethical impact, the Ethics Committee will be expected to work in close cooperation with such task forces or bodies
- further rules governing the functioning of the Ethics Committee shall be decided by the Ethics Committee itself, shall be reflected in an updated version of this document and advised to the WSC Chairperson
- these terms of reference, and any amendments thereto, shall be approved by the WSC.

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