

National *freedom* Network

NFN Membership Agreement

This agreement serves to formalize membership with and govern the relationship between the National Freedom Network (NFN) as South Africa's counter-Trafficking in Persons (TiP) network, and its members, whether professional individuals, sole proprietors, business entities or non-governmental organisations.

Guiding Principles

As members of the NFN we collectively commit to the following ethical principles to guide all that we do in the counter-TiP space:

Accountability

We commit to being accountable to one another in word and conduct within our counter-TiP work, and to work within the boundaries of the Prevention and Combating of Trafficking in Persons (PACOTIP) Act 7 of 2013 and other related South African legislation, recognizing that our individual behavior and decisions can influence and affect reputation and relationship within the wider counter-TiP movement.

Best Practice

We strive to follow global best practice and the highest industry standards in our work against Trafficking in Persons, to humbly, but actively, seek justice for the victims we serve.

Collaboration

We believe that networking and collaboration are strategic responses to Trafficking in Persons (TiP). As such we agree to work with one another in the fight against TiP, recognizing that we have a common purpose with unique functions and contributions within the Network.

Confidentiality

We commit to keeping confidential any information that has been shared in express confidence during any conversation, discussion, or meeting. We will also not disclose any information to any unauthorized person, where such disclosure might compromise ongoing investigations, or the safety and security of any person or civil or state organization involved in the case.

Dignity

We believe that every person has the right to dignity, and that one of the best practices we can adopt is to "recognize the dignity and value of the people around us." (Kirsten Jenkin)

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Research Based

We rely on recent and robust research at both the local and global level, to inform best practices within our scope of service provision.

Self-Care

We acknowledge that we work in a trauma filled space, and that we cannot be effective if we ourselves are not physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually well.

Survivor Informed

When and where possible, we will strive to ensure that the voices of survivors are included and form part of programme and project design and development.

Trauma Informed

We recognize the importance of working from a trauma informed perspective, and commit to ensuring that all relevant team members, staff, interns and volunteers are adequately trained on trauma informed approaches.

Victim Centred

Being victim centred means placing the rights, needs, priorities and concerns of the victim at the forefront of any response. We recognize the importance of ensuring a victim centered approach and commit to ensuring that we operate from this approach at every level of the work.

Code of Conduct

In addition to committing to the Guiding Principles, as members of the NFN we recognize that the NFN (Team and Board) does not govern our day-to-day operations but that it does, however, play an overall regulatory compliance role. As such we:

- Understand that our work, including any unconventional methods, needs to be conducted within the boundaries of legislation (particularly the legal instruments listed in the National Policy Framework and Standard Operating Procedure for Integrated Victim Assistance to Victims of Trafficking) and best practice, and that any complaint or report of illegal / criminal activity by a member will be investigated and reported to authorities where necessary.
- Commit to reporting any knowledge or suspicion of Trafficking in Persons, especially Child Trafficking, through the relevant and available channels.
- Will always strive to keep paramount the safety and security of potential victims, confirmed victims, and survivors and all those accommodating and / or working with them.

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- Commit to respecting the value and dignity of each potential victim, confirmed victim and survivor, including through stories told and images used, and will always endeavour to make use of the [Ethical Storytelling](#) principles.
- Will strive to ensure that we reference legitimate sources for information, facts and statistics cited on any of our platforms and communication channels and understand that dissemination or sharing of material is equivalent to endorsement.
- Understand that there is a process in place with regards to conducting research within the Network, and that any research requests coming in via the NFN Team will have been through a vetting process as per the NFN Research Requirements, to ensure among other things that (a) any necessary ethical clearance is in place and (b) the potential risk of secondary traumatization has been considered and catered for. It is however, ultimately each member's choice as to whether they will participate in said research or not.
- Will not compromise our standards for funding and agree that we will not accept any local or international funding that requires us to engage in activities that are illegal, corrupt or conducted in an unethical manner.
- Will respect intellectual property rights on materials and resources and commit to avoiding plagiarism of any form or manner. Use of any written, printed, audio, visual or other material designed or produced by another person or organization, shall be used only with express written consent from the person or organization that has copyright or intellectual property rights on that material. This includes resources available on the SA Counter-Trafficking Resource Library.

Member Criteria

These are the minimum standards required of NFN members:

- Each member shall be active in the counter-TiP field or at a minimum have a counter-TiP programme or focus project within the wider scope of organisational or business activities.
- Each member shall be operational in South Africa.
- For new applicants, a minimum of two reference letters from existing members is required.
- Individual members will be required to submit a police clearance certificate no older than 3 months.
- Each organisational or business entity member (with exception of sole proprietors) shall be registered as a legal entity.
- Each organisational member working with children, shall have a Child Protection Policy in place.
- Each member working directly with victims and / or survivors shall have a Safeguarding policy or set of policies in place.

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- Phase 1 shelters shall be Department of Social Development (DSD) registered **and** accredited to provide shelter or housing to adult victims of trafficking (or at a minimum provide proof of having started the accreditation process).
- Child and Youth Care Centres shall be registered with DSD as a place of safety for minors in need of care of protection.
- Any member providing counselling services to victims or survivors shall be appropriately qualified and preferably trauma informed.
- Any member working with data and intel around TiP matters and cases, shall have a Case Management System in place.
- Any member performing any form or manner of investigation activities, shall do so within the constitutional framework of South Africa, all relevant and related legislation, and for SA citizens within the PSIRA¹ framework and registration.
- Sole proprietors and business entities shall have a risk mitigation strategy in place, to ensure responsible supply chains free from any abuse, exploitation or trafficking.

Member Commitments

As official members of the NFN we commit to:

- Treating one another as colleagues, partners and professionals in the field, with dignity and respect.
- Completing the NFN Member Profile Form and updating it annually. We also understand and agree that official contact details provided on the NFN Member Profile Form may be used for referral and connection purposes.
- Keeping the NFN Team up to date with regards to our counter-TIP programmes, projects and campaigns, as well as any major changes within the organization and its work, understanding that the NFN Team cannot otherwise effectively champion our work.
- Submitting our annual report - or a summary of our counter-TIP activities and achievements for the year - to the NFN Team by latest 28 February each year.
- Accepting that apart from a few organisations, the NFN will co-represent all members on the National Inter-sectoral Committee for Trafficking in Persons (NICTIP) and the National Rapid Response Task Team (NRRT) and will feed back to us all relevant information, as well as consult widely and be as inclusive as possible at these meetings.
- Having at least one team member represent us on a minimum of two of the annual, virtual national conference calls held for NFN members. This person will also be responsible for providing clear feedback to the rest of our team.
- Sharing any lessons learned with other NFN members, when applicable.

¹ Private Security Industry Regulatory Authority

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- Getting actively involved in local level Coalitions and / or Provincial Task Teams, where possible from a permission, logistic and financial perspective.
- Providing reference letters for new applicants to the NFN, only if we are willing to fully endorse their reputation and their work.
- Dealing with disputes in a respectful and honest manner. If the dispute has taken place within a local forum, said forum will need to act to resolve the dispute. If the dispute is not resolved and the aggrieved party feels that conduct has violated the NFN Member Agreement, then the dispute may be raised to the NFN Team who will mediate where possible.

NFN Team Commitments

As the NFN Team we commit to:

- Supporting and championing you - our members - and your counter-TiP activities and programmes that fall within the bounds of this agreement and its relevant guidelines.²
- Disseminating important information, documents and changes or updates that would affect your work and that you require access to.
- Hosting a minimum of three virtual national member conference calls per annum.
- Ensuring that any research requests made directly to or through NFN, have met the NFN research requirements and minimum standards prior to allowing any researcher access to you. Initial introduction to the researcher and research project, will also be made by an NFN team member.
- Providing access to exclusive member benefits which include but are not limited to:
 - Introductions and referrals within and beyond the Network.
 - Access to other network members and their skills, knowledge and expertise.
 - Representation at the NIC:TIP Committee and National Rapid Response Team (NRRT) meetings, effectively acting as a communication channel for you.
 - Consultation on any TiP-related matters that require your input as role players in the field.
 - Priority registration for the NFN capacity building sessions.
 - Provision of one-on-one or group consultation calls, during business hours, for any relevant input, review, conversations, discussions or concerns related to your counter-TiP work.
 - Provision of a safe platform for the sharing of resources and information, as well as a safe space to voice concerns and latest trends.
 - Information of funding opportunities and grant alerts that might be relevant to your work, when and as we come across such opportunities or alerts.

² Any place of safety that accommodates Victims of Trafficking (VoTs) and advertises their physical address on any platform, will automatically remain a silent member of the NFN and will not be publicly promoted. Additionally, every member has the option to be a silent member should they feel this would contribute to their safety and security.

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- Priority for potential partnership on funded projects.
- Reference letters for funding applications or other counter-TiP activities.

Duration, resignation, suspension or termination

This agreement shall be valid from the date of signature until further significant revisions are made which might require Members to sign newly updated agreement. The Membership Agreement will be reviewed and updated based on input from the NFN Team, NFN Board and official NFN Members.

Members can resign from NFN membership by writing a resignation letter to notify the NFN National Network Coordinator with applicable reason(s) and a one-month notice period.

NFN will issue a verbal and written warning for the following scenarios:

- First time offenses relating to the Code of Conduct, Member Criteria or Member Commitments set out above.

NFN reserves the right to suspend or terminate membership in the following cases:

- Repeated non-compliance with the Code of Conduct and / or Member Criteria and / or Member Commitments listed above.
- Evidence of abuse within or by the member - whether physical, emotional, sexual or spiritual in nature - and towards organizational staff, interns, volunteers, clients and beneficiaries, victims and survivors, anyone from the local community, or any other NFN member or partner in the field.
- Any member coming under official investigation for any other alleged criminal activity.
- Issues related to major fraud by leadership that is verified by staff, clients or beneficiaries, audit reports from donors or partners etc.

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Statement of Acknowledgment

While this Membership Agreement is open to review by any of your team or staff members in a national or global position, please ensure that it is signed by your operational head in South Africa - whether CEO, Director, Country Manager or similar position. It should also be shared with the rest of your local SA team and staff members so that everyone is aware of the content.

I acknowledge that I have reviewed the NFN Membership Agreement, and that I understand that it is my responsibility to read, understand, become familiar with, and ensure compliance with the content set out herein, whether in my personal capacity as an Individual Member or Sole Proprietor, or representing a Business Entity or Member Organisation.

Furthermore, I acknowledge receipt of electronic copies of the following documents³, and commit to our team personnel having access to these documents:

- ***Prevention and Combating of Trafficking in Persons Act 7 of 2013***
- ***National Policy Framework (NPF)***
- ***Standard Operating Procedure for Integrated Assistance to Victims of Trafficking***



Name:
Position:
Organisation:
Date:

Name: Marina Reyneke
Position: Director & Operations Manager
National Freedom Network

³ These documents are downloadable from the NFN Online Platform. Please contact us should you not receive them.