

SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Protecting the dignity and wellbeing of all those we serve

POLICY REFERENCE

Policy Number	BALSK / SGP / 2026 / 01
Version	1.0
Date of Adoption	14 June 2026
Review Due	14 June 2027
Approved By	Board of Management Committee, BALS
Safeguarding Officer	Shri Binod Sharma, Secretary
Contact	+91-9934718741 balskraj@gmail.com
Classification	Public Document

BINOBA AROGYA EVAM LOK SHIKSHAN KENDRA

Vill. Jai Krishana Nagar, P.O. Baday, Via Islampur, Dist. Nalanda, Bihar - 801303
Regd. No. 195/87-88 | FCRA No. 031340012/1988 | PAN: AAAAB0762B

"Safeguarding is not a compliance exercise. It is a commitment to the people we serve, the communities we work in, and the values we stand for."

01 PREAMBLE

Binoba Arogya Evam Lok Shikshan Kendra (BALSK) is a registered civil society organisation established in 1987, working across health, education, livelihood, disaster risk reduction, and community development in Nalanda and neighbouring districts of Bihar.

Over more than three decades, BALSK has worked directly with children, women, marginalised communities, and survivors of natural disasters. This proximity to vulnerable groups brings with it both a privilege and a profound responsibility — the responsibility to ensure that no person is ever harmed, exploited, or put at risk as a result of their association with BALSK.

This Safeguarding Policy is BALSK's formal, institutional commitment to uphold the safety, dignity, and rights of every individual it works with. It sets out the standards, systems, and responsibilities that govern safeguarding across all of BALSK's operations. BALSK maintains an absolute zero-tolerance position towards any form of safeguarding violation.

02 LEGAL AND REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

BALSK's safeguarding approach is grounded in and consistent with the following legal and regulatory framework:

Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012	Provides for protection of children from offences of sexual assault, sexual harassment and pornography
Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015	Governs care, protection and rehabilitation of children in need
Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (POSH) Act, 2013	Prevention, prohibition and redressal of sexual harassment of women at the workplace
Indian Penal Code (IPC)	Relevant provisions on assault, abuse, exploitation and criminal misconduct
UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), 1989	International framework affirming children's rights to protection, participation and survival
FCRA Act, 1976 and Amendments	Compliance obligations governing foreign contribution and organisational accountability

03 SCOPE OF THIS POLICY

This policy applies without exception to all persons and entities associated with BALSK in any capacity:

BALSK Staff	All full-time, part-time, and contractual employees
Volunteers & Interns	All individuals contributing on a voluntary or internship basis
Consultants	All external experts engaged for specific assignments
Board Members	All members of the Board of Management Committee
Partner Organisations	All implementing partners and their staff working in BALS/ programmes
Visitors & Researchers	Donors, journalists, researchers, and any visitor who interacts with beneficiaries

The policy covers all geographic locations of BALS/’s operations across Bihar and any other state where BALS/ conducts programmes, field visits, or activities.

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DEFINITIONS

4.1 Safeguarding

Safeguarding refers to all measures, systems, and practices adopted by BALSK to protect people particularly children and vulnerable adults from harm, abuse, neglect, or exploitation that could arise through their contact with BALSK's work, staff, volunteers, or partners.

4.2 A Child

For the purposes of this policy, a child is any person below the age of 18 years, consistent with the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015 and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989.

4.3 A Vulnerable Adult

A vulnerable adult is any person aged 18 or above who may be at risk of harm due to physical or mental disability, illness, age, poverty, social exclusion, or other circumstances that limit their ability to protect themselves.

4.4 Categories of Harm

Physical Abuse	Any act causing bodily injury or physical suffering, including hitting, shaking, burning, or using excessive force
Emotional / Psychological Abuse	Persistent behaviour that causes emotional damage — including threats, humiliation, intimidation, or isolation
Sexual Abuse / Harassment	Any unwanted sexual conduct, contact, or exploitation including non-contact abuse such as exposure or sharing of sexual material
Neglect	The persistent failure to provide essential care, supervision, food, shelter, or medical attention to a person in one's care
Financial Exploitation	Misappropriation of a person's money, assets, or resources without their consent or under conditions of pressure
Discrimination	Unfair treatment on the basis of gender, caste, religion, disability, ethnicity, age, or HIV status

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SAFEGUARDING OFFICER

BALSK has designated a Safeguarding Officer who bears primary institutional responsibility for the implementation, monitoring, and review of this policy across all programmes and locations.

DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING OFFICER

Shri Binod Sharma

Secretary, BALSJ

Phone: +91-9934718741

Email: balskraj@gmail.com, secretariat@balsk.in

BALSK Office, Jai Krishana Nagar, Islampur, Nalanda, Bihar

Roles and Responsibilities of the Safeguarding Officer

- Serve as the primary point of contact for all safeguarding concerns, complaints, and inquiries
- Ensure orientation on this policy for every new staff member, volunteer, and consultant at commencement of engagement
- Maintain a confidential and secure Safeguarding Register recording all concerns, reports, and their outcomes
- Lead or oversee the investigation of all reported safeguarding incidents with impartiality
- Ensure timely support and referral for survivors and affected parties
- Liaise with government authorities, law enforcement, and legal bodies when required
- Report all significant safeguarding concerns and case outcomes to the Board of Management Committee
- Ensure the policy is formally reviewed at least once every twelve months
- Undertake regular training to remain current in safeguarding standards and best practices
- Coordinate with partner organisations to ensure alignment with this policy

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PREVENTION

6.1 Code of Conduct

All individuals covered by this policy are required to read, understand, and sign BALS's Safeguarding Code of Conduct. This is a binding document and must be signed before or at the commencement of any engagement with BALS.

Expected Behaviours - All persons associated with BALS shall:

- Treat all beneficiaries, colleagues, and community members with dignity, respect, and fairness at all times
- Maintain professional boundaries in all interactions, particularly with children and vulnerable groups
- Report any safeguarding concern to the Safeguarding Officer without delay
- Cooperate fully with any safeguarding investigation
- Maintain confidentiality on all safeguarding matters and case details
- Challenge or report inappropriate behaviour by colleagues or partners
- Obtain appropriate consent before photographing, filming, or publishing any image of beneficiaries

Prohibited Behaviours - All persons associated with BALS shall NOT:

- Engage in any physical, emotional, sexual, or financial abuse or exploitation of any beneficiary
- Use their position of authority to extract personal favours, gifts, or services
- Spend time alone with a child or vulnerable adult in a private or unsupervised setting
- Use language that is demeaning, threatening, discriminatory, or sexually suggestive
- Share personal or sensitive information about beneficiaries without explicit authorisation
- Suppress, discourage, or fail to report a safeguarding concern raised by another person
- Consume alcohol or intoxicants while on duty or in contact with beneficiaries

6.2 Safe Recruitment

BALS follows safe recruitment practices to minimise the risk of appointing individuals who may pose a risk to vulnerable groups. All appointments involving regular contact with children or vulnerable adults include identity verification, reference checks with previous employers, and, where legally permissible, a background screening. Appointment letters reference the mandatory Code of Conduct obligation.

6.3 Induction and Ongoing Training

Every person covered under this policy receives a safeguarding induction before commencing work. The Safeguarding Officer conducts a structured annual refresher training for all staff. Community-level awareness sessions are held to ensure beneficiaries are informed of their rights and know how to report concerns.

6.4 Safe Programming

All BALS programmes are designed and implemented with safeguarding considerations integrated from the outset. This includes safe data management, use of appropriate images, inclusive community engagement, and regular safety assessments at field locations.

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REPORTING MECHANISMS

Any person - staff, volunteer, beneficiary, or community member - who witnesses, experiences, or suspects a safeguarding concern is strongly encouraged and expected to report it promptly. No concern is too small.

7.1 Reporting Channels

Concerns may be reported through any of the following channels:

Direct to Safeguarding Officer	Shri Binod Sharma +91-9934718741 balskraj@gmail.com, secretariat@balsk.in
Written Complaint	Addressed to the Secretary, BALS/ , Jai Krishana Nagar, Islampur, Nalanda, Bihar
Verbal Report to Any Senior Staff	The receiving staff member is obligated to inform the Safeguarding Officer within 24 hours
Anonymous Report	BALS/ accepts anonymous concerns and will investigate them to the extent reasonably possible

7.2 Mandatory Reporting

The reporting of safeguarding concerns is mandatory for all BALS/ staff and volunteers. Any person who becomes aware of or reasonably suspects a safeguarding violation is duty-bound to report it. Failure to report is a serious breach of this policy and may result in disciplinary action, including termination of service.

7.3 Documentation and Record-Keeping

The Safeguarding Officer shall document all safeguarding reports in the Safeguarding Register within 24 hours of receipt. Each entry must include the date and time of the report, the nature of the concern, parties involved, immediate action taken, and the follow-up plan. All documentation is stored securely and accessed only on a need-to-know basis.

7.4 Protection of the Reporter

BALS/ guarantees that any person who raises a safeguarding concern in good faith, whether their own experience or a concern about another, will be fully protected from retaliation, victimisation, harassment, or any adverse professional consequence. This protection extends to beneficiaries, staff, volunteers, and community informants.

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CASE MANAGEMENT AND RESPONSE

8.1 Survivor-Centred Approach

BALSK's response to every safeguarding concern is grounded in a survivor-centred approach. This means:

- The safety, wellbeing, and dignity of the survivor are the overriding priority in every decision
- The survivor's wishes, preferences, and consent are sought and respected at every stage
- The survivor is kept informed of the progress of any investigation or action taken
- Immediate emotional and practical support is arranged for the survivor before any investigation commences
- The survivor is never pressured to participate in proceedings they are not comfortable with

8.2 Initial Assessment and Response

Upon receiving a safeguarding report, the Safeguarding Officer will take the following steps immediately:

1. Ensure the physical and emotional safety of the survivor
2. Formally acknowledge receipt of the concern within 48 hours
3. Carry out an initial risk assessment to determine the severity and urgency of the situation
4. Inform the Board of Management Committee if the concern is of a serious or complex nature
5. Cooperate with police or government child protection authorities if legally required
6. Ensure that the alleged perpetrator is not in a position to continue contact with the survivor or others at risk

8.3 Investigation Process

All safeguarding investigations will be conducted in accordance with the following principles:

- Investigations are led by the Safeguarding Officer or an independent designated investigator
- All proceedings are conducted with strict impartiality, confidentiality, and sensitivity
- Both the complainant and the respondent are given a fair opportunity to present their account
- No person with a conflict of interest will be involved in the investigation
- The investigation timeline is communicated to all parties at the outset
- Findings and outcomes are documented formally in the Safeguarding Register

8.4 Disciplinary Action

Where an allegation is substantiated following a fair investigation, BALS/ will take disciplinary action proportionate to the severity of the violation:

Minor / First Violation	Formal written warning and mandatory safeguarding training
Serious Violation	Suspension from duties pending full investigation
Substantiated Serious Violation	Termination of employment or engagement, and potential referral to law enforcement
Criminal Conduct	Immediate referral to law enforcement and full cooperation with legal proceedings

BALSK will not permit any individual found responsible for a safeguarding violation to continue in any role involving contact with vulnerable populations.

8.5 Confidentiality and Data Protection

All safeguarding information is classified as strictly confidential. Details of any case are shared only on a strict need-to-know basis. Personal information of survivors will not be disclosed to any party without their informed, voluntary consent. All physical records are stored in locked files and all digital records are protected with access controls. BALS/ complies fully with applicable data protection laws and principles in managing safeguarding data.

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MONITORING AND REVIEW

The Safeguarding Officer, Shri Binod Sharma holds primary accountability for monitoring the implementation of this policy. The following oversight mechanisms are in place:

Annual Policy Review	Full review of this policy by the Safeguarding Officer and the Board of Management Committee, every June
Quarterly Register Review	Review of the Safeguarding Register every quarter to identify patterns, gaps, or recurring concerns
Annual Staff Training	Mandatory refresher safeguarding training for all staff, documented and recorded
Community Feedback	Structured community feedback sessions at all field locations to ensure beneficiaries can raise concerns freely
Partner Compliance	Annual check that all implementing partners have reviewed and aligned with BALSK's Safeguarding Policy
Board Reporting	Summary of safeguarding activity, including any cases and outcomes, reported to the Board annually

Any amendments to this policy require approval by the Board of Management Committee and will be communicated to all staff, volunteers, and partners through a formal circular issued by the Secretary.

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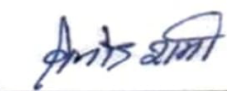
ORGANISATIONAL COMMITMENT

Safeguarding is the shared responsibility of every person associated with BALSK. It is not optional. It is not limited to certain roles. It applies to all, at all times, in all places.

BALSK commits to providing all necessary resources, training, and systems to ensure that this policy is not merely a document but a living part of its organisational culture. The leadership of BALSK — the Board of Management Committee and the Secretary — personally affirm this commitment and are accountable for its fulfilment.

This policy has been reviewed and formally adopted by the Board of Management Committee of Binoba Arogya Evam Lok Shikshan Kendra (BALSK).

Safeguarding Officer

Signature: 

Approved by Board of Management Committee



Name: Shri Binod Sharma

Designation: Secretary, BALKS

Date: 14/06/2026

Signature: 

Name: BHAGWAN SINGH

Designation: PRESIDENT

Date: 14/6/2026

Signature: 

Name: BINOD SHARMA

Designation: SECRETARY

Date: _____

Signature: 

Name: PANO DEVI

Designation: TREASURER

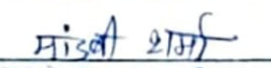
Date: _____

Signature: 

Name: SHYAMSUNDRI DEVI

Designation: MEMBER

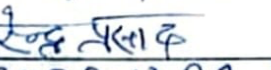
Date: 14/06/2026

Signature: 

Name: MANDVI SHARMA

Designation: MEMBER

Date: 14/06/2026

Signature: 

Name: SURENDRA PRASAD

Designation: MEMBER

Date: 14/06/2026

Signature: 

Name: SANTOSH KUMAR

Designation: MEMBER

Date: 14/6/2026

ANNEXURE A

Safeguarding Code of Conduct — Staff Acknowledgement Register

I, the undersigned, hereby confirm that I have received, read, and fully understood the Safeguarding Policy and Code of Conduct of Binoba Arogya Evam Lok Shikshan Kendra (BALSK). I commit to abiding by all standards and obligations set out therein. I understand that any violation of this Code of Conduct may result in disciplinary action, including termination of my engagement with BALSK, and may also attract legal consequences under applicable law.

S.No	Full Name	Designation	Department / Project	Signature	Date
1	ANJAY KUMAR	PM	BALSK - MISEROR	Anjay Kumar	15.6.26
2	ARVIND KR.	ACCOUNTANT CUM PROJECT ASSISTANT	"	Arvind Kumar	15-06-26
3	MRITUNJAY KR.	SUPERVISOR	"	Mrityunjay Kumar	15/6/26
4	BANTY KUMAR	HEALTH ANIMATOR	"	Banty Kumar	15.6.26
5	DR. SHAMBHU SHARAN SINGH	NON PAYROLL STAFF DOCTOR	"	शम्भुशरण सिंह	
6	ARCHA KUMARI	" " ANM	"	अर्चना कुमारी	15/6/2026
7	RAMPRAVESH RAM	DRIVER	"	रामप्रवेश राम	15/6/2026
8	PRITI DEVI	HEALTH ANIMATOR	"	प्रीति देवी	15/6/26
9	VIDYANAND KR. CHAUHAN	"	"	विद्यानन्द कुमार	15/06/26
10	NUTAN DEVI	"	"	नूतन देवी	15/6/26
11	BECHAN KR. PANDIT	"	"	बैचन कुमार पंडित	15/6/26
12	SATYA PRAKASH	NON PAYROLL TECHNICAL ASSOCIATE	"	Satya	15/06/2026
13					
14					
15					

ANNEXURE B

Safeguarding Incident Report Form

This form is to be completed by any person reporting a safeguarding concern. All information will be treated with strict confidentiality. Submit completed form to the Safeguarding Officer: Shri Binod Sharma | +91-9934718741

Date of Report	
Name of Reporter (optional)	
Contact of Reporter (optional)	
Relationship to BALS	Staff / Volunteer / Beneficiary / Community Member / Other
Name of Survivor / Affected Person	
Age / Gender of Survivor	
Location of Incident	
Date / Time of Incident	
Nature of Concern	Physical / Emotional / Sexual / Neglect / Financial / Other
Name of Alleged Perpetrator (if known)	
Relationship of Perpetrator to BALS	

Description of the concern (please describe what happened in as much detail as possible):

Immediate action taken (if any): _____

Signature of Reporter: _____ Date: _____

FOR SAFEGUARDING OFFICER USE ONLY

Date Received by Officer	
Case Reference Number	
Initial Risk Assessment	Low / Medium / High / Critical
Immediate Action Taken	
Referred to Authorities?	Yes / No — If Yes, specify:
Board Notified?	Yes / No — Date:
Outcome of Investigation	
Disciplinary Action Taken	
Case Closed On	
Signature of Officer	Shri Binod Sharma +91-9934718741

This policy was approved at a meeting of the Board of Management Committee held on June 14, 2026 at Islampur, Nalanda

