

Amity within Red Cross – what to do if I encounter inappropriate behaviour?

The Finnish Red Cross expects all its volunteers to treat other volunteers, recipients of aid, employees and partners alike professionally, respectfully and fairly. We value each other's opinions and views, and treat everyone fairly. We are committed to ensuring that the Red Cross is a safe environment for its volunteers, recipients of aid, employees and third parties, both in face-to-face encounters and online.

As an organisation, the Finnish Red Cross therefore does not condone any form of inappropriate treatment or behaviour. Any behaviour that cannot be considered generally acceptable and that offends or demeans the other party can be considered inappropriate behaviour and harassment. Examples of inappropriate behaviour include sexual harassment, discrimination, bullying or defamation.

When volunteers first start their volunteer activities, they commit to following the seven basic principles of the Red Cross and the volunteer code of ethics of the Finnish Red Cross. We also adhere to the principles of a safer space at all events and in all activities of our organisation.

So, if you witness or are subjected to inappropriate behaviour or harassment, it is your right – and your duty – to intervene. You can follow the steps described in the process below, depending on your role.

In particularly serious cases, a written report of the incident must also be submitted via the Finnish Red Cross's [**misconduct reporting channel**](#). The report may be made by the person who has experienced harassment, by the branch, or on behalf of those who have experienced harassment. In the event of a suspected crime, the police must be contacted or the victim is supported in filing a police report.

The situation must always be assessed in an unbiased, confidential, reliable and independent manner. The assessment must be based on facts. In an acute situation, the volunteer's activities can be put on hold while the incident is being investigated, by a decision of the volunteer or employee in charge of the activity. During the initial review it is important not to share information with any outsiders on the work of the investigation team, and no conclusions cannot yet be drawn about the final conclusion of the matter.

You can find further information and more detailed instructions on resolving situations involving inappropriate behaviour in the guide [**'Amity within Red Cross'. Prevention and processing of inappropriate treatment and harassment in volunteer activities.**](#)



Reviewing inappropriate behaviour or harassment

Problematic situations are always primarily resolved close to the volunteer activities



You observe or experience inappropriate behaviour or harassment.

1

Explain the issue first to the volunteer in charge of the activity in question or to the president of the branch.

- Contact the employee in charge of the volunteer activities in question if...
 - bringing the matter up in your operational environment feels difficult
 - the case is related to the elected officials of your branch
 - an FRC employee is in charge of the activity (e.g. online activities)
- Contact the district's executive director/head of the department if...
 - the case is related to employees or elected officials of the district board

2

The person receiving your notification will take the matter forward; it will be processed and a report will be compiled of the situation.

3

The district/institution will always help and support with resolving the situation when needed.

4

When the situation has been resolved, a follow-up meeting will be agreed on and support and help will be made available as needed to everyone involved in the matter.

5

If a crime is suspected in the matter or if the case is otherwise very serious, i.e. sexual harassment is suspected, this will be reported through the whistleblowing channel of the Finnish Red Cross.

- A police report will always be filed in the event of a crime.

