

Standards for the Protection of Children

Museum of Illusions Warsaw

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Preamble

The paramount principle of all actions undertaken by the Museum of Illusions is to act in the best interest of the child. Every employee of the Museum treats the child with respect and consistently considers their needs. Any form of violence against children is strictly prohibited. The Museum's employees, in pursuing these objectives, act within the framework of applicable laws, internal regulations of the Museum, and their competencies.

Chapter I: Definitions of Terms

§ 1.

Museum – Museum of Illusions sp. z o.o., sp.k., Rynek Starego Miasta 21, 00-273 Warsaw, (NIP: 1132936609, REGON: 366932467, KRS: 0001130575).

Museum Employees – individuals employed by the Museum. Their duties involve activities requiring contact with minors, including:

- Guiding tours involving minors. Visiting groups remain under the supervision of their guardians, and employees are not responsible for supervising children during their time at the Museum. Their responsibilities include conducting museum lessons, ensuring order and behavior, managing the museum shop, and assisting with the exhibits and objects made available by the Museum.
- Assisting Museum visitors, including children who are at the Museum under the care of a parent/guardian or an authorized caretaker, with navigating the exhibits, managing the shop counter, and providing instructions and information about the Museum.
- Assisting in situations that pose a risk to children.

Child – For the purposes of this document, a child is defined as a person under 18 years of age.

Child's Guardian – the legal representative of the child: parent, guardian, foster parent, temporary guardian, teacher, or the person responsible for an organized tour.

Parental Consent – refers to the consent of at least one of the child's parents or guardians. In case of a disagreement between the parents, they should be informed of the need for the family court to resolve the matter.

Child Abuse – Child abuse refers to any behavior towards a child that constitutes a criminal offense. This includes neglect (whether intentional or unintentional), action or inaction, and any result that violates the child's rights, freedoms, personal goods, or disrupts their development.

There are several basic forms of child abuse:

1. Physical abuse – Single or repeated acts or omissions that cause or threaten physical harm to the child. This harm results from actions or inactions by a parent, guardian, or person entrusted with power over the child or someone the child trusts.
2. Psychological abuse – Prolonged, non-physical harmful interactions between the child and the person responsible for the child or someone they trust. It includes both actions and omissions. Examples include emotional unavailability, neglect, hostility, blaming, rejection, or inappropriate developmental interactions.
3. Sexual abuse – Engaging a child in sexual activities, whether physical contact occurs or not. This includes situations like exhibitionism, inappropriate verbal conversations, or the sharing of pornographic materials.
4. Neglect – Chronic or incidental failure to meet the child's physical and emotional needs, which leads to health or developmental problems.
5. Peer violence (bullying) – When a child experiences various forms of harassment by peers. This may be direct or through communication technologies like the internet or mobile phones.

Person responsible for the protection standards – The company president, who may designate another person to oversee the proper implementation of child protection standards and ensure they remain up-to-date.

Person responsible for child protection – A Museum employee present on-site, tasked with receiving reports of child safety risks and initiating interventions with the appropriate authorities or institutions.

Person responsible for child support – A Museum employee tasked with developing and monitoring a child support plan.

Child's personal data – Any information that identifies the child, including their name and image.

Chapter II: Identifying and Responding to Risk Factors for Child Abuse

§ 2.

The Museum has implemented intervention procedures that are known and accessible to all staff. Each Museum employee knows who to report to when they encounter child abuse and who is responsible for taking appropriate actions. Museum employees have access to the contact details of local institutions.

§ 3.

Museum employees assigned to child protection duties are those present at the Museum during their shift. They are responsible for reacting, protecting the child, intervening, and providing support when they observe or receive information about potential abuse.

1. Museum employees are knowledgeable and attentive to risk factors and symptoms of child abuse.
2. If a risk factor is identified, the employee engages in a conversation with the child's guardian, offering information about available support options and motivating them to seek assistance.
3. The employee responsible for child protection monitors the situation and well-being of the child.
4. In the event of a violation or suspected violation of the child's rights, the responsible employee reports the matter to the police and informs the Museum president.

§ 4.

A list of nearby health care facilities and support institutions includes:

Healthcare Facilities:

- ZOZ Starówka – Andersa 37, primary and nursing care.
- Bielański Hospital – Specialist hospital with various departments.
- Śródmieście Clinic – Health and specialized care.

Social Support Institutions:

- Śródmieście Social Welfare Center – Material and family support.
- Family Support Center – Comprehensive family and child support.

Specialist Care Institutions:

- Mental Health Clinic – Psychiatric and psychological consultations for children and adults.
- Children's Health Center – Specialized mental health care for children.

§ 5.

The duties of the person designated by the Museum management as responsible for implementing child protection standards include:

1. Ensuring that child protection standards are made available on the Museum's website and on the premises.
2. Preparing Museum employees for applying the standards and child protection before they begin work or after any changes to the standards.
3. Delegating tasks and responsibilities related to implementing child protection standards and monitoring their implementation.
4. Keeping a record of employees who have familiarized themselves with the child protection standards before starting work or after changes to these standards.
5. Reviewing child protection standards in collaboration with the manager and employees.
6. Monitoring difficulties in applying the standards.
7. Coordinating updates to the standards.

§ 6.

The person responsible for child protection must, depending on the circumstances of the case:

1. Accept reports of risk factors threatening the welfare of the child.
2. Accept reports of signs of child abuse or actual abuse, documenting the incident and verifying the situation, and inform the management/organizer of the results of these findings.
3. Accept reports of suspected improper use, dissemination, or exploitation of the child's image, or any issues that arise in this regard.
4. Initiate an intervention.
5. Notify the interdisciplinary team if circumstances justify initiating the "Blue Card" procedure.
6. Notify the family court.
7. File a report of suspected crime against the child.
8. Maintain a record of incidents and interventions, safeguarding the documentation.

§ 7.

The Museum regularly trains personnel on child protection standards:

1. In all cases, regardless of the type of employment or collaboration, the institution verifies the candidate's personal data, qualifications, and competencies for working with children.
2. Before employing or engaging a person in any form of collaboration, and entrusting them with duties involving work with children, the institution also assesses whether there is any risk of that person posing a threat to the well-being and safety of children. Additionally, it ensures that the candidate shares the Museum's values regarding respect for children and their rights.

Museum employees must sign a declaration confirming their knowledge of the child protection standards and commitment to complying with them (Appendix 3).

§ 8.

The Museum follows safe recruitment principles for personnel. During the recruitment process, the following must be obtained:

1. Personal data of the candidate, such as name(s), date of birth, and contact details, confirmed by identity verification.
2. Information regarding:
 - The candidate's education.
 - The candidate's professional qualifications.
 - The candidate's employment history.
3. To obtain additional information about the candidate, the institution may request references from previous employers or contact details for acquiring such references. However, failure to provide these references should not result in negative consequences for the candidate.
4. Before entering into any form of collaboration with an individual, the institution is obliged to verify the candidate's criminal record.

This obligation is based on:

- Article 92c of the Act of September 7, 1991, on the education system (Dz. U. of 2024, item 750).
- Article 21 of the Act on counteracting threats of sexual crimes and the protection of minors.

§ 9.

1. Any declarations made by a person with whom an employment relationship is to be established or who will work within the institution are included in the employee's personal file, or, in the absence of such a file, attached to the civil law contract.
2. Refusal to sign the required declarations prevents the establishment of an employment relationship or any other form of collaboration.

§ 10.

1. Every employee is familiar with and adheres to the established rules for safe relationships between employees and children, between children themselves, and between event participants and children.
2. Each employee has the right to inform the child's guardian about the rules for safe relationships.

§ 11.
Rules for Safe Relationships Between Employees and Children

1. The rules for safe relationships between Museum employees and children apply to all employees, collaborators, interns, and volunteers, as well as any adult having contact with children under the care of the institution when the contact is related to the institution's activities.
2. The primary principle guiding all actions of Museum employees is acting in the best interest of the child.
3. Museum employees treat children with respect, acknowledging their rights and needs.
4. Any form of violence towards children is strictly prohibited.
5. Forming romantic or sexual relationships with children is unacceptable.
6. Museum employees act within the framework of applicable laws, internal regulations of the organizer, and their own competencies.
7. Each employee is obligated to maintain a professional relationship with the child and to always consider whether their response, communication, or action toward the child is appropriate, safe, justified, and fair to other children. All interactions with the child should be conducted in an open and transparent manner to minimize the risk of misinterpretation of behavior.

§ 12.
Communication with Children

In communication with children, every Museum employee:

1. Shows patience and respect towards the child.
2. Listens attentively to children and provides responses appropriate to their age and the situation.
3. Informs the child when making decisions concerning them and attempts to take their expectations into account.
4. Respects the child's right to privacy. If it is necessary to break confidentiality to protect the child, the employee informs the child as soon as possible.
5. Ensures that when possible, other employees are within sight or hearing range during activities with children. In exceptional and justified situations where an employee must be alone with a child, they inform other Museum employees and indicate the exact location where they will be with the child.
6. Assures the child that if they feel uncomfortable in any situation or with a particular behavior or words, they can speak to that employee or another designated person and expect appropriate action and/or help.
7. Avoids shaming, humiliating, neglecting, or offending the child.
8. Does not yell at the child.
9. Does not disclose sensitive information about the child to unauthorized individuals, including other children. This includes the child's image, family, economic, medical, guardianship, and legal situation.
10. Refrains from inappropriate behavior in the presence of children, including using vulgar language, gestures, offensive remarks, referencing sexual activities or attractiveness, and abusing authority or physical strength (e.g., intimidation, coercion, threats).

§ 13.
Activities with Children

In activities with children, every Museum employee:

1. Ensures transparency in every interaction with children.
2. Sets a positive example for children and acts as a role model.
3. Engages children in activities and treats them equally, regardless of their gender, sexual orientation, ability/disability, social status, ethnicity, culture, religion, or worldview.
4. Prioritizes the safety and well-being of children, which includes maintaining vigilance and reporting any irregularities, such as unsecured electrical installations.
5. Pays attention to the physical and emotional needs of children and helps address those needs. The employee ensures that children know who they can approach to report concerns or inappropriate behavior.
6. Reports any concerns about the safety and well-being of children to the guardians accompanying the children to the Museum.
7. Ensures the safety of children and access to immediate medical assistance (first aid kit availability, ability to call an ambulance).
8. Avoids involving children in games or activities that degrade, insult, or embarrass them, or cross boundaries of intimacy.

9. Does not favor any children or provide them with unnecessary personal attention.
10. Does not engage in romantic or sexual relationships with children or make inappropriate propositions. This includes sexual comments, jokes, gestures, or sharing erotic or pornographic content with children, regardless of its form.
11. Does not capture the child's image (filming, recording, photographing) for personal use. This also applies to allowing third parties to capture images of children without informing the Museum management, obtaining their approval, and securing the consent of the child's guardians and the child.
12. Does not offer children alcohol, tobacco products, or illegal substances, nor does the employee use them in the presence of children.
13. Does not accept money or gifts from the child or the child's guardians. The employee avoids creating relationships of dependency with the child or the child's guardians that could lead to accusations of unequal treatment or gaining financial or other benefits.

§ 14. Physical Contact with Children

Any action towards a child that can be seen as an act of violence is unacceptable. However, there are situations in which physical contact with a child may be appropriate and adheres to the rules of safe contact because it meets the child's needs at that moment, considering their age, developmental stage, gender, and cultural and situational context. There is no universal rule to determine when such physical contact is appropriate, as behavior that is acceptable for one child may be inappropriate for another. Employees should always rely on their professional judgment, listen to and observe the child's reactions, ask for consent before initiating physical contact (e.g., a hug), and be aware that even well-intended contact can be misinterpreted by the child or third parties.

§ 15. Physical Contact with Children (Continued)

Every Museum employee, when engaging in physical contact with children, adheres to the following principles:

1. If it is necessary to touch a child to correct their posture or provide assistance, the employee explains beforehand what they will do and why.
2. The employee must always be prepared to explain their actions and gestures toward the child.
3. Special care is taken with children who have experienced abuse, whether sexual, physical, or emotional.
4. Physical contact with children should always be open and visible to others.
5. The employee does not hit, poke, push, tug, kick, pat, or in any way violate the physical integrity of the child.
6. The employee avoids touching the child in a manner that could be perceived as indecent or inappropriate.
7. The employee refrains from engaging in activities such as tickling, play-fighting, or rough physical games with children.

§ 16. Contact Before and After Visiting the Museum

1. Contact with a child should occur only during the child's visit to the Museum and should be related to the employee's duties.
2. Museum employees are not allowed to invite children to their place of residence or meet them in other locations before or after their visit to the Museum.
3. Employees are prohibited from communicating with children via personal communication channels (personal phone, email, social media profiles). If contact is necessary, the proper communication channels for children and their guardians are through official channels (work email, work phone). If the institution does not have official phones, online communication (e.g., through social media groups, emails) is allowed only if there is another adult or at least two children in the recipient group. Communication must always be open and transparent.
4. If there is a need to meet with a child before or after their Museum visit, the Museum employee should inform the Museum, and the child's guardian must consent to such contact.
5. If the child or their guardian is a close friend or acquaintance of the Museum employee, the employee is obligated to keep confidential any information regarding other children or their guardians.

§ 17.

Online Safety

1. Every employee is aware of the digital risks and threats that come from recording private online activity through applications and algorithms, as well as from their own online actions.
2. Museum employees are not allowed to use their personal social media accounts to post information related to working with children. Any such communication must take place through the institution's official social media channels. When posting comments on social media, employees must exercise caution and evaluate whether the information may harm or pose a risk to the child.
3. Museum employees are not allowed to establish contact with a child visiting the Museum through social media connections for purposes unrelated to work.
4. Online communication is conducted through the child's guardian. If this is not possible, both the child and their guardian must provide consent for direct communication, keeping in mind that direct communication with the child via email or closed group communication (e.g., WhatsApp, Messenger) is only permitted if there is at least one other adult or two children in the group. Communication must always be transparent.
5. Messages should be limited to matters directly related to the child's visit to the Museum. Employees must avoid sending anything that a third party could interpret as sexually suggestive.
6. It is prohibited to communicate with children through online chats, gaming websites, or internet messengers.

§ 18.

Rules for Safe Relationships Between Children

1. Children visiting the Museum are under the care of their guardians, who are responsible for their behavior and must ensure that the child they are supervising follows the rules in their interactions with other children.
2. Museum employees are authorized to intervene and alert the child's guardians if they observe that the child under their care is behaving inappropriately.
3. Museum employees may directly address inappropriate behavior by a child who is not following the child-to-child interaction rules, provided the contact with the child adheres to the requirements outlined in the previous chapter concerning employee-child relations.
4. The rules for child-to-child relationships specify that every child should:
 - Show respect to other children.
 - Refrain from using psychological violence.
 - Interact politely with other children, avoiding insults, neglect, or shouting at others.
 - Refrain from physical violence, such as tugging, kicking, pushing, or shoving.
 - Not record, photograph, or share private data of another child.
5. Each Museum employee is obligated to intervene immediately if they observe inappropriate behavior in a child-to-child interaction.
6. The Museum informs children about the possibility of reporting incidents of peer violence, child abuse, or signs of harm to Museum staff.
7. Museum employees, as circumstances allow (e.g., when guiding group tours), may personally inform children about the option to report inappropriate behavior between children or between children and adults.

§ 19.

Training

1. Every Museum employee is trained to identify risk factors and symptoms of child abuse as part of their responsibilities.
2. Each Museum employee participates in trainings organized or recommended by the Museum on child protection. The training is tailored to the employee's role.
3. For permanent staff, the training is conducted at least once every two years.
4. After updates to the standards, Museum employees are informed of the changes, and if necessary, the training is repeated.

Chapter III: Intervention Procedures in Case of a Child's Safety Risk

§ 20.

1. The intervention procedures aim to support Museum employees in fulfilling their legal and social duty to respond to suspected child abuse.

2. Intervention should be initiated regardless of whether the abuse occurred during the child's visit to the Museum or if the information pertains to abuse outside the Museum (e.g., domestic violence).

3. The goal of intervention is to stop the abuse and provide the child with protection and safety.

§ 21.

1. The intervention is conducted by the Museum employee on duty at the time the information about the abuse or signs of violence toward a child was received or observed.

2. If a Museum employee suspects that a child is being harmed or if the abuse is reported by another child or visitor, the employee must prepare an official note and report it to the Museum management, followed by initiating an intervention. The note may take the form of a written document or an email.

3. If the alleged abuse involves the person responsible for the intervention, the Museum manager shall conduct the intervention.

4. If the Museum manager is the one reported for abuse and no other person has been designated to handle interventions, then the person who observed the abuse or received the report must undertake the actions described in this chapter.

§ 22.

1. The Museum employee informs the child's guardian about their duty to report suspected child abuse to the appropriate institution (prosecutor/police or family court or social services). If informing the guardian is contrary to the best interest of the child or impossible, this obligation is waived.

2. After informing the guardians as outlined in the previous point, the Museum employee, in consultation with the Museum manager, submits a notification of suspected crime to the prosecutor or police, or submits a request for family oversight to the local family court or social services.

3. Further actions are carried out by the relevant institutions according to their competences.

4. A report of each intervention is recorded on an intervention card, the template of which is provided in Appendix 1 of these Standards. The card is included in the intervention registry maintained by the Museum management.

§ 23.

In cases where a child's life is at risk or there is a threat of serious harm to their health, the Museum employee who first becomes aware of the danger must immediately notify the appropriate services (police, ambulance) by calling 112. After making the notification, an intervention card must be completed.

§ 24. Child Abuse by an Adult

1. If child abuse is reported, the person responsible for the intervention conducts interviews with the child and other individuals who may have knowledge of the incident, including the child's personal, family, or health circumstances. This includes, especially, conversations with the child's guardian. The person responsible for the intervention makes efforts to establish the course of events and the impact on the child's mental and physical health. These findings are recorded on the intervention card.

2. The person responsible for the intervention informs the child's guardian (provided the guardian is not the perpetrator of the abuse) about the incident and advises on the possibility and justification of obtaining specialized support, either from the Museum or external institutions.

3. If there is suspicion that a crime has been committed against the child, the person responsible for the intervention prepares a notification of a suspected crime and submits it to the relevant police station or prosecutor's office.

§ 25.

1. If the conversation with the guardian reveals that they are not interested in helping the child, are ignoring the incident, or otherwise failing to support the child who has experienced abuse, the person responsible for the intervention prepares a request for family oversight and submits it to the family court with jurisdiction over the family's place of residence.
2. If the findings suggest that the guardian is neglecting the child's physical or emotional needs, or the family is struggling with parenting issues (e.g., the child often leaves home unsupervised, is frequently hungry), or if a family member is abusing the child (e.g., a parent or another household member yells at the child or uses physical punishment such as slapping), the social services must be informed of the situation and the need for family support. Additionally, if unmet needs stem from poverty, abuse, or neglect, the initiation of the "Blue Card" procedure must be requested.

§ 26.

1. If an employee of the Museum is reported for child abuse, they are immediately removed from any contact with children (not just the child victim) until the matter is clarified.
2. If it is evident that the Museum employee engaged in an act of abuse that is not a criminal offense, and there is no need to immediately notify the relevant institutions, the person responsible for the intervention examines all circumstances of the case, including interviewing the person suspected of abuse, the child victim, and other witnesses. If it is determined that the harm to the child was significant, particularly if it involved discrimination or violation of the child's dignity, terminating the employment relationship with the offending person should be considered, or such a solution should be recommended to their superiors.
3. All individuals who, in the course of their professional duties, become aware of child abuse or related information are obliged to keep this information confidential, except when sharing it with authorized institutions as part of the intervention process.

§ 27. Peer Abuse

1. In cases of suspected abuse of one child by another on Museum grounds, a conversation must be held with the child suspected of abuse and their guardian, as well as separately with the abused child and their guardian. Additionally, other individuals with knowledge of the incident should be interviewed.
2. The interviews should aim to establish the facts of the incident and the impact it had on the mental and physical well-being of the abused child. The findings are recorded on an intervention card. Separate intervention cards are completed for both the abusive child and the abused child.
3. A plan for ensuring the safety of the abused child should be developed in consultation with their guardian, including strategies for isolating the child from sources of danger.
4. During the interviews, care should be taken to ensure that the child suspected of abusing another child is not themselves being abused by a guardian, other adults, or other children. If such a situation is confirmed, appropriate intervention measures must be taken regarding this child as well.

§ 28.

1. If the child suspected of abuse is between the ages of 13 and 17 and their behavior qualifies as a punishable act, a written report of the incident must be submitted to the family court or the police responsible for the child's place of residence.
2. If the child suspected of abuse is over 17 years old and their behavior qualifies as a crime, a written report must be submitted to the appropriate local police station or prosecutor's office.

§ 29. Support Plan

In addition to the actions mentioned, the child may be provided with the phone number for the Children's Helpline: 116 111.

Adults can seek help from the Parents and Teachers Helpline regarding Child Safety: 800 100 100.

Chapter IV: Monitoring the Application of Standards

§ 30.

1. The person responsible for overseeing the child protection standards at the Museum is the company president, who may appoint individuals to carry out the tasks described below.
2. The designated person for coordinating the application and observance of the standards monitors compliance, responds to reports of violations, maintains a record of reports, and prepares proposals for changes to the standards.
3. The Museum implements necessary changes to the Standards and communicates them to future Museum managers.

Chapter VI: Final Provisions

§ 31.

1. These Standards come into force on September 30, 2024.
2. The Standards are made available on the entity's website (www.swiatiluzji.pl / <https://swiatiluzji.pl/en/home/>) and displayed on the premises of the Museum of Illusions (Rynek Starego Miasta 21, 00-272 Warsaw).
3. Partner organizations, when their activities involve contact with children, are required to comply with these Standards.

Chapter VII: Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Intervention Card Template
- Appendix 2 – Sample Notification of Suspected Crime
- Appendix 3 – Declaration of Familiarity with and Commitment to Child Protection Standards
- Appendix 4 – Sample Request for Family Situation Review

In the event of any discrepancies arising from the translation into a foreign language, the Polish version of the regulations shall prevail.