

DOCUMENT NAME			PAGE
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Anti-corruption policy for the Church of Sweden at the national level

1. Introduction

Purpose and relation

According to the Church Ordinance, the Church of Sweden should always maintain good financial housekeeping in its operations and funds should be managed effectively and in an ethically justifiable manner that is in line with the Church's fundamental values.

Corruption takes many different forms, but always acts as an obstacle to sustainable development. It undermines democratic processes, legal certainty and our goals regarding human rights and an equal society. Various forms of corrupt behaviour also prevent us from making use of resources within the organisation in an effective and responsible manner. It is those who live in poverty and vulnerable circumstances who are often most affected by the negative consequences of corruption.

Target group

The policy covers the entire Church Board and all bodies/groups/delegations that the Church Board appoints. The policy also covers employees and contractors at the national level.

Communication

The policy is disseminated on the intranet operated by the Central Church Office and at introductory meetings and training sessions.

Reviews

The Secretary General is responsible for ensuring that the policy is followed up on a regular basis. Following up is undertaken via internal reviews, the consideration of reported cases and the system for complaint management for our international operations.

Updating

The Church Board shall verify that the policy is up-to-date at least once per term. The Secretary General is responsible for providing the Church Board with the decision basis which is required in order to update the policy.

2. General requirements

The Church of Sweden operates under Swedish law. Swedish law should also be applied to our work abroad, at the same time as local laws and other regulations should also be followed. However, local regulations and practices can never be used as an excuse for involvement in corruption or any other form of unethical action.

Our position on corruption is also reflected in our *Code of Conduct for the Church of Sweden at the National Level*, in the *Guidelines for Representation and Gifts* and in the *Procurement Policy for the*

Church of Sweden at the National Level (on conflicts of interest) with associated *Church of Sweden's Code of Conduct for Suppliers* (section on anti-corruption).

3. Zero tolerance for corruption

The Church of Sweden has zero tolerance regarding all forms of corruption at the national level, both within the Church and within the organisations that we collaborate with. Placing a strong focus on handling corruption – both internally and externally – contributes toward helping us meet the goals of the Church regarding sustainable development and the actualisation of human rights.

Moreover, a strong anti-corruption policy supports our ambitions to act responsibly, to use resources effectively and to generate confidence between the Church of Sweden at the national level, the Church's members and our partners. The way that the Church acts has an impact both on individual people and on society at large as well. It is important that confidence in our impartiality and non-partisan position is not diminished.

Our definition of corruption is: ***abuse of trust, power or position for undue profit or gain.***

The term corruption covers bribery, conflicts of interest, fraud, blackmail, nepotism and other comparable irregularities.

Our position regarding corruption is: ***always prevent, never accept, always inform and always act.***

All personnel must report any knowledge or suspicions regarding corruption to their immediate supervisor or to the manager of the economics and finance department. Suspected cases of corruption within our international operations should be reported to <https://www.svenskakyrkan.se/omoss/how-to-make-complaints>.

All reports will be handled confidentially and the person making the report will not be subject to reprisals or any unfair treatment. Actions will be taken against demonstrable cases of corruption.

4. Zero tolerance in an international context

The Church of Sweden at the national level assumes and acts to ensure that its international partners actively work to prevent and uncover corruption and other irregularities. We apply our position on zero tolerance within an international context as well. The issue must be constantly discussed, even if it may be perceived as sensitive in certain environments.

Weaknesses in systems, procedures and management increase the risk of corruption and are therefore objects for capacity strengthening efforts when the Church of Sweden is working with partners in other countries.