



# ***Thomas Chase Ltd Sexual Exploitation and Abuse, Prevention and Response***

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**Policy and Procedure Manual  
March 2019**

### **a) INTRODUCING THE POLICY DOCUMENT**

The provisions in this policy apply to all employees, managers, customers, investors, contractors and any other third parties involved with the company, regardless of their gender, sexual orientation, role or status.

This policy on inappropriate behaviour is not limited to what occurs inside the office. Sexual harassment will not be tolerated at work, on site, at off-site gatherings or anywhere else particularly when on work based travels or expatriated work based trips within and outside Nigeria for instance, the Ekiti, Ilesha and Port-Harcourt Projects.

We are committed to carrying out all provisions in this policy and monitoring its effectiveness. We will work with related parties to improve the policy and our processes on a consistent basis for the retention and sustenance of the reputation of the Thomas Chase Brand.

### **b) MEANING OF SEXUAL EXPLOITATION**

Sexual Exploitation means any actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power, or trust, for sexual purposes, including, but not limited to, profiting monetarily, socially or politically from the sexual exploitation of another.

Similarly, the term “sexual abuse” means the actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force or under unequal or coercive conditions, breach of trust, sexual exploitation, sexual harassment, sexual assault, un-consensual or forced sexual conduct against any person, rape amongst other sexual misdemeanors.

Sexual abuse and harassment, consists of: “unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favours, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature done to fellow staff, contractors or indigenes of the host community where we carry out our work”

Sexual harassment can happen once or many times and may include physical, verbal or non-verbal actions. This form of harassment may make the victim feel offended, humiliated or offended.

Most sexual harassment is subjective and circumstantial which is why there is no definitive, exhaustive list of inappropriate behaviours.

Instead, here are some examples of conduct that may constitute sexual harassment:

- Sexual pranks, teasing, jokes
- Verbal abuse of a sexual nature
- Physical touching of a sexual nature
- Giving sexually suggestive gifts
- Making sexually suggestive gestures
- Posting sexually suggestive pictures
- Buying gifts to indigenes or host community members with sexual intent

### **c) THE SCOPE OF APPLICATION OF THE POLICY**

The present Policy shall apply to all staff of Thomas Chase, including staff of separately administered organs of Thomas Chase.

Thomas Chase Staff working as expatriates or in communities outside Lagos, interim or seconded staffs in any state in Nigeria or outside Nigeria are prohibited from committing acts of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse, and have a particular duty of care towards women and children.

Sexual exploitation and sexual abuse violate universally recognized international legal norms and standards and have always been unacceptable behaviour and prohibited conduct for Thomas Chase staff.

In order to further protect the most vulnerable populations, especially women, girls and under-aged children, the following specific standards which reiterate existing general obligations under the Thomas Chase Staff Regulations and Rules, are promulgated:

(a) Sexual exploitation and sexual abuse constitute acts of serious misconduct and are therefore grounds for disciplinary measures, including summary dismissal, Criminal Prosecution, Loss of Benefit;

(b) Sexual activity with children (persons under the age of 18) is prohibited regardless of the age of majority or age of consent locally. Mistaken belief in the age of a girl child is not a defence;

(c) Exchange of money, employment, goods or services for sex, including sexual favours or other forms of humiliating, degrading or exploitative behaviour, is prohibited. This includes any exchange of assistance that is due to beneficiaries of assistance;

(d) Sexual relationships between Thomas Chase staff and beneficiaries of assistance, since they are based on inherently unequal power dynamics, undermine the credibility and integrity of the work of Thomas Chase and are strongly discouraged;

(e) Where a Thomas Chase staff member develops concerns or suspicions regarding sexual exploitation or sexual abuse by a fellow worker, whether in the same agency or not and whether or not within the Thomas Chase system, he or she must report such concerns via established reporting mechanisms;

(f) Thomas Chase staff are obliged to create and maintain an environment that prevents sexual exploitation and sexual abuse particularly against the host community.

The Project Manager has a particular responsibility to support and develop systems that maintain this environment. The standards set out above are not intended to be an exhaustive list.

Other types of sexually exploitive or sexually abusive behaviour may be grounds for administrative action or disciplinary measures, including

summary dismissal, pursuant to the Thomas Chase Staff Regulations and Rules.

The Project Manager shall be responsible for creating and maintaining an environment that prevents sexual exploitation and sexual abuse, and shall take appropriate measures for this purpose where there is reason to believe that any of the standards listed above have been violated or any behaviour referred to above has occurred.

This action shall be taken in accordance with established rules and procedures for dealing with cases of staff misconduct and the said Staff will thereafter be handed over to the law enforcement agencies or the Nigerian Police Force.

All reports of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse shall be handled in a confidential manner in order to protect the rights of all involved.

#### **d) DISCIPLINARY ACTION**

We have established and implemented a disciplinary action process to ensure fairness and consistency across all incidents of sexual harassment in and out of the workplace particularly within all our host communities.

Harassers will be subject to progressive disciplinary action as follows:

- For infrequent or less serious allegations, the harasser may receive a verbal warning, a written warning or a negative performance review.
- For periodic or more serious sexual harassment incidents, the harasser may receive a demotion, a transfer, a suspension and perhaps criminal penalties such as a fine and will be handed over to the Police.
- For frequent or extremely serious allegations, the harasser will likely face termination and severe criminal penalties and his/her name be put in the Register of Sexual Offenders.

This disciplinary action process is only an outline and requires the company to determine the severity of the harassment.

We reserve the right to stray from the process indicated above, depending on the severity of the incident and other circumstances. Any embarrassment caused to Thomas Chase by any staff will be greeted with the severity of sanction it requires.

**e) STAFF AFFIRMATION CLAUSE**

I affirm that I have read the above sexual exploitation and abuse prevention and response policy document and I understand its content fully and I hereby undertake to commit myself to it and be bound by any breach or consequence with respect thereof.