

Kaya Code of Conduct



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When you book on a Kaya volunteer placement, you agree to abide by the Code of Conduct Agreement set out in this document. Kaya operates within culturally and environmentally sensitive areas and it is only through the operation of this Code of Conduct that we can continue to be welcomed into the communities, lives and homes of the people with which we work. The work that we contribute is only of value if we are not causing damage in other areas. What's more, many of the rules are set to ensure your on-going safety, comfort and well being as you live and work alongside the locals and your fellow volunteers, with unfamiliar cultural norms and new environments. The Kaya Code of Conduct is in place to protect you, the projects, beneficiaries and communities that we work alongside.

Agreement to abide by these rules is implicit in your contract and failure to comply will result in the risk of dismissal from your programme.

Kaya expects that all programme participants should conduct themselves in a manner that is responsible, professional, respectful and supportive of the rights of others. Behaviour that is contrary to this standard, including, but not limited to, acts that are illegal, insensitive to local customs, detrimental to or incompatible with the interests, harmony and/or welfare of the role that Kaya and its partners play in the local community may be considered grounds for dismissal.

Kaya expressly prohibits any engagement in illegal activities (as defined by local laws), including but not limited to possession or use of illegal substances.

- The possession, sale, and/or consumption of illegal drugs are treated as serious crimes in our host countries.
- Participants engaged in illegal activities, including but not limited to, possession or the use of illegal drugs may be immediately dismissed from their programme without warning.
- As a visitor in a foreign country, you fall within the jurisdiction of that country's local laws and the local law officials. If you are caught by authorities using or in possession of any type of illegal substance, you will be arrested and submitted to the mercy of the local justice system.
- If you are arrested for any illegal activity, including but not limited to drug use, Kaya holds no responsibility and will not be in a position to assist you. In such a situation your embassy or consulate in the host country will be contacted to assist you, to provide legal assistance, but it is important to understand that your nation's embassy will not be able to protect you from local penalties applied to your crime.
- Kaya are not responsible for any costs that you incur if you are arrested or suspected of involvement in illegal activities.

Kaya prohibits participants from engaging in irresponsible drinking

- Alcohol is legal in all our host countries and the legal drinking age is generally eighteen. If you have been accepted into a Kaya programme and are under eighteen years old you are expected to abide by this law.
- Irresponsible drinking is classified by Kaya as drinking that puts oneself or others at risk, negatively affects one's volunteer work, and/or negatively affects, in any way, the reputation of Kaya or that of its community partners. Attending one's project placement intoxicated is strictly prohibited and may lead to immediate dismissal.
- Remember that drinking can inhibit your judgment, making you more vulnerable to scams, theft, assault, sexual advancements and your own unwise decisions.
- Participants who drink irresponsibly will be given a formal warning by the Kaya In-Country Representative and includes Kaya partner organisations where they assume this role. On the second offense, participants may be dismissed from the programme.

- Participants are asked that, if they choose to drink, to please drink responsibly and to take the measures necessary to ensure that drinking does not negatively impact on their project, put themselves or others at risk; or damage the reputation of Kaya and its volunteers.
- Participants are not permitted to encourage Kaya staff members to engage in drinking and/or partying with volunteers during volunteer down time; this is against Kaya staff policy and can have serious consequences for staff members.

Kaya prohibits its participant's engagement in prostitution.

- Prostitution is illegal in most of our host countries, but is still openly available in some areas
- Kaya does not condone or accept participants' decision to visit individuals working as 'sex workers', in any capacity. Participants that choose to seek this service must understand that they are contributing to a major societal problem. A large proportion of women that become sex workers do so because they have been pushed into the business against their will. Many have been trafficked and are under strict control and financial debt. In some cases, women working in such a trade may not even be of age of sexual consent.
- If a Kaya participant is caught contributing to the prostitution industry in any way, they may be immediately dismissed from the programme. This applies to men and women working in the sex industry.

Kaya requires all participants to attend orientation and training classes and to operate within the regulations of any specific programme

- Orientations and briefings include vital information on health and safety as well as training on carrying out aspects of your work. These briefings seek to secure your safety and that of those around you and it is imperative that requests made by your project leader are followed at all times.
- Should a volunteer have any questions or feel uncertain about any of the safety and operational information they receive whilst working on their project, they should seek further clarification from their project leader. Some rules may not seem to be important or make sense, but they are generally born from experience and can have major repercussions when not followed. If a rule or decision appears to be a serious risk, it should be reported to the In-Country Representative if the project leader fails to take corrective action.
- The willful breaching of safety regulations will result in immediate dismissal from the programme without prior warning,
- Any behaviour or activity, outside the scope of safety briefings that puts a participant's own physical safety and/or the well being of another individual at risk may also be grounds for immediate dismissal from the programme without warning.

Home-stays and volunteer houses

Kaya expects all participants to conduct themselves in their home-stays/volunteer houses in a manner that is responsible, professional and respectful of local customs and culture. Kaya would not be able to operate if we did not have the support of local community members who are willing to welcome our participants into their homes. These relationships allow Kaya to provide its participants with cultural immersion and home stay experiences and it is imperative that all participants respect these relationships and do their part to preserve them.

- Home stays: Participants who live with home stay families are expected to treat all family members with respect and courtesy and to behave in a manner that is respectful to local customs. Please try to keep down the family's expenses by turning off lights, switching off electric fans etc. If you cause any loss or damage to the home or the family's property, it is your financial responsibility to repair or replace what is lost or damaged. You are expected to call if you will be late, are going to miss a meal, or will not make it

home for the night. You must receive permission before inviting any other guests into your home. Kaya does not allow participants to have guests share a bed with them or stay overnight, and it is forbidden to have romantic or sexual relations with a member of a homestay family and with any person within their home. Not only is this culturally inappropriate, it is also disrespectful to the homestay family. Participants are expected to help with household chores and participate as a member of the family in activities. We ask that you do respect the personal space and privacy of your homestay family and accept that they may occasionally engage in family activities which do not include you.

- **Volunteer Houses:** Participants who live in volunteer houses are expected to treat all fellow residents and staff with respect and courtesy. Please be conscientious of sharing a space with others by cleaning up after yourself, being considerate with noise and sharing the facilities available in the house. If you cause any loss or damage to the accommodation, it is your financial responsibility to repair or replace what is lost or damaged. You are expected to call if you are going to be late or miss a meal, or will not make it home for the night. You must receive permission before inviting any other guests into the volunteer house. Kaya does not allow participants to have guests share a bed with them or stay overnight, and it is forbidden to have sexual relations within a volunteer house, whether the person is another volunteer or a local person. Not only is this culturally inappropriate, it is disrespectful to your fellow housemates in shared accommodation.

Project Placements

Kaya expects all participants to conduct themselves in their project placement in a manner that is responsible, professional and respectful of local customs and culture. Participants are expected to view their projects as a professional internship and to behave accordingly in a responsible manner that dignifies the relationship between all project partners and Kaya. Participants are expected to be on time, call if they are going to be late or unable to attend the project, abide by the Kaya site policy for requesting days off from volunteer work, treat co-workers and co-volunteers with respect and cordiality, and responsibly. Participants who fail to conduct themselves in a manner that is responsible, professional, and respectful of local customs and culture and knowingly and/or deliberately fail to comply with the expectation outlined in this document will receive a formal warning. Further and/or on-going failure to remedy the behaviour in question may result in dismissal from the programme.

Relationships

Kaya expects all participants to conduct themselves in a polite, respectful and patient manner. Problems or concerns with your project counterparts, co-workers, home stay families, Kaya or project staff, or fellow volunteers should be dealt with in a professional and respectful manner. Issues that cannot be resolved should, in a timely fashion, be brought to the attention of the Kaya In-Country Representative. If this is not resolved to your satisfaction it should be reported to the Kaya head office.

- Participants and staff are not permitted to enter romantic or sexual relationships during a participant's volunteer period; this is against Kaya staff policy and can have serious consequences for staff members.
- Participants should at all times respect that the Kaya or partner offices are a place of work and should behave accordingly.
- Participants who fail to conduct themselves in a manner that is responsible, professional, and respectful of local customs and culture and knowingly and/or deliberately fail to comply with the expectation outlined in this document will receive a formal warning. Further and/or on-going failure to remedy the behaviour in question may result in dismissal from the programme.

Local Community

Kaya expects all participants to conduct themselves within the local host community in a manner that is responsible, professional and respectful of local customs and culture. Within the local community you are expected to carry yourself and act in a manner that is in line with Kaya policies and expectations as outlined

in this document. We expect participants to take on the role of a “gracious guest” throughout the duration of their stay in our local host countries. This means that you make an effort to adapt to the local culture and be respectful of cultural norms. This includes but is not limited to dressing appropriately, respecting local religious practices and addressing community members in a courteous manner. Kaya would be unable to operate if we did not have the support of local community members who are willing to welcome our participants into their communities.

- Participants are not permitted to enter into sexual relations with members of the community who are being supported by the programmes with which we work. Not only are many of these individuals very vulnerable, but we also work in environments with high risks of infection for HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases.

Families

Kaya welcomes families onto specified placements, and it is a great opportunity for cultural exchange, for all family members. We ask that parents:

- Take responsibility for their children at all times during project activities and at the accommodation. Children are expected to be polite and well-behaved at accommodation and on the projects. Parents are responsible for the behaviour and actions of their children at all times and local staff and families are not responsible for this.
- Follow the decision of the local coordinator regarding suitability of tasks for children. If there are activities that are unsuitable for younger children, the parents will be informed by the local coordinator. These decisions are made usually on health and safety grounds and parents are expected to follow the local coordinators advice. If parents decide that they do not wish for their children to participate in activities they can advise the local coordinator. Where possible the coordinator will arrange a replacement activity but this may not always be possible.
- Do not expect families or local staff to babysit for their children. Families and project staff are very busy and usually have more than enough to do. However, if this is required, please discuss it with the local coordinator. This is not a service offered by Kaya and any arrangement entered into is done so at the parents discretion.

Reporting Incidents

Kaya requires all participants to report incidents of discrimination, cruelty or other practices that cause offense to a Kaya representative or a representative of the partner organisation in-country – rather than intervening. If you see, hear or encounter any discrimination, cruelty or other unsavoury practice of any kind, within the community or to other individuals, we ask that you do not challenge that person directly or intervene. If you feel that you need to express your views / concerns, please speak to the project manager and they will take the necessary steps to resolve the situation. Kaya is absolutely opposed to any form of discrimination or mistreatment of people or animals, and this information will be taken seriously, but also dealt with in the appropriate manner.

Environmental Responsibility

Kaya requests all participants to abstain from purchasing items which are recognised to damage or harm to the environment or endangered animals, such as ivory products, coral or fur. Your project manager will provide information on the items to avoid in your area. We also ask that you respect your environment at all times and abstain from dropping litter, damaging the environment or causing pollution – even in environments where this may seem to be the local norm. Local environmental concerns may require that you take on different practices than you might be used to in your home country, and we ask all participants to be sensitive to these requests.

Dismissal Policy

Kaya volunteers can be dismissed from the programme for a number of reasons stated in the code of conduct. If you are generally continuing to be a disruptive influence to the project and Kaya's partners and have received several warnings then you may also be asked to leave the programme.

In any and all cases in which a participant is dismissed from a Kaya programme for failure to comply with the Kaya Participant Code of Conduct, Kaya rescinds any and all responsibility for or to the participants, at the time of dismissal. Dismissal from the programme will result in the loss of all fees paid to Kaya. All outstanding financial obligations to Kaya will remain in full effect, transportation or other expenses incurred by the participant at the result of the early termination of his/her programme will remain the sole responsibility of the participants.