



CODE OF ETHICS OF THE TAS FOUNDATION

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1.- INTRODUCTION

The TAS Foundation - Work, Assistance and Overcoming Barriers - is a non-profit organisation, whose Board of Trustees is made up of 12 town councils in the province of Seville, 1 private company and 1 regional association of family members of people with disabilities.

Mission: improving the living standards of every person with disabilities and that of their families in rural settings so they can live their lives to the fullest. Working with individualised assistance, inclusive and adapted to the needs of every phase of life, and with the solidary participation of volunteers.

Vision: Embrace constant growth and improving the Foundation to provide a quality service to people with disability contributing positively to society.

Principles and values. The TAS Foundation bases its actions on internal democracy, transparency in its actions, solidarity among its members, and ethics.

The values that the TAS Foundation defends are: the consideration of people with disabilities as subjects of rights and duties, their inclusion and empowerment until full citizenship achievement, the importance of families, and the quality of its actions.

The TAS Foundation assumes and joins the principles and values proclaimed in the Preamble and Article 3 of the International Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, approved by the United Nations General Assembly on 13 December 2006.

These principles are:

- a) **Respect** for inherent **dignity**, individual autonomy including the freedom to make one's own choices, and independence of persons;
- b) **Non-discrimination**;
- c) **Full** and effective **participation** and **inclusion** in society;
- d) **Respect for difference** and acceptance of persons with disabilities as part of human diversity and humanity;
- e) **Equality of opportunity**;
- f) **Accessibility**;
- g) **Equality between men and women**.

Environmental protection and **promotion of human rights** are also an important matter for the TAS Foundation.

TAS Foundation promotes a respectful development of the environment. Its actions must not adversely affect the environment and it promotes natural environment conservation and sustainable use of resources.

Through its actions, the TAS Foundation works for the respect of human rights of those with disabilities, understood as civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights, as well as the right to develop.

People with disabilities have the potential to grow and progress, develop and adapt to their environment. In order to do so, and to exercise their rights, they need support based on a development model and, if necessary, with positive discrimination.

2.- PRESENTATION: CODE OF ETHICS, OBJECTIVES, MONITORING BOARD AND ADDRESSEES

This code provides a guide to ethical decision-making and behaviour, but it is not a set of rules of how people should behave in all situations.

It is based on a set of values and principles and proposes a set of guidelines for action. It appeals to ethics, to the deepest human being, to the root of our being, with the goal of generating or modifying behaviour.

The Code of Ethics of the TAS Foundation is one more tool offered to the people who make up the Tas Foundation, in order to better achieve the goal set by ourselves. It is a living instrument, subject to the required changes and improvements that might be identified by the stakeholders, during its implementation and development process.

Objectives

The Code of Ethics of the TAS Foundation has the following objectives:

- Identifying the fundamental values on which the activity of the TAS Foundation is based.
- Manifestation of the fact that the TAS Foundation is a dynamic and values-based organisation.
- Helping the different groups involved (governance team, families, professionals, volunteers, people with disabilities) with the purpose of identifying the relevant options when ethical uncertainties arise.
- Establishment of a set of values, principles and rules the main objective of which is guiding conduct in the exercise of the activity and decision-making.
- Providing conduct's guidance and orientation in the TAS Foundation's actions and to its members.

Monitoring Board

This Code of Ethics is necessarily a living, evolving document, the content and implementation of which should be constantly analysed and evaluated. A Monitoring board will be created to take charge of the development, interpretation, communication, application, monitoring and evaluation of this Code of Ethics. The Board will be made up of at least four members, who represent an objective and global vision of the TAS Foundation (on a voluntary basis, the participation of at least one member of the executive committee, a volunteer, a professional, a person with a disability, a family member and a representative of the workers will be encouraged). This Monitoring Committee will meet at least once a year.

Periodically, at the latest every four years, the Monitoring Board shall review and propose improvements to this Code. The modifications will give rise to a new Code of Ethics to be approved by the Board of Trustees.

Addressees

This code applies to all those who have any kind of responsibility for improving the living standards of people with disabilities **or developmental disorders**, and for that of their families in the rural environment, unrelated to their role, place of work, etc.

- The Foundation itself, specifically the workforce in the governing, management and administration bodies of the TAS Foundation, as well as their support structures: people on the committees and working groups.
- The service users and families.

- The human resources in the TAS Foundation, considered as a whole, which includes employed professionals, trainees —if there were any, and volunteers.
- Collaborative companies.

3.- GOVERNING BODIES AND MANAGEMENT OF THE TAS FOUNDATION

Composition of the Board of Trustees:

Art. 14 of our statutes establishes that the Board of Trustees will be made up of natural and/or legal persons, whether they are public or private entities, who will be called trustees, and their composition being no less than three members and no more than twenty-one.

Regarding gender, in accordance with the Law 12/2007 for the Promotion of Gender Equality in Andalusia—which aims for the real and effective achievement of equality between women and men, the majority of the members of the Board of Trustees will be women. (Agreement adopted by the Board of Trustees in December 2014).

Ethical conduct: those who are engaged in the governing, management and administration bodies of the TAS Foundation **shall always act ethically and with integrity** and, under no circumstances, shall carry out contrary activities to the fundamental principles and values established in the statutes.

They shall exercise the attributed powers for the exclusive purpose they were granted for and shall avoid any action that could jeopardise the interests of the TAS Foundation and those of the people it represents.

They may not use the name, assets or resources of the TAS Foundation for their own benefit or for private purposes, nor use their status to obtain privileges or benefits.

When having the resources of the TAS Foundation at disposal in the performance of the duties, those **should be used economically, austerely, prudently and discreetly, avoiding superfluous and unnecessary expenses.**

Loyalty, good faith and mutual support: those forming the governing, management and administration bodies of the TAS Foundation will commit their actions to the **principles of good faith, loyalty, mutual support and respect** for the organisation and, in the main, for all its stakeholders.

Commitment, efficiency and involvement: those forming the governing and management bodies of the TAS Foundation shall maintain an **active and responsible commitment in order to achieve the objectives set by the organisation**, developing diligent and efficient actions while exercising their functions.

Likewise, they shall **attend the meetings** held by the bodies and committees they belong to, and shall **promote the practice of consensus** as the ordinary decision-making system as well as the best guarantee of respect and appreciation of all opinions.

Transparency and integrity of information: those forming part of the governing and management bodies of the TAS Foundation shall provide all the necessary means in order to **guarantee transparency in the organisation's management**, endorsed in any case by clearly independent external audit opinions, and making relevant information available to stakeholders for accountability.

Professional secrecy: those who take part in the governing, management and administration bodies of the TAS Foundation are required not to disclose confidential information which has come to their knowledge in the performance of their activity, even after they are no longer linked to the organisation.

4.- THE PERSON

A person is a person, with no conditions—always and in all circumstances, and never ceases to be a person not even partially due to greater or lesser competences of any kind. There are no degrees of personhood, being a person does not depend on the contexts of expression in which one expresses oneself.

Recognizing the person with a disability or developmental disorder as an equal is an essential condition to transform **dignity** into reality. Human beings develop their competences, not only by a predetermined biological mandate, but also as a result of interaction with other fellow human beings in specific cultural settings.

The above-mentioned configures two essential values related to every person; the TAS Foundation assumes and supports them both in the reference to people with disabilities or developmental disorders: **the value of dignity and the value of equality.**

Human dignity and values

As an individual, the person with a disability or with developmental disorders has values in and of him/herself. He/she is a human being with dignity, with his/her limitations and capacities, like any other person. Consequently, he/she is an individual with particular characteristics, purposes and personal and unique objectives, with dignity and own courage, comparable to those of any other person.

On the basis of respect for dignity and intrinsic value, we understand that the person is subject to a dynamic process of change which generates individual needs, desires, beliefs and options. We seek quality life standards, guaranteeing the right to a dignified life and to self-determination, taking care of every person and being aware of individual differences.

Self-determination principle is related to this value, understood as the right of every person to become a causal agent, an actor, at least partially, of his/her own destiny. **Individuality** is another guiding principle of ethical standards, which leads to actions and attitudes of respect for difference, for one's own identity, and support the exclusive profile of each person's needs. Therefore, there is no room for an undifferentiated, homogenised group of people with disabilities or developmental disorders but rather a mention to each person, worthy in itself, full, demanding specific individualised support from the environment at specific times.

Equality:

Beyond their differences, a person with a disability or developmental disorders is a full citizen, with needs, rights and obligations like everyone else.

As a person, he/she has the right and the necessity to live in the community and to use the same services and contexts as other citizens. This is the **principle of inclusion** of every person as an involved individual, in his/her own rights, in any context, of understanding participation as action-interaction with the power to partly shape the context, and with the ability to provide value and richness.

Resulting from equality, we stand in front of a second ethical principle, that of "**equal opportunities for participation**". The person with a disability or developmental disorders has the potential to grow, develop and adapt to the environment. Aiming so, and with the goal of exercising his/her rights, he/she needs support, based on a developmental model and, if necessary, with positive discrimination.

A third standards' guiding principle refers to the required promotion of quality and meaningful interpersonal relationships, based on principles of reciprocity, empathy, mutual trust and competence; these relationships with family members, people in the environment or professionals are essential for the personal perception of Quality of life, satisfaction, well-being and happiness.

The following is a non-exhaustive set of ethical standards that constitute some conduct's guidelines for the organisation, the professionals and the families.

5.- ETHICAL BEHAVIOURS OF THE ORGANISATION, THE HUMAN RESOURCES AND THE FAMILY

- The organisation:

- It will ensure personalised, individualised and quality assistance. This distinctive care must lead the practice towards the individuals and their families, avoiding generic programming and eluding responses or actions that may not take into account the difficulties, environment and life journey of each person.
- It will always guarantee the person's right to privacy, all the more so if the person is not capable of defending it, especially in the institutional environment: educational centres, workplaces, day-care centres, occupational centres, etc.
- The organisation will promote and support every step that can help make life as accessible as possible, guaranteeing also the Quality of life and the required supports in the scope of family, school, work, housing, leisure and social life in general.
- It will promote age-appropriate activities, rhythms and routines which would be at the same time adapted to the socio-cultural conditions of the context, always seeking the least restrictive environment (LRE) and encouraging the use of community services.
- It will remove barriers of all kinds (physical, social, communicational, etc.) and it will have comfortable and warm buildings, facilities and equipment according to general standards.
- It will recognise families as the driving force behind associations, ensuring and reinforcing their participation and presence in all structures and management bodies.
- By focusing practices towards the provision of specific support based on guidance, training and overburdened relief, the organisation will support each family in accepting their circumstances with the aim of achieving an appropriate environment capable of improving their capabilities and advancing their development.
- Regarding standards, families will be considered with total impartiality, avoiding any vulnerability to random factors such as sympathy or situations of privilege. Thus, they will participate equally in all areas, that is to say, under the same rules.

- Human resources: professional staff, volunteers and trainees.

- They must implement practices and strategies with the goal of boosting and encouraging the capacity for choice, decision-making, the establishment of personal plans and objectives, autonomy and, in general, any other component of self-determination.
- They will always foster the person's self-esteem and social recognition, regardless of achievements, social productivity or difficulties.
- They must report situations of manifest injustice, mistreatment or humiliating treatment and any other action that may lead to non-compliance with this Code of Ethics.
- The attitude that everyone can progress when the proper support is available will be permanently considered.
- The support will be provided by a permanently warm and interpersonal relationship, i.e. by integrating technical quality with human warmth.
- Every family will be supported in the acceptance of the person with a disability or developmental disorder with a view to achieving an environment capable of enhancing their abilities and at the same time helpful to achieve appropriate development.
- They will execute and ensure a dignified and respectful relationship at any moment. The treatment, manner of calling, addressing and designating people must be based on respect, taking into account the individual's wishes, opinions, age and the socio-cultural environment in which they move, and showing no discrimination on grounds of gender, ability, ethnicity, religion, politics or sexuality.
- They will have concern for the socio-cultural diversity of families and for the intrinsic needs of the family in its evolutionary moment, promoting practices that show respect for difference, erasing personal attitudes opposed to this and combating those of others.
- They will provide family support services and ease links to encourage help between families in the same situation, guaranteeing treatment without discrimination, respecting differences and denouncing all situations of injustice that may deteriorate the right to equal and dignified professional treatment for any family.

The family

Regardless of the different family compositions according to the relationships of its members and the socio-cultural context in which they develop, we recognise the family as a value in itself.

Families are the most important resource to respond to their own needs and those of their members with disabilities due to their double role as support seeker-recipient, and as support providers to other families.

- It shall encourage and foster self-determination at all ages, facilitating informed decision-making, the expression of opinions, interests, beliefs, expectations and needs, and providing maximum opportunities to express this self-determination.
- It shall ensure dignified and respectful use of the image of the person when he or she is unable to express consent or defend his or her rights.
- The right to privacy, within the family scope, shall be guaranteed.

6.- GENERAL ORGANISATIONAL AND RELATIONAL CRITERIA

6.1. Transparency and management

The TAS Foundation shall at all times act in accordance with Law 19/2013, of 9 December on Transparency, Access to Public Information and Good Governance and Law 1/2014, of 24 June, on Public Transparency in Andalusia.

The TAS Foundation, as an organisation at the service of society, must provide anyone who requests it with regular information on its lines of action, programmes, objectives, how and how much it obtains resources and the composition of its governing bodies.

The TAS Foundation will publish an annual report with information on its activities, programmes, resources and governing bodies. It shall also publish the distribution of its expenses, specifying the amounts allocated to fundraising and resource management expenses and administrative expenses, as well as the definition of the concepts included in the calculation of these expenses.

6.2.- Fundraising

The TAS Foundation will ensure that the origin of the donations it may receive will not block its free action and will not represent any obstacle to the foundation objectives' achievement.

Understanding fundraising not only as an activity **aimed exclusively at obtaining monetary income, but also at building relationships and promoting values**, improving the living standards of people with disabilities or developmental disorders, we propose a set of principles and values to guide such action.

The members of the TAS Foundation are committed to:

1. **Exercising the fundraising profession with honesty**, respect, integrity and transparency in order to retain the maximum social reliability in our professional work.
2. **Prioritize the achievement** of the purpose and the benefit of the collective before personal and professional interests, always obeying the mission of the TAS Foundation.
3. Ensuring that the materials used in fundraising are being accurate, and may adequately reflect the mission of the organisation and the project or action for which they may be requested, and also that those are guaranteeing the respect, at all times, to the beneficiaries' dignity.
4. **The wills of the donors shall be respected** regarding the purpose of their funds and the donors shall always be consulted on any possible change or modification of their contributions' destination. According to the donor's rights, the corresponding certification of the donations shall be complied.
5. The **fundraising techniques** used shall be those achieving the maximum result at the lowest cost, that is, raising funds always **under the criteria of efficiency** and return on investment. These techniques and channels are not a target in themselves, but the means by which to obtain greater social support for the causes and projects we work for.
6. **Refusing donations**, whether from private sourcer or companies, when they may differ from TAS Fondation objectives and values.
7. Providing **accurate and truthful information and ensuring real accounting of the management of the raised funds to donors**, through monitoring reports, annual reports and reports on activities and results.

8. Ensuring the **total confidentiality of donors' personal data** regarding to third parties, guided by the criteria established by current Data Protection regulations.

6.3 Relations with companies

Collaborative relations with companies shall respect the values of independence, transparency and efficiency, among others, which should distinguish the work of the TAS Foundation.

The TAS Foundation shall respect certain minimum criteria, in accordance with the implementation of the principles contained in this code. Specifically, enterprises with which collaboration is established shall:

- Comply with the eight fundamental ILO Conventions referring to forced labour, child labour and unionisation rights.
- Respect the environment, complying with current legislation.
- Respect public health both in its products and in its production processes according to the legislation in force.
- The TAS Foundation will not be associated with any advertising campaign that shall encourage and promote the consumption of unhealthy products such as tobacco or distilled alcohol, nor gambling in betting shops.
- The TAS Foundation will not establish relationships with weapons manufacturing and trafficking companies.
- TAS Foundation will not establish relationships with companies involved in the genetic engineering of products or animals which can interfere with the balance of nature's lifecycle or that can cause animal abuse.

6.4 Human resources

In this section, we aim to guide and clarify practices in the management of human resources, especially regarding the essential dissociation of labour relations and procedures for attracting resources and members.

1. Strictly respect the legislation in force, when the relationship between the TAS Foundation and the people who provide work is of the "employment" type.
2. It is recommended to ensure through Human Resources and Recruitment policies and procedures the recognition that some staff members of the TAS Foundation may, by virtue of a free and personal decision, become partners or donors without this decision influencing the start, development or end of their employment relationship.
3. Adopt measures to prevent discrimination in hiring on the basis of race, gender, nationality or religion. Likewise, the Foundation shall favour the employment of people with disabilities or developmental disorders.
4. The tasks carried out by volunteers shall under no circumstances come into conflict with the tasks that may be carried out by employees.
5. The **data referring to the total number of people** (remunerated and not remunerated) at the service of the TAS Foundation **shall be made public**.

7.- COMMUNICATION GUIDELINES, PUBLICITY AND USE OF IMAGES

Communication shall follow the following guidelines and practices:

- The people with disabilities or developmental disorders shall be placed as the protagonists of the communication and not the entity nor the Board of Trustees.
- Absolute respect for the dignity of individuals must be shown, avoiding at any time catastrophic, discriminatory, stereotypical or idyllic messages and images which may undermine their dignity.
- ICTs potential will be used in order to promote dialogue and participatory building of communication, and the access and use of media will be guaranteed to all collectives we work with.
- We will offer channels for citizen participation by social networks.
- Communication shall serve not only to raise awareness of developmental barriers but also to make public the positive results of the Foundation's work.
- Communication shall contribute to transparency and accounting of the Foundation. Information will be accessible and clear so that everyone can access it openly.
- Work in collaboration with media professionals to improve the quality and treatment of the information about the different realities of persons with disabilities or developmental disorders.
- Formulate consistent information that complies with this code of conduct and at the same time contains high journalistic content that is relevant to the media.
- Work with the media to ensure that, as far as possible, sensationalist images that could offend the dignity of the people portrayed or give a distorted picture of reality are not disseminated.
- The broadcasted information shall be properly verified; reliable sources of information and rigorous analysis of the situations shall be used.
- Where the communication is made in the context of cooperation with other entities (companies, public institutions, universities or any other organisation), the TAS Foundation shall ensure compliance with the guidelines referred to in that point, encouraging express reference to the Code in the collaboration agreements.