



## **Seafarers' Ministry Covenant of Values and Conduct**

To better coordinate and encourage those who undertake seafarers' ministry, chaplains, ship visitors, drivers and hosts dedicated to seafarers' ministry enter into this Covenant to state our common values and rules of conduct. Those who agree to this document do so not out of legal obligation, but for moral and spiritual wellbeing. We seek by this Covenant to work in harmony for the good of each other and of all seafarers.

Our common values are:

- *Communication* – we encourage clear and frequent communication between Board of Directors, staff and volunteers. We encourage the use of verbal, printed, and digital forms of communication whenever appropriate. We also encourage regular meetings of those in seafarers' ministry for mutual encouragement, professional discussion and prayer.
- *Relationships* – we do not present our faith to seafarers in a spirit of proselytization or desire to have seafarers join our specific Christian tradition. It is only during appropriate moments of mutual trust and friendship that we discuss issues of faith. We value discipleship and sharing of the Good News of Jesus Christ in love, but we vigorously discourage proselytism and any speech that is coercive or obligating.
- *Service* – as a ministry of welcome, we are eager to assist seafarers with their spiritual, social, and physical needs to the extent that we can do so. We do this not from ulterior motives, but because we are called as God's servants to support others. We encourage our staff and volunteers to consider the various ways they can serve seafarers beyond literature ministries, including help with communication and transportation.
- *Hospitality* – the greatest spiritual gift we take to seafarers is true hospitality. This hospitality is expressed in the whole fruit the Spirit bears within us, most especially a genuine love for seafarers. We also encourage humour, open hearts, joyfulness, and friendship.
- *Collaboration* – though we come from various denominations and Christian traditions, we value the work of cooperation in a spirit of ecumenism, that is, a recognition that God's Kingdom stretches across national or denominational borders. Our service to seafarers is strengthened by collaboration.
- *Safety* – ports and ships are working environments with very clear safety rules. Proper personal protective clothing and safety requirements are part of maritime culture, and thus a part of the culture of maritime ministry.
- *Respect* – we respect each other and all seafarers in our ministry, as well as those welfare professionals who work in other organizations. We note that we are visitors to seafarers' homes each time we board their ships and we welcome them to ours at our mission; when we do so, we make every effort to be welcoming and sensitive to their needs and desires.



## The Mission to Seafarers Southern Ontario

Caring for Seafarers from around the world.

Guided by these values, we recommend productive behaviours and prohibit inappropriate conduct. We encourage all staff and volunteers to embrace these guidelines, as poor conduct on the part of individuals impacts the perception of all.

### Recommended Actions and Habits

- Listen with an intent and a compassionate ear (sometimes called "active listening," instead of planning ahead to what you want to say next).
- Be an advocate for seafarers' welfare.
- Extend an offer of friendship and sincere fellowship.
- Always abide by safety protocol, including required personal protective clothing, and respect the direction of any security personnel in port or on board.

### Prohibited Actions and Habits

- Never charge fees for any services rendered without express direction of the Board of Directors.
- Never proselytize. Baptism, Exorcism, or other similar services are strictly prohibited unless in emergency circumstances (i.e., imminent danger of death) and by explicit request.
- Never speak poorly of or misrepresent the work of any other staff member, or volunteer, including those from other seafarers' welfare organizations. Only present yourself as a representative of the center, ministry, or organization with which you are formally affiliated.
- Never confront or denigrate staff or volunteers of other religious traditions. Never harm or dispose of any written or audio-visual material of other faith traditions that you might find on board ship. Your work is to represent your own tradition and seafarers' welfare ministry, not to limit the work of others.

By signing this Covenant, you agree to be a valued member of the Mission to Seafarers Southern Ontario. Should a breach of these principles of conduct occur, you will be required to leave the port ministry committee and you will be removed from this Covenant.

Name:

Date:

Signature: