

# Guideline for learning and competence development

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## Table of content

.....	1
Guideline for learning and competence development.....	1
1 Introduction.....	3
1.1 Scope and limitation .....	3
1.2 Definitions.....	3
2 Learning organisation .....	3
3 Education levels .....	4
4 Responsibility .....	4
5 Competence development for staff.....	4
6 Costs .....	4
6.1 Costs of training for volunteers and localstaff.....	4
6.2 Costs of competence development for centrally employed staff.....	5

# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Scope and limitation

These guidelines set out the Swedish Red Cross' approach to learning and how we work with competence development and training within the organisation. The guidelines apply to everyone engaged with the Red Cross regardless of their role: elected representative, volunteer, employee, delegate, trainee, consultant, paid employee or anyone who has undertaken a mission for the Swedish Red Cross in any way. Red Cross in Sweden or abroad.

## 1.2 Definitions

In this document, we use three terms: learning, training and competence development. The concepts are close in meaning but have slightly different meanings within the Swedish Red Cross.

By *learning*, we mean any form of development of knowledge, abilities, new habits or behaviour that takes place informally in everyday life or in a planned way through activities.

*Training and competence development* is about the planned learning that takes place within the role and mission of the Red Cross. All training and competence development should aim to both develop volunteers/employees and to strengthen the organisation's capacity and achieve its objectives.

# 2 Learning organisation

The Swedish Red Cross aspires to be a learning organisation, which means that we continuously learn new things and increase our collective competence through a conscious investment in learning, to constantly develop our activities to be able to solve our mission in the best possible way.

At the Swedish Red Cross, we want to create a learning organisation by:

- An inquisitive, welcoming culture that encourages learning and is characterised by openness, with room for reflection, ideas and vision.
- leadership that enables, encourages and monitors employees learning and development.
- a belief that people have the capacity to influence and change their own and others situations; we encourage learning and use methods of participation and inclusion so that all employees and volunteers can continuously learn.
- a view of learning as a continuous, active process that is built into everyday life and that benefits from interaction and cooperation with others, where lessons are learned from experience and new knowledge are shared in order to learn from each other and make use of the competence already present in the organisation. Differences are seen as assets and mistakes as learning opportunities.
- blended learning methods with opportunities to learn new things, practice, repeat and reflect individually and in groups, both digitally and physically.
- a belief in continuous learning over time, learning that is both an individual and a collective process that must be allowed to take time.
- a common educational foundation for employees, where everybody attends selected basic courses on the activities and values of the Swedish Red Cross.

Competence development can be divided into three components:

1. Informal learning that takes place on the job, through among other things, learning your role, new tasks and self-reflection.
2. Social learning, which takes place through interaction with others, including feedback, networking and coaching.
3. Formal learning in the form of training or courses, this part should be based on the informal and social learning components.

### **3 Education levels**

The Swedish Red Cross has two education levels. The first level defines which training courses are compulsory for everybody involved in the Red Cross, i.e. the minimum common level of education required to work and be active in the Swedish Red Cross. Level two and any further levels consist of additional training in the form of operational and/or mission-specific training.

Level 1 is determined by the HR department and can be found on Rednet/Kunskapsbanken. Any additional training is determined by department heads or local managers.

### **4 Responsibility**

Anyone engaged with the Red Cross has a responsibility for their own learning and for contributing to a non-judgmental and supportive learning environment.

Leaders on all levels of the Swedish Red Cross and in different parts of the organisation (managers, local boards, volunteer leaders) are responsible for ensuring that everyone engaged with the Red Cross have both basic Red Cross training (according to the Education Levels) and the specific competence required for a particular mission or duty.

The HR department is responsible for these guidelines, for reviewing the quality of courses and for contracting partners for training and other development activities as needed.

### **5 Competence development for staff**

Competency development aims to develop employees individually while strengthening the organisation's ability and conditions to achieve its goals. Employees have a responsibility together with their manager or the local board to discuss and propose appropriate forms of personal and professional development and learning based on the requirements and needs of the organisation. These needs may be based on the requirements and expectations of their current role, but may also address developmental needs to be able to progress and take on new roles. Each employee should have a plan for professional development, which should be defined in meetings between employees and managers.

### **6 Costs**

#### **6.1 Costs of training for volunteers and localstaff**

Basic training according to a decision by GS is free of charge for volunteers and local staff. Any contingent expenses are to be paid in accordance with the procedure laid down by the SRCs Training Unit.

It is the local board chair's responsibility to budget for expenses in connection with development activities of local staff or any other developmental activities based on the needs of the organisation.

## **6.2 Costs of competence development for centrally employed staff**

Managers within the central organisation have the mandate to make decisions and approve costs for competence development in accordance with the current authorisation scheme and the current purchasing guidelines. The cost for training and development is covered within the respective department's budget. An analysis of competence development needs is made annually in the business plan and competence development activities are budgeted at the department level. The head of the department decides how to allocate and use the budget in the best possible way based on the needs of the staff and the department.

Before deciding on major investments for competence development, HR is consulted for advice on coordination, options and contacts with suppliers.

Sometimes there are opportunities for employees to attend training courses, seminars or networking events free of charge. Even if the activity is free of charge, an assessment should be made against the above criteria to ensure that the employee's time is being spent on the right things and that any travel and accommodation costs are justified.