



Global Action Network for Sickle Cell
and Other Inherited Blood Disorders

Contractors Handbook



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Welcome

Welcome to GANSID. The Global Action Network for Sickle Cell Disease and Other Inherited Blood Disorders (GANSID) is a globally distributed organization composed of independent contractors rather than traditional employees, working across multiple countries and time zones. This Handbook sets out the guiding principles, expectations, and working arrangements that bring our diverse team together as one effective and collaborative organization. It outlines how remote work is structured, how scheduling and availability are managed, and how we conduct meetings in a manner that respects the different time zones, cultural contexts, and personal responsibilities of our contractors. Through these shared agreements and practices, we strive to foster a productive, inclusive, and mission-driven environment that enables all team members to contribute meaningfully to advancing the lives of individuals and families affected by inherited blood disorders worldwide.

This Handbook is provided to every contractor before they begin work with GANSID, consistent with GANSID's Gender Equality Plan (2026–2030), and is reviewed periodically to keep pace with how the organization grows.

This Handbook should be read alongside GANSID's Working from Home Confidentiality Policy, Diversity and Anti-Racism

Lanre Tunji-Ajayi

CEO GANSID





Whom This Handbook Covers

This Handbook applies to all individuals engaged by GANSID as independent contractors or consultants, across all regions and functions, including administrative, programmatic, research, communications, and advocacy work. Volunteers and Board members are covered by separate handbooks and governing documents but may find the scheduling and meeting guidelines in Sections 4 and 5 useful as well.



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Remote Work



Working Arrangements

Though GANSID is registered in the USA and Canada, it does not maintain a central office. All contractors work remotely, from a location of their choosing, using their own equipment unless otherwise agreed in their individual contractor agreement.



Confidentiality While Working Remotely

Because GANSID handles sensitive information about patients, families, partner organizations, and internal operations, all contractors must follow GANSID's Working from Home Confidentiality Policy in full. In practice, this means:

- Conduct calls and meetings in a private space, not in public locations such as cafes or shared transit, where sensitive material may be discussed
- Lock devices when stepping away and keeping work devices password-protected
- Never sharing GANSID account credentials or access with anyone outside the organization
- Store all confidential documents securely and return them to the CEO or their delegate when exiting the organization. Dispose confidential documents appropriately such as deleting soft copies from systems and shredding paper copies when no longer needed is also expected
- Reporting any suspected breach of confidentiality to the CEO without delay



Equipment and Connectivity

Contractors are responsible for maintaining a reliable internet connection and a quiet, professional environment for calls and virtual meetings, recognizing that GANSID's work spans well-resourced and under-resourced settings alike. Where connectivity is a genuine barrier, contractors should raise this with their supervisor so that reasonable alternatives, such as audio-only participation or asynchronous updates, can be arranged.

Scheduling and Availability Expectations

CORE AVAILABILITY WINDOW

GANSID's core hours of operation are 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM Eastern Daylight Time (EDT) / Eastern Time. Contractors are expected to be reasonably available for meetings, calls, and responsive communication during this window on their agreed working days, regardless of their own local time zone.

This single shared window exists to give GANSID's globally distributed team a predictable, common reference point, while keeping the burden of cross-time-zone work concentrated into one clearly defined block rather than spread unpredictably across the day.

What This Means in Practice

- Contractors are not expected to be online or working for the full 8:30 AM–4:30 PM EDT window every day; rather, this is the window within which meetings may be scheduled and during which a contractor should be reasonably reachable on their working days.
- Outside core hours, contractors are free to structure their day around their own time zone, caregiving responsibilities, and personal commitments, provided agreed deliverables and deadlines are met.
- Contractors whose local time zone places some or all of the core window outside typical working hours (for example, in parts of Africa, Southeast Asia, Europe, or the Western Pacific) should agree to a specific, narrower availability slot within the core window with their supervisor at the start of their engagement, and update it if circumstances change.
- Total weekly hours and specific working days are set out in each contractor's individual agreement; the core window governs when those hours should generally fall, not how many hours are worked.





TIME OFF, ILLNESS, AND UNAVAILABILITY

Life happens, and GANSID expects contractors to communicate proactively rather than disappear. If a contractor is unable to meet a scheduled commitment, will be unavailable during agreed hours of work, or need to take a leave of absence, they should:

- Notify their supervisor or program coordinator as early as possible, ideally before the affected period begins.
- Propose a revised timeline for any affected deliverables.
- Arrange coverage with a colleague where the work is time-sensitive and coverage is feasible.

Planned time off should be flagged with as much notice as reasonably possible so that meetings and deadlines can be adjusted around it and a replacement contractor hired where necessary. Ideally, a minimum of eight weeks in advance of the planned time off should be provided, where possible.

Meeting and Scheduling Guidelines

GANSID is committed to running meetings in a way that is respectful of different time zones and personal responsibilities, consistent with the scheduling guidelines adopted under GANSID's Gender Equality Plan.



When to Schedule Meetings

- Recurring meetings should be scheduled within the 8:30 AM–4:30 PM EDT core window wherever possible.
- When a meeting must include participants for whom the core window falls very early or very late locally, organizers should rotate the meeting time where feasible, so that the inconvenience of an off-hours meeting does not fall on the same region or individuals every time.
- Meetings should not be scheduled during commonly observed personal or caregiving hours (e.g., very early morning or evening) without a clear reason and advance agreement from those affected.
- Wherever possible, organizers should confirm time zones explicitly in the invitation (e.g., “10:00 AM EDT / 3:

Meeting Practices

- Standing meetings should be set in advance as recurring meetings.
- Calendar invitations to contractors should be sent with reasonable advance notice, ideally at least 48 hours for one-off meetings.
- Agenda of internal meetings should be shared in advance so contractors who cannot attend live can still contribute input beforehand.
- Meetings that are not essential for everyone to attend live should be recorded, with notes or a recording shared afterward for anyone who could not join.
- Where a recurring meeting consistently falls outside reasonable hours for a participant, the organizer should work with that person to find an asynchronous alternative, such as a written update, rather than requiring attendance at an inconvenient time indefinitely.
- Contractors meeting with external teams should log into meetings at least 5 minutes before meeting starts with necessary documents ready for sharing, where applicable.



Personal Responsibilities

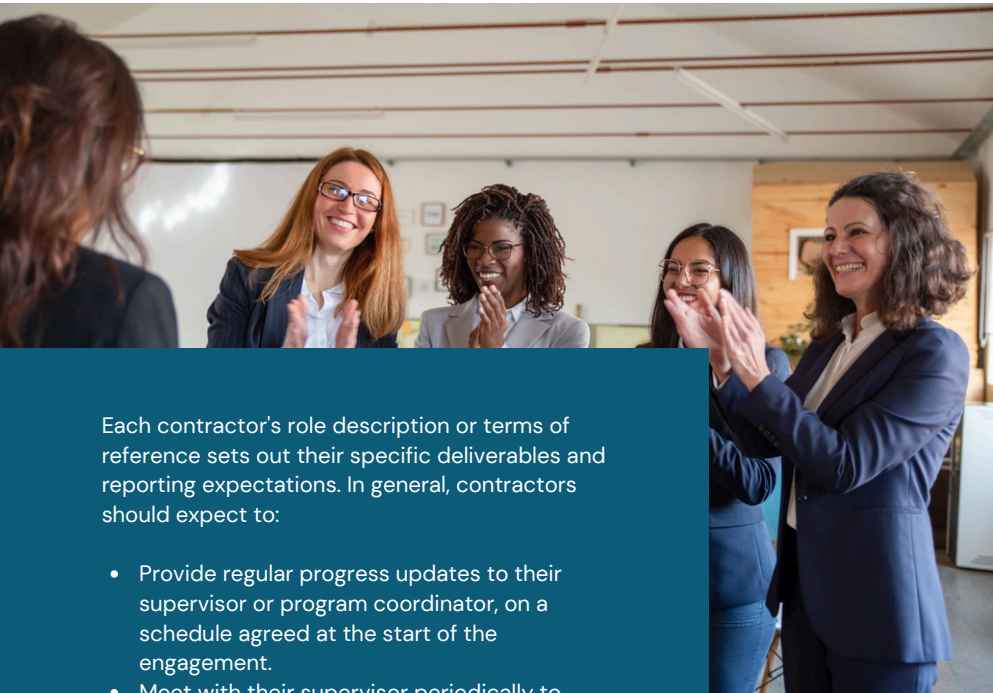
GANSID recognizes that many contractors balance caregiving and other personal responsibilities alongside their work. Contractors are not expected to justify or disclose the nature of personal commitments in order to request a meeting time adjustment; a simple request to a supervisor or meeting organizer is sufficient.

Communications

- Routine communication (email, project management tools, messaging platforms) should be checked and responded to within one business day during a contractor's agreed working days.
- Urgent matters should be flagged clearly as urgent, and contractors should agree with their supervisor on an appropriate channel for time-sensitive issues.
- Because GANSID's team rarely shares the same working hours at the same moment, written, asynchronous updates (status notes, shared documents, recorded summaries) are encouraged as the default way of keeping each other informed, with live meetings reserved for discussion that genuinely benefits from real-time conversation.



Performance, Reporting, and Check-Ins



Each contractor's role description or terms of reference sets out their specific deliverables and reporting expectations. In general, contractors should expect to:

- Provide regular progress updates to their supervisor or program coordinator, on a schedule agreed at the start of the engagement.
- Meet with their supervisor periodically to review progress, discuss challenges, and confirm scheduling needs.
- Flag delays or obstacles as early as possible rather than at a deadline.



Confidentiality, Conduct, and Safeguarding

All contractors are bound by GANSID's Working from Home Confidentiality Policy with respect to proprietary and personal information encountered in the course of their work, and by GANSID's Diversity and Anti-Racism Policy and Safeguarding and Anti-Harassment Policy with respect to how they treat colleagues, partners, and the communities GANSID serves. These policies apply equally whether a contractor is working from home, traveling, or attending a GANSID event.

Any concerns about harassment, discrimination, or safeguarding should be raised using the reporting routes set out in GANSID's Safeguarding and Anti-Harassment Policy.

Raising Concerns About Scheduling or Workload



If the core availability window, a recurring meeting time, or overall workload is not working for a contractor, whether because of time zone, health, caregiving responsibilities, or any other reason, they are encouraged to raise it with their supervisor or the CEO directly. GANSID would rather adjust an arrangement than have a contractor struggle silently or disengage.

Review

Behind every achievement is a team of talented individuals who bring diverse experiences, perspectives, and expertise to their work. We believe that great ideas can come from anywhere, and we encourage collaboration.

This Handbook applies alongside GANSID's Gender Equality Plan 2026–2030, GANSID's By-Laws, Working from Home Confidentiality Policy, Diversity and Anti-Racism Policy, and Safeguarding and Anti-Harassment Policy.