



Employment & Contracting Policy for Tour Leaders, Guides, and Representatives

Date of Approval: June 2025

Approved by: Director

Reviewed: Every 2 Years

Applies to: Tour Leaders, Local Guides, Representatives, Drivers, and Field Coordinators

1. Policy Statement

ACME Voyages recognizes that the well-being, motivation, and professionalism of its tour leaders, guides, representatives, and drivers are essential to delivering high-quality and sustainable tourism experiences.

The company therefore commits to offering formal employment or contractual agreements that are fully compliant with Indian labor law and relevant international labor standards (ILO, UN Global Compact, and Travelife).

All personnel must be treated with fairness, dignity, and respect, and must be informed of their terms of employment, duties, wages, benefits, insurance coverage, and working hours in a transparent and written format.

2. Purpose

The objectives of this policy are to:

- Ensure every active staff member (permanent, temporary, or freelance) understands their employment terms.
- Promote fair working conditions, proper remuneration, and safety protection.

- Prevent labor exploitation and promote social responsibility across all company operations.
- Strengthen accountability and trust between ACME Voyages and its local partners.

3. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All tour leaders, city guides, and representatives contracted or employed by ACME Voyages.
- Drivers and assistants working on company-organized tours.
- Freelance and subcontracted guides operating under ACME Voyages supervision.

4. Terms and Conditions of Employment

4.1 Employment Contracts

- All staff receive a written agreement or appointment letter before the start of their assignment.
- The contract outlines duties, payment, and expectations clearly in a language the staff understands.
- Both the staff member and company sign the agreement before commencement.

4.2 Working Hours and Rest Periods

- Standard working hours: 8 hours per day / 48 hours per week in compliance with the Indian Shops and Establishments Act.

- Tour leaders and guides may occasionally work longer due to travel schedules; in such cases, compensatory rest or overtime allowance is provided.
- Staff are entitled to at least one full day off per week during extended tour operations.
- Meal and rest breaks are scheduled between tours or transfers as per operational feasibility.

4.3 Wages and Payment

- All staff are paid fairly and competitively, exceeding or equal to the minimum wage set by state law.
- Daily wage guides are compensated based on experience, language skill, and duration of service.
- Payments are made punctually, either in cash or through bank transfer, with full transparency.
- Any tips or gratuities from clients belong entirely to the guide or tour leader unless voluntarily pooled for team distribution.
- Overtime or work beyond agreed hours is compensated at 1.5x the standard hourly rate or as agreed contractually.

4.4 Insurance and Safety Coverage

- All tour leaders, guides, and drivers engaged by ACME Voyages are covered under accidental travel insurance during active duty.
- The insurance covers:
 - Accidental injury or disability during a tour
 - Emergency medical expenses
 - Repatriation in case of serious illness or accident

- The company ensures that all staff are briefed on emergency protocols, contact numbers, and reporting procedures.

4.5 Leave Entitlements

- Annual leave: Minimum of 12 paid leave days per year for full-time staff.
- Sick leave: Minimum of 6 days per year, supported by a medical certificate if required.
- Public holidays: National and regional holidays as applicable to the region of operation.
- Maternity and paternity leave: Provided as per statutory provisions.

4.6 Benefits and Allowances

- Meal and travel allowances are provided during long tours or when the employee is required to stay overnight outside the home city.
- Accommodation is provided or reimbursed when field staff are required to travel on extended assignments.
- Uniforms, identity cards, and name badges are issued where necessary for professional representation.
- Training allowances or incentives are offered for staff who participate in sustainability or safety training sessions.

5. Duties and Responsibilities

For Tour Leaders and Guides

- Ensure safety, comfort, and cultural respect of guests at all times.
- Promote responsible behavior in line with company's Sustainable Tourism Guidelines.

- Prevent littering, over-tourism pressure, or wildlife disturbance during excursions.
- Provide accurate and ethical information about destinations, local culture, and communities.
- Report any unethical or unsafe practices observed during tours.

6. Health, Safety, and Well-being

- ACME Voyages maintains strict compliance with occupational safety standards.
- Staff receive regular first-aid and safety orientation before deployment.
- Access to clean drinking water, hygienic meals, and safe accommodation is mandatory during tours.
- Any harassment, discrimination, or abuse is strictly prohibited and leads to disciplinary action.

7. Communication and Awareness

- During onboarding, all employees and freelancers receive:
 - A full briefing on the company's employment and ethical standards.
 - A signed acknowledgment confirming understanding of their rights and responsibilities.
 - Regular updates on wage changes, benefits, and safety measures.

8. Monitoring and Grievance Handling

- ACME Voyages conducts annual reviews of employment practices.
- Staff are encouraged to report issues through a confidential grievance system via phone, email, or written complaint.

- All grievances are handled within 7 working days by the HR or Sustainability Officer.

9. Non-Compliance and Disciplinary Measures

- Any breach of this policy, including late payments, unsafe working conditions, or discrimination, is addressed promptly.
- Contractors or suppliers found violating fair labor principles may be removed from ACME Voyages' supplier network.