

New South Wales Powerchair Football Association (NSWPFA)

Member Protection Policy – Summary

Purpose of policy

Sporting organisations have legal and moral obligations to provide safe environments. Our Member Protection Policy (policy) assists us to adequately meet these obligations and to maintain responsible behaviour and ethical and informed decision-making within our sport. Our policy outlines our commitment to a person's right to be treated with respect and dignity, and to be safe and protected from abuse. It informs everyone of his or her legal and ethical rights and responsibilities and the standards of behaviour that are required. It also covers the care and protection of children participating in our sport's activities.

Who the policy applies to

The policy specifies who it applies to but generally this includes employees, board members, committee and sub-committee members, administrators, coaches, officials, support personnel and players/athletes in a paid or voluntary capacity (and whether they are appointed, elected or selected to these roles); life members; parents, spectators and sponsors; and member associations and affiliated clubs.

What it covers

The policy states our position on and requirements relating to:

- *child protection*
- *taking and using images of children*
- *anti-discrimination and harassment*
- *sexual relationships between coaches and the adult athletes that they coach*
- *participating while pregnant*
- *gender identity*
- *codes of conduct and behaviour*

It covers breaches of our codes of behaviour, any behaviour that brings or is likely to bring our sport into disrepute and other inappropriate behaviour whether that occurs at practice/training sessions, in the club rooms, at meetings, at events and activities organised or sanctioned by the sport, or away trips. It also clearly confirms that the following types of behaviour will not be tolerated:

- Child abuse
- Sexual assault and sexual misconduct
- Discrimination

- Bullying, harassment and vilification
- Physical assault and violence
- Verbal abuse and intimidation
- Actions that create a hostile environment
- Conduct that may cause psychological injury or distress.

Complaints

Our sport takes all complaints about inappropriate behaviour, both on and off-field, seriously. A range of steps have been set out in the policy for dealing with groups or individuals who engage in any of the behaviour prohibited by the policy. It provides guidance for those with a complaint or concern, those who have had a complaint made against them and, those who have responsibility for handling a complaint.

All complaints will be handled based on the principles of procedural fairness (natural justice), that is:

- confidentially will be maintained;
- both the person making the complaint (complainant) and the person the complaint is against (respondent) will be given full details of what is being said against them and have the opportunity to respond (give their side of the story);
- irrelevant matters will not be taken into account;
- decisions will be unbiased and fair; and
- any penalties imposed will be fair and reasonable.

A person(s) found guilty of breaching the policy, including making a false or malicious allegation, may be sanctioned by a range of measures including from a verbal warning up to expulsion from the sport. A group/body found guilty of breaching the policy could be suspended or expelled from membership of NSWPFA and affiliated organisations.

Working with Children Check requirements

Underlying the policy is a range of laws which vary from state to state. Despite some differences, there are some universal minimum standards that the law applies to persons involved in sporting activities. These include anti-discrimination laws, criminal law and child protection laws. Our policy outlines the screening process for people in our sport who work, coach, supervise or have regular unsupervised contact with people under the age of 18 years.

Code of Behaviour

As a member of *NSWPFA*, a member association or an affiliated club or a person required to comply with *APFA's member protection policy*, you must meet the following requirements in regard to your conduct during any activity held or sanctioned by *NSWPFA*, a member association or an affiliated club and in any role you hold within *NSWPFA*, a member association or an affiliated club:

1. Respect the rights, dignity and worth of others.
2. Be fair, considerate and honest in all dealing with others.
3. Be professional in, and accept responsibility for, your actions.
4. Make a commitment to providing quality service.
5. Be aware of, and maintain an uncompromising adherence to, *NSWPFA's* standards, rules, regulations and policies.
6. Operate within the rules of the sport including national and international guidelines which govern *NSWPFA*, the member associations and the affiliated clubs.
7. Do not use your involvement with *NSWPFA*, a member association or an affiliated club to promote your own beliefs, behaviors or practices where these are inconsistent with those of *NSWPFA*, a member association or an affiliated club.
8. Demonstrate a high degree of individual responsibility especially when dealing with persons under 18 years of age, as your words and actions are an example.
9. Avoid unaccompanied and unobserved activities with persons under 18 years of age, wherever possible.
10. Refrain from any form of harassment of others.
11. Refrain from any behavior that may bring *NSWPFA*, a member association or an affiliated club into disrepute.
12. Provide a safe environment for the conduct of the activity.
13. Show concern and caution towards others who may be sick or injured.
14. Be a positive role model.
15. Understand the repercussions if you breach, or are aware of any breaches of, this code of behaviour.

Our Member Protection Policy is one of the measures we have put in place to help us ensure that our sport is safe, welcoming and enjoyable. It provides assurances to all those involved and those wishing to be involved in our sport that improper conduct will not be tolerated.

A copy of our Member Protection Policy is available through request from any committee member or through our governing national body AUSTRALIAN POWERCHAIR FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION (APFA), website www.auspfa.org.au .

If you have any queries relating to the policy, please contact public.officer@auspfa.org.au .