



WEST LAKES SPORTS CLUB Inc
PO Box 6106, West Lakes Shore SA 5020

MEMBER PROTECTION POLICY

WLSC is committed to providing a safe environment that is free from harassment, discrimination and abuse for everyone, and promotes respectful and positive behaviour and values.

This policy provides a code of behaviour forming the basis of appropriate and ethical conduct which everyone must abide by.

WLSC is committed to ensuring that everyone associated with WLSC complies with the policy.

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Purpose of Our Policy

The main objective of our Member Protection Policy is to maintain responsible behaviour and ethical and informed decision-making by participants in this club. This policy outlines our commitment to a person's right to be treated with respect and dignity, and to be safe and protected from abuse. Our policy informs everyone involved in our club 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 club's activities.

Who Our Policy Applies To

Our policy applies to everyone involved in the WLSC and Affiliate Club, whether in paid or unpaid positions, including committee members, staff, coaches, officials, volunteers, players, parents, spectators, hirers and visitors.

Extent of Our Policy

Our policy covers unfair decisions, breaches of our code of behaviour and inappropriate behaviour that occurs at practice, at meetings, in the club rooms, at social events organised or sanctioned by the club (or our Affiliate Clubs). It also covers behaviour where there is suspicion of harm towards a child or young person.

Club Responsibilities

We will:

- assume Affiliate Club Delegates as contact points within the club for any player or parent to approach regarding mental health and other issues which may not constitute a child safety situation. While these player advocates are not professionals, they are great listeners and a resource as to the steps to follow to seek appropriate help.
- appoint a Child Safe Officer to assist with all matters relating to child safe environments and reporting requirements
- make any necessary amendments to our Constitution, rules or other policies to enable this policy to be enforceable;
- implement and comply with our policy;
- promote our policy to everyone involved in our club;
- always promote and model appropriate standards of behaviour;
- respond to breaches or complaints made under our policy promptly, fairly, and confidentially;
- apply this policy consistently;
- use appropriately trained people to receive and manage complaints and allegations e.g. Member Protection Information Officers (MPIOs)
- seek advice from, and if necessary or appropriate, refer serious issues to the relevant peak body.

Serious issues include unlawful behaviour that involves or could lead to significant harm and includes criminal behaviour (e.g. physical assault, sexual assault, child abuse) and any other issues that our state or national body request to be referred to them (e.g. conflict of interest).

Individual Responsibilities

Everyone associated with our club must:

- comply with our screening requirements including completion of a South Australian Working with Children check;
- comply with the standards of behaviour/ codes of conduct outlined in our policy;
- treat others with respect;
- always place the safety and welfare of children above other considerations;
- be responsible and accountable for their behaviour;
- follow the guidelines outlined in this policy if they wish to make a complaint or report a concern about possible child abuse, discrimination, harassment or other inappropriate behaviour;
- comply with any decisions and/or disciplinary measures imposed under this policy

Child Protection

WLSC is committed to the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people accessing our service. We support the rights of the child and will act without hesitation to ensure a child safe environment is always maintained. We also support the rights and wellbeing of our staff and volunteers and encourage their active participation in building and maintaining a secure environment for all participants.

WLSC acknowledges that our staff, members and volunteers provide a valuable contribution to the positive experiences of children involved in our sport. WLSC aims to continue this and to take measures to protect the safety and welfare of children participating in our sport through the following mechanisms:

1. Identify and Analyse Risk of Harm

WLSC will develop and implement a risk management strategy, which includes a review of existing child protection practices, to determine how child-safe and child- friendly the organisation is and to determine what additional strategies are required to minimise and prevent risk of harm to children.

2. Develop Codes of Conduct

WLSC will ensure it has codes of conduct that specify standards of conduct and care when dealing and interacting with children, particularly those in the organisation's care. The club will also implement a code of conduct to address appropriate behaviour between children.

The code(s) of conduct will set out professional boundaries, ethical behaviour and unacceptable behaviour and can be found at the end of this document.

3. Choose Suitable Employees and Volunteers

WLSC will conduct Police Criminal Check and Working with Children Check for all persons associated with the club as required by law, to ensure that it engages the most suitable and appropriate people to work with children (in prescribed positions).

4. Support, Train, Supervise and Enhance Performance

WLSC will ensure that volunteers and employees who work with children or their records have ongoing supervision, support and training such that their performance is developed and enhanced to promote the establishment and maintenance of a child- safe environment.

The child safe officer role will be established to support this statement and the appointment of the person to this role will be reviewed annually.

5. Report and Respond Appropriately to Suspected Abuse and Neglect

WLSC will ensure that volunteers and employees are able to identify and respond to children at risk of harm.

WLSC will make all volunteers and employees aware of their responsibilities under the Children's Protection Act 1993 if they have suspicion on reasonable grounds that a child has been or is being abused or neglected.

We require that any child who is abused or anyone who reasonably suspects that a child has been or is being abused by someone, report it immediately to the police or relevant government agency and the President.

If any person feels another person or organisation bound by this policy is acting inappropriately towards a child or is breaching the code'(s) of practice set out they may make an internal complaint.

6. Supervision

Members under the age of 18 must always be supervised by a responsible adult, and it is the Affiliate Clubs' requirement that all children have a parent/guardian in attendance at all trainings and games.

Our club will otherwise provide a level of supervision adequate and relative to the members' age, maturity, capabilities, level of experience, nature of activity and nature of venue.

If a member finds a member under the age of 18 is unsupervised, they should assume responsibility for the member's safety together with another member until the parent/guardian can be found.

Taking Images of Children

WLSC acknowledges that in South Australia under the Summary Offences Act 1953 a person must not engage in indecent filming.

- Wherever possible, obtain permission from a child's parent/guardian before taking an image of a child that is not their own and ensure that the parent knows the way the image will be used. Images of children and adults should not be used inappropriately or illegally.
- Under no circumstances will the use of camera phones, videos and cameras inside changing areas, showers and toilets be allowed.

We will only use appropriate images of a child, relevant to our sport and ensure that the child is suitably clothed in a manner that promotes the sport, displays its successes, etc.

Anti-harassment, Discrimination and Bullying

Our club opposes all forms of harassment, discrimination and bullying.

This includes treating or proposing to treat someone less favourably because of a particular characteristic; imposing or intending to impose an unreasonable requirement, condition or practice which has an unequal or disproportionate effect on people with a particular characteristic; or any behaviour that is offensive, abusive, belittling, intimidating or threatening – whether this is face-to-face, indirectly or via online communication technologies including social networking websites.

Social media postings, blogs, status updates and tweets in reference to the club or associated peak bodys must not use offensive, provocative or hateful language, must not be misleading, false or injure the reputation of another person, should respect and maintain the privacy of others and should promote the sport in a positive way.

Some forms of harassment, discrimination and bullying are against the law.

No person in his/her capacity as a spectator or participant in the club in the course of carrying out his/her duties or functions of being a participant in the Peak body shall engage in conduct that offends, humiliates, intimidates, contempts, ridicules, incites, threatens, disparages, vilifies or insults another person on the basis of that person's race, religion, colour, gender, sexual orientation, descent or national or ethnic origin.

Sexual & Gender Identity

All people, regardless of their sexuality or gender identification, are welcome at our club.

Participation in teams by transgender persons will be as per the relevant rules of the sport peak body.

Sexual Relationships

Intimate relationships between any other members are considered strictly personal and the member protection policy will not apply, except where evidence of harassment, bullying, exploitation, or the like, then WLSC shall apply the relevant actions pertained in this policy.

Codes of Conduct

Club House and Surrounds

- Strictly no BYO into WLSC grounds or clubhouse.
- All players, officials and members are always expected to behave in a manner which brings credit to them and the club (both on and off the field).
- Member and visitor attire is to be clean and tidy. Clothing and footwear are to be worn inside.
- No football boots/baseball cleats inside.
- Strictly no smoking.
- No running inside.
- No ball games/playing with balls inside
- Club approved sponsors only are to be displayed or promoted.
- All players, officials & visitors are to treat the clubrooms and the facilities with respect and will be responsible for any damage to the club's facilities if deliberately caused.
- Players and officials need to abide by the club rules and regulations.
- Members and visitors are to follow the directive of WLSC staff and committee members

WLSC Committee Members and Staff

- Hold an up-to-date and relevant Police Criminal Check and Working with Children Check
- Role model appropriate behaviour by acting with integrity and professionalism.
- Place the safety and welfare of all members and visitors above all else.
- Be reasonable in your demands on your fellow committee member's and staff time, energy and enthusiasm.
- Encourage and support opportunities for people to learn appropriate behaviours and skills.
- Never advocate or condone the use of illicit drugs or other banned performance enhancing substances or methods.
- Respect the rights and worth of every person, regardless of their age, race, gender, ability, cultural background, sexuality or religion.
- Do not tolerate abusive, bullying or threatening behaviour.
- Respect the decisions of the committee as your own.
- Display responsible behaviour in relation to alcohol and other drugs.
- Do not tolerate behaviour that may incite players and spectators against any on field official or public display of displeasure.

WLSC will expect the Affiliate Clubs to uphold their respective Code of Conducts for players, coaches, officials and spectators.

WLSC committee members and staff are expected to follow and enforce the Codes of Conduct by requesting appropriate conduct be observed.

Complaint Handling

Our club takes all complaints about on and off-field behaviour seriously. Our club will handle complaints based on the principles of procedural fairness (natural justice), that is:

- all complaints will be taken seriously;
- 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 can respond (give their side of the story);
- matters not relevant to the matter at hand will not be considered;
- decisions will be unbiased and fair; and
- any penalties imposed will be fair and reasonable.

Please note that under no circumstances is ANY individual from our club permitted to complain in writing or verbally to the relevant peak body. All complaints are to be actioned in terms of this policy.

Making a Complaint

Step 1: Before Making a Formal Complaint

In many situations the most appropriate step is to discuss the issue with the person who is the cause of the complaint. If the problem cannot be resolved by a direct personal approach it should then be raised with an appropriate person in order to discuss the issue and attempt a resolution:

Note, where a complaint relates to an allegation of child abuse the matter will immediately be referred to the police or relevant state government authority.

Step 2: Making a Formal Complaint

If the direct approach has not resulted in a satisfactory outcome, then a formal complaint can be made. The initial formal complaint must be introduced to the President in writing. If you make a complaint it will be investigated in a fair and impartial manner. No judgements or assumptions will be made, and no action taken until the investigation is complete unless the matter relates to child abuse. If a complaint is made against you, you will be given the opportunity to tell your side of the story. Confidentiality will always be maintained. Each complaint will be dealt with in as short a time as possible, ideally no more than one month.

Step 3: The Process

Once you have made a formal complaint in writing to the President, they will firstly ensure there is no conflict of interest before dealing with the complaint. If such a conflict exists, then the complaint will be referred to another appropriate person.

The delegated person will then interview all parties and witnesses in relation to the complaint, with a view of having a resolution to the satisfaction of all parties and the club.

During these interviews the parties will be advised what will happen if the complaint is upheld or if the complaint is not supported by the evidence.

All interviews will be recorded in writing.

Step 4: Review and Outcome

If the complaint remains unresolved the President will review the complaint and make a final decision with the agreement of the majority of the WLSC Executive Committee.

At any stage of the process, a person can seek advice from or lodge a complaint with an anti-discrimination commission or other external agency.

If the complaint relates to suspected child abuse, sexual assault or other criminal activity, then our club will need to report the behaviour to the police and/or relevant government authority and our state/national body.

Disciplinary Measures

WLSC will take disciplinary action against anyone found to have breached our policy or made false and malicious allegations. Any disciplinary measure imposed under our policy must:

- Be applied consistent with any contractual and employment rules and requirements.
- Be fair and reasonable.
- Be based on the evidence and information presented and the seriousness of the breach.
- Be determined by our Constitution, By Laws and the rules of the game.

Possible disciplinary measures depending on the nature of the complaint could include:

- verbal and/or written apology;
- written warning;
- counselling to address behaviour;
- withdrawal of any awards, achievements bestowed by our club;
- suspension or termination of membership, participation or engagement in a role or activity;
- de-registration for a period or permanently;
- a fine or payment; or
- any other form of discipline that our committee considers reasonable and appropriate.

Appeals

The complainant or respondent can lodge one appeal against decisions or disciplinary measures imposed by our club to the relevant peak body. Appeals must be based on either a denial of natural justice, because of unjust or unreasonable disciplinary measure(s) being imposed, or on the grounds that the decision was not supported by the information/evidence presented and available to the decision maker/club.

Adopted 6/5/2023