



North Shore Football & Netball Club

MEMBER PROTECTION POLICY

VERSION # 01

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MEMBER PROTECTION POLICY

1. Introduction

The **NORTH SHORE FOOTBALL & NETBALL CLUB** aims to provide an opportunity for the youth of our area to participate in sport, namely Netball and Australian Rules' Football. We offer a direct pathway into Senior Football for the players of the Colts (U/18's) of North Shore's **Junior** Football Club and entry into the GFNL (senior competition) for our **Junior** Netballers, with an emphasis on enhancing their health and wellbeing through organised sport.

The Club, will at all times, endeavour to provide for the health, welfare and well being of its' players, supporters and spectators. This aim will be achieved by promoting and developing the following values and objectives:

- A sense of social and community values.
- An environment to nurture the physical and mental development of our youth.
- Respect for officials, opposition players and supporters.
- The virtues of fair and disciplined play.
- Equal opportunities for everyone.

They will be realised by providing as far as reasonable:

- Competent coaches and assistants.
- Adequate facilities, amenities and equipment.
- Supervised social functions encouraging family participation.
- Regular communication and consultation with players and parents.
- Active leadership and management of the Club.

All players, Coaches and Officials, parents, supporters and Committee members have a responsibility, at all times, when representing the **NORTH SHORE FOOTBALL & NETBALL CLUB** to conduct themselves in an appropriate manner consistent with these values and/or Codes of Conduct.

2. Purpose of Our Policy

The main objective of our Member Protection Policy (policy) is to maintain responsible behaviour and the making of informed decisions by participants in this club. It 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.

3. Who Our Policy Applies To

Our policy applies to everyone involved in the club including committee members, administrators, coaches, officials (umpires/referees/judges), players, parents and spectators.

4. Extent of Our Policy

Our policy covers unfair decisions (e.g. team selection) and actions, breaches of our code of behaviour and behaviour that occurs at practice, in the club rooms, at social events organised or sanctioned by the club (or our sport), and on away and overnight trips. It also covers private behaviour where that behaviour brings our club or sport into disrepute or there is suspicion of harm towards a child or young person.

5. Club Responsibilities

We will:

- implement and comply with our policy;
- promote our policy to everyone involved in our club;
- promote and model appropriate standards of behaviour at all times;
- respond to breaches or complaints made under our policy promptly, fairly, and confidentially;
- review this policy every 12-18 months; and
- seek advice from and refer serious issues to our regional body, AFL Barwon.

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.

6. Individual Responsibilities

Everyone associated with our club must:

- comply with the standards of behaviour 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.

7. Protection of Children

7.1 Child Protection

The **NORTH SHORE FOOTBALL & NETBALL CLUB** 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 maintained at all times. 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.

The **NORTH SHORE FOOTBALL & NETBALL CLUB** acknowledges that our staff, members and volunteers provide a valuable contribution to the positive experiences of children involved in our sport. The **NORTH SHORE FOOTBALL & NETBALL CLUB** aims to continue this and to take measures to protect the safety and welfare of children participating in our sport by:

7.1.1: Identify and Analyse Risk of Harm

The **NORTH SHORE FOOTBALL & NETBALL CLUB** 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 because of the action of an employee, volunteer or another person.

7.1.2: Develop Codes of Conduct for Adults and Children

The **NORTH SHORE FOOTBALL & NETBALL CLUB** will ensure that the organisation 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 organisation 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. (See Part B)

7.1.3: Choose Suitable Employees and Volunteers

The **NORTH SHORE FOOTBALL & NETBALL CLUB** will ensure that the organisation takes all reasonable steps to ensure that it engages the most suitable and appropriate people to work with children (in prescribed positions).

This may be achieved using a range of screening measures. Such measures will aim to minimise the likelihood of engaging (or retaining) people who are unsuitable to work with children.

The **NORTH SHORE FOOTBALL & NETBALL CLUB** will ensure that working with children checks/criminal history assessments are conducted for employees and volunteers working with children, where an assessment is required by law.

If a criminal history report is obtained as part of their screening process, the **NORTH SHORE FOOTBALL & NETBALL CLUB** will ensure that the criminal history information is dealt with in accordance with relevant state requirements. (See Part C)

7.1.4: Support, Train, Supervise and Enhance Performance

The **NORTH SHORE FOOTBALL & NETBALL CLUB** 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.

7.1.5: Empower and Promote the Participation of Children In Decision-Making And Service Development

The **NORTH SHORE FOOTBALL & NETBALL CLUB** will promote the involvement and participation of children and young people in developing and maintaining child-safe environments.

7.1.6: Report and Respond Appropriately To Suspected Abuse and Neglect

The **NORTH SHORE FOOTBALL & NETBALL CLUB** will ensure that volunteers and employees are able to identify and respond to children at risk of harm.

The **NORTH SHORE FOOTBALL & NETBALL CLUB** will make all volunteers and employees aware of their responsibilities under respective state laws if they have suspicion on reasonable grounds that a child has been or is being abused or neglected. (See Part E)

In addition to any legal obligation, 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. Please refer to our complaints procedure outlined in attachment [C1] of this policy. This will explain what to do about the behaviour and how the **NORTH SHORE FOOTBALL & NETBALL CLUB** will deal with the problem.

7.2 Supervision

Members under the age of 10 must be supervised at all times by a responsible adult. Our club will 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 10 is unsupervised, they should assume responsibility for the member's safety until the parent/guardian or supervisor can be found.

Parents must turn up on time to collect their child for reasons of courtesy and safety. If it appears a member will be left alone at the end of a training session with just one child, they will ask another member to stay until the child is collected.

7.3 Transportation

Parents/guardians are responsible for transporting their children to and from club activities (e.g. practice and games). Where our club makes arrangements for the transportation of children (e.g. for away or over night trips), we will conduct a risk assessment that includes ensuring vehicles are adequately insured, the driver has a current and appropriate licence for the vehicle being used and appropriate safety measures are available (e.g. fitted working seatbelts)

7.4 Taking Images of Children

Images of children can be used inappropriately or illegally. The club requires that members, 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. We also require the privacy of others to be respected and disallow the use of camera phones, videos and cameras inside changing areas, showers and toilets.

If the club uses an image of a child it will avoid naming or identifying the child or it will, wherever possible, avoid using both the first name and surname. We will not display personal information such as residential address, email address or telephone numbers without gaining consent from the parent/guardian. We will not display information about hobbies, likes/dislikes, school, etc as this information can be used as grooming tools by pedophiles or other persons. 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.

8. 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 communication technologies such as mobile phone and computers. Some forms of harassment, discrimination and bullying are against the law and are based on particular characteristics such as age, disability, gender, sexual orientation, pregnancy, political or religious beliefs, race, and marital status.

Our club takes all claims of harassment, discrimination, bullying and cyber bullying seriously. We encourage anyone who believes they have been harassed, discriminated against or bullied to raise the issue with the club (see Responding to Complaints).

9. Inclusive practices

Our club is welcoming and we will seek to include members from all areas of our community.

9.1 People with a disability

Where possible we will include people with a disability in our teams and club. We will make reasonable adaptations (e.g. modifications to equipment and rules) to enable participation.

9.2 People from diverse cultures

We will support and respect people from diverse cultures and religions to participate in our club and where possible will accommodate requests for flexibility (e.g. modifications to uniforms).

9.3 Sexual & Gender Identity

All people, regardless of their sexuality, are welcome at our club. We strive to provide a safe environment for participation and will take action over any homophobic behaviour.

9.4 Pregnancy

Pregnant women should be aware that their own health and wellbeing, and that of their unborn children, should be of utmost importance in their decision making about the way they participate in our sport. We recommend pregnant women to consult with their medical advisers, make themselves aware of the facts about pregnancy in sport, and ensure that they make informed decisions about participation.

9.5 Girls playing in boys teams

If there is not a separate sex competition, our club will support girls playing in boys teams up until the age of 12 years (when federal sex discrimination law says if differences in strength, stamina and physique are relevant, then single sex competition is required). After this age our club will consider each request on an individual basis including looking at the nature of our sport and other opportunities to compete.

10. Responding to Complaints

10.1 Complaints

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 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.

More serious complaints may be escalated to our regional body, AFL Barwon.

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.

10.2 Complaint Handling Process

When a complaint is received by our club, the person receiving the complaint (e.g. President, Member Protection Information Officer) will:

- listen carefully and ask questions to understand the nature and extent of the problem;
- ask what the complainant would like to happen;
- explain the different options available to help resolve the problem;
- take notes; and
- maintain confidentiality but not necessarily anonymity.

Once the complainant decides on their preferred option for resolution, the club will assist, where appropriate and necessary, with the resolution process. This may involve:

- supporting the person complaining to talk to the person being complained about
- bringing all the people involved in the complaint together to talk objectively through the problem (this could include external mediation);
- gathering more information (e.g. from other people that may have seen the behaviour);
- seeking advice from our district, regional, state and/or national body or from an external agency (e.g. State Department of Sport or anti-discrimination agency);
- referring the complaint to our regional body, AFL Barwon; and/or
- referring the complainant to an external agency such as a community mediation centre, police or anti-discrimination agency.

In situations where a complaint is referred to our regional body, AFL Barwon, and an investigation is conducted, the club will:

- co-operate fully;
- ensure the complainant and respondent are not victimised;

- where applicable, ensure the complainant is not placed in an unsupervised situation with the respondent(s); and
- act on our AFL Barwon's recommendations.

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.

10.3 Disciplinary Measures

Our club 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 measures that may be taken include:

- verbal and/or written apology;
- counselling to address behaviour;
- withdrawal of any awards, placings, records, achievements bestowed in any tournaments, activities or events held or sanctioned by our club;
- suspension or termination of membership, participation or engagement in a role or activity;
- de-registration of accreditation for a period of time or permanently;
- a fine; or
- any other form of discipline that our club considers reasonable and appropriate.

10.4 Appeals

The complainant or respondent can lodge one appeal against decisions of or disciplinary measures imposed by our club to our regional body, AFL Barwon. 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.

Attachment 1.1: SCREENING REQUIREMENTS

This attachment sets out the screening process for people in our club who work, coach, supervise or have regular unsupervised contact with people under the age of 18 years.

Our Club will:

1. Identify positions that involve working, coaching, supervising or regular unsupervised contact with people under the age of 18 years.
2. Obtain a completed *Member Protection Declaration* (MPD) (Attachment 1.2) from all people who are identified in the above step and keep it in a secure place.
3. Provide an opportunity for a person to give an explanation if a MPD isn't provided or it reveals that the person doesn't satisfactorily meet any of the clauses in the MPD. We will then make an assessment as to whether the person may be unsuitable to work with people under the age of 18 years. If unsatisfied we will not appoint them to the role/position.
4. Where possible, check a person's referees (verbal or written) about his/her suitability for the role.
5. Ask the people identified in step 1 to sign a consent form for a national police check.
6. Possibly request (or ask the person to request) a national 'Part Exclusion' police check from our relevant police jurisdiction. This check excludes irrelevant records. If the police check indicates a relevant offence, we will provide an opportunity for the person to give an explanation, and then we will make an assessment as to whether the person may pose a risk to or be unsuitable to work with people under the age of 18 years. If unsatisfied we will not appoint them to the role/position.
7. Make an assessment as to whether the person may be unsuitable to work with people under the age of 18 years if the person does not agree to a national police check after explaining why it is a requirement under our policy. If unsatisfied, we will not appoint them.
8. Decide whether to offer the person the position taking into account the result of the police check and any other information the club has available to it. Where it is not practical to complete the police check prior to the person commencing in the position, we will complete the check as soon as possible, and if necessary, act immediately on the outcome.
9. Protect the privacy of any person who is checked and maintain confidentiality of any information obtained through the checking process.
10. Return information collected during screening (such as a completed MPD form, police records and referee reports) to the relevant person if that person is not appointed to the position, or otherwise be destroyed within 28 days of the date of the decision or the expiry of any appeal period, unless within that time the person requests that the documents be returned to them. For appointed persons, information will be kept on file in a secure location.

Attachment 1.2: MEMBER PROTECTION DECLARATION

Our club has a duty of care to all those associated with our club. As a requirement of our Member Protection Policy, we must enquire into the background of those who undertake any work, coaching or regular unsupervised contact with people under the age of 18 years.

I (name) of

..... (address) born/...../.....

sincerely declare:

1. I do not have any criminal charge pending before the courts.
2. I do not have any criminal convictions or findings of guilt for sexual offences, drug offences, offences related to children or acts of violence.
3. I have not had any disciplinary proceedings brought against me by an employer, sporting organisation or similar body involving child abuse, sexual misconduct or harassment, other forms of harassment or acts of violence.
4. To my knowledge there is no other matter that the club may consider to constitute a risk to its members, employees, volunteers, athletes or reputation by engaging me.
5. I will notify the President of the club immediately upon becoming aware that any of the matters set out in clauses 1 to 4 above has changed.

Declared in the *State/Territory of*

on/...../.....(date) Signature

Parent/Guardian Consent (in respect of a person under the age of 18 years)

I have read and understood the declaration provided by my child. I confirm and warrant that the contents of the declaration provided by my child are true and correct in every particular.

Name:.....

Signature:.....

Date:

Attachment 1.3: WORKING WITH CHILDREN CHECK REQUIREMENTS

The following information was updated in April 2011. It is subject to change at any time.

1 VICTORIA

The Working with Children (WWC) Check creates a mandatory minimum checking standard across Victoria. The *Working with Children Act 2005* requires that some people who work or volunteer in child-related work require a WWC Check. The check involves a national police records check and a review of relevant findings from prescribed professional disciplinary bodies (currently only the Victorian Institute of Teaching). There is an exemption for volunteers whose own children are involved in the particular activity; however they should still be required to complete the screening process.

A person who has no criminal or professional disciplinary history will be granted an *assessment notice*. This notice will entitle the person to undertake child-related work in Victoria and is valid for five years (unless revoked). A person deemed unsuitable to work or volunteer with children will be given a *negative notice* and cannot work in child-related work in Victoria.

For more information:

- www.justice.vic.gov.au/workingwithchildren or 1300 652 879

Attachment 2: CODES OF BEHAVIOUR

2.1 Player's Code of Conduct

- Play by the rules – the rules of your club and the laws of the game.
- Never argue with an umpire or other official – without these people, you cannot play football. Act respectfully toward all officials.
- Control your temper - verbal abuse of officials and sledging other players doesn't help you enjoy or win any games.
- Be a team player – It's a team game, treat it that way.
- Treat all players as you would like to be treated – fairly.
- Co-operate with your coach, the umpires and fellow team-mates.
- Play for your own enjoyment & to improve your skills.
- Respect the facilities and equipment of your own and opposing Clubs
- Don't use ugly remarks based on race, religion, gender or ability – you'll let down your coach, team-mates and family if you do – many such comments are actually now illegal.
- Do not use information technology to make or post inappropriate comments against players, clubs, club officials, match officials or the League, which is discriminatory or offensive. Information technology includes, but is not limited to, email, instant messaging, text messages, phone messages, digital images, website postings (including social media such as Facebook, Twitter and blogs).

2.2 Parents & Supporters Code of Conduct

- Remember that you are there for the participants to enjoy the game.
- Encourage participation, but don't force it.
- Teach that enjoyment is more important than winning.
- Never ridicule mistakes or losses – supporters are there to support not downgrade.
- Lead by example and respect all players, coaches, umpires and spectators – physical or verbal abuse will not be tolerated.
- Recognise all volunteers who are giving up their valuable time.
- Never publicly criticise umpires – raise personal concerns with club officials in private.
- Don't use ugly remarks based on race, religion, gender or ability – you'll let down your family and yourself if you do – & many such comments are actually now illegal.

By registering with the Geelong Football & Netball League we agree to abide by these principles. I/We support the Club in it's undertakings and encourage the Club to take any necessary disciplinary actions including the suspension and banning where warranted of any players for repeated or serious breaches of the Codes of Conduct.

Attachment 3: DUTY STATEMENT

3.1 Coach

I, _____, hereby commit, to the best of my ability, to uphold the AFL Coaches Code of Conduct.

I understand that as an integral component of my accreditation, I must maintain a standard of behaviour and conduct in the best interests of the game and the players/ staff in my care.

In representing myself in an honest manner and without bringing the coaching profession or the Game into disrepute, I will endeavour to uphold the following to the best of my ability:

1. I will respect the rights, dignity and worth of all individuals within the context of my involvement in Australian Football, including refraining from any discriminatory practices on the basis of race, religion, ethnic background, or special ability/disability.
2. I will abide by and teach the AFL Laws of the Game and the Rules of my Club and League/Association.
3. I will be reasonable in the demands I make on the time commitments of the players in my care, having due consideration for their health and well-being.
4. I will refrain from any form of personal abuse or unnecessary physical contact with the players in my care.
5. I will have due consideration for varying maturity and ability levels of my players when designing practice schedules, practice activities and involvement in competition.
6. I will avoid overplaying the talented players aiming to maximise participation and enjoyment for all players regardless of ability. Where I am responsible for players in the 5-12 year old age group, I will ensure that all players gain equal playing time.
7. I will stress and monitor safety always.
8. In recognising the significance of injury and sickness, I will seek and follow the physician's advice concerning the return of injured or ill players to training.
10. I will endeavour to keep informed regarding sound principles of coaching and skill development, and of factors relating to the welfare of my players.
11. I will, at all times, display and teach appropriate sporting behaviour, ensuring that players understand and practice fair play.
12. I will display and foster respect for umpires, opponents, coaches, administrators, other officials, parents and spectators.
13. I will ensure that players are involved in a positive environment where skill learning and development are priorities are not overshadowed by a desire to win.
14. I reject the use of performance enhancing substances in sport and will abide by the guidelines set forth in the AFL DRUG POLICY.

Note: The "Coaches Code of Conduct" is to be signed and conformed to as part of the accreditation requirements of the AFL. Coaches should be aware that, in addition to this Code, they may be obliged to sign a further Code of Conduct/Ethics with their Club and/or League.

ASC Member Protection Policy Template - Club version – Jan 2017

<p>Nature of complaint (category/basis/grounds)</p> <p>Can tick more than one box</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Harassment or <input type="checkbox"/> Discrimination</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Sexual/sexist <input type="checkbox"/> Selection dispute <input type="checkbox"/> Coaching methods</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Sexuality <input type="checkbox"/> Personality clash <input type="checkbox"/> Verbal abuse</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Race <input type="checkbox"/> Bullying <input type="checkbox"/> Physical abuse</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Religion <input type="checkbox"/> Disability <input type="checkbox"/> Victimisation</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Pregnancy <input type="checkbox"/> Child Abuse <input type="checkbox"/> Unfair decision</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other</p>
<p>What they want to happen to fix issue</p>	
<p>Information provided to them</p>	
<p>Resolution and/or action taken</p>	
<p>Follow-up action</p>	