

NATIONAL CHILD PROTECTION POLICY



June 2013

1. Application

1.2 Application

The *National Child Protection Policy* (**Policy**) applies to an Australian Football league that is conducted or administered by:

- (a) a State or Territory league or body that is affiliated with the AFL, including:
 - a. NSW/ACT: AFL (NSW/ACT) Commission Ltd ACN 086 839 385;
 - b. NT: AFL (Northern Territory) Ltd ACN 097 620 525;
 - c. QLD: AFL (Queensland) ACN 090 629 342;
 - d. SA: South Australian Football League Inc ABN 59 518 757 737;
 - e. TAS AFL (TAS) ACN 135 346 986;
 - f. Victoria: Australian Football League (Victoria) ACN 147 664 579;
 - g. WA: West Australian Football Commission Inc ABN 51 167 923 136); or
- (b) an entity or body that is affiliated with (or licensed by) an Affiliated State or Territory Body.

(Football Body)

Australian Football: players; coaches; officials; spectators; and administrators and all people reasonably connected to the Football Body (**Members**) must comply with the Policy.

1 Policy Statement

The Football Body and its Members are committed to the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people involved in Australian Football. The rights of the child are fundamental to all organisations and persons reasonably connected to Australian Football; each will act without hesitation to ensure a child-safe environment is maintained at all times. Child-protection laws in all Australian States and Territories illegalise child abuse. These laws also cover the reporting and investigation of cases of child abuse. The Football Body and all Members subject to this Policy must comply with the all applicable child-protection laws.

In addition to expeditiously reporting all allegations of child abuse to appropriate State or Territory authorities, the Football Body and its Members must deal with all allegations of child abuse promptly, seriously, sensitively and confidentially. Any Member who reasonably suspects that a child has been or is being abused by someone within Australian Football or by his/her parents/guardians must report it immediately to the police or relevant government agency, and the Football Body.

The Football Body will not attempt to investigate, mediate or conduct any hearing into any allegation of child abuse as this is the role of the police and the relevant government agency.

2 Child Abuse

Child abuse involves conduct which puts children at risk of harm (usually by adults, sometimes by other children) and often by those they know and trust. It can take many forms, including verbal and physical actions and by people failing to provide them with basic care. Child abuse may include:

- a) Physical abuse by hurting a child or a child's development (e.g. hitting, shaking or other physical harm; giving a child alcohol or drugs; or training that exceeds the child's development or maturity).
- b) Sexual abuse by adults or other children where a child is encouraged or forced to watch or engage in sexual activity or where a child is subject to any other inappropriate conduct of a sexual nature (e.g. sexual intercourse, masturbation, oral sex, pornography including child pornography or inappropriate touching or conversations).
- c) Emotional abuse by ill-treating a child (e.g. humiliation, taunting, sarcasm, yelling, negative criticism, name calling, ignoring or placing unrealistic expectations on a child).
- d) Neglect (e.g. failing to give food, water, shelter or clothing or to protect a child from danger or foreseeable risk of harm or injury).

3 Working with Children: Statutory Obligations

The Football Body requires all Members who will be required to work with children to comply with the statutory obligations that apply to people working with children in their state or territory. This may involve the relevant Member undertaking a "working with children check" to determine their suitability to work (in a paid or volunteer capacity) with children.

Information relating to the statutory obligations of members working with children can be found in the URLs below:

- QLD: www.cypcg.qld.gov.au;
- NSW: www.check.kids.nsw.gov.au/
- WA: www.checkwwc.wa.gov.au
- VIC: www.justice.vic.gov.au/workingwithchildren

- SA: <http://www.recsport.sa.gov.au>
- TAS: www.police.tas.gov.au
- NT: <http://www.workingwithchildren.nt.gov.au>
- ACT: www.aifs.gov.au

NB: Statutory working with children obligations may require members who travel interstate or between states and territories with children to comply with two or more sets of statutory obligations. This issue could arise when, for example, an Australian Football club takes underage players away for training camps, competition or other activities.

4 Taking Images of Children

Recognising that images of children can be used inappropriately or illegally, Members must, wherever possible, obtain permission from a child's parent/guardian before taking an image of a child. Members must inform the parent/guardian about the nature and extent of the use that will be made of the image(s) and generally comply with the *National Privacy Policy*. Members must respect the privacy of other members and must not use camera phones, videos and cameras inside changing areas, showers and toilets.

If the Football Body uses an image of a child, the Football Body must avoid naming or identifying the child and, wherever possible, avoid using both the first name and surname. The Football Body must not display personal information such as residential address, email address or telephone numbers without gaining consent from the parent/guardian. The Football Body must not display information about hobbies, likes/dislikes, school, etc as this information can be used as grooming tools by paedophiles or other persons. The Football Body must only use appropriate images of a child, relevant to Australian Football and ensure that the child is suitably clothed in a manner that promotes the sport.