



**FOOTBALL
SOUTH
AUSTRALIA**

POLICY FOR SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

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1. Introduction

Football SA is committed to providing a safe and enjoyable environment for everyone that participates in football. Everyone that is involved in the sport should be treated with respect and dignity and be able to participate free of being discriminated, harassed, bullied or abused.

Children and young people are a major stakeholder of football and should be able to enjoy participating in a safe, supportive, and empowering environment. Football SA and all its affiliated clubs and associations, have a responsibility to safeguard the welfare and wellbeing of children and young people, who should feel comfortable, and be encouraged to, speak up and report any concerns they may have or be aware of in relation to the safeguarding of children and young people.

In 2018 some of the requirements to create and maintain a child safe environment were removed from the *Children's Protection Act 1993* and replaced by the *Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017*. New, stronger laws for people volunteering with children were implemented following recommendations as part of Federal and South Australian Royal Commissions into child abuse and child protection systems to help keep children safe in our community.

This policy will be reviewed in accordance with Football SA's review process, being two years from the date of implementation. The policy will be reviewed as of April 2023.

2. Scope

The Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy forms part of Football SA's ongoing commitment to providing a safe and inclusive culture, which safeguards participants from any form of harm or risk of harm.

The wellbeing of Children and Young People is of paramount importance and this policy forms part of the Football SA Member Protection Framework and should be read in conjunction with the following documents:

- Football Australia Member Protection Policy
- Football Australia Safeguarding Policy and Framework
- Football Australia Code of Conduct
- Football SA Code of Conducts
- Working with Children Check Policy

This policy is to be implemented by all Football SA Affiliated Clubs and Associations that provide services to children and young people Under 18 years of age.

3. Child Safe Environment Compliance Requirements

a. Lodging a Compliance Statement.

All clubs that provide services to children and young people Under 18 years of age must lodge a Child Safe Environment Compliance Statement with Football SA to confirm that they are implementing the requirements of a child safe environment as outlined in this policy.

A single compliance statement on behalf of all affiliated clubs and associations will be submitted by Football SA to the Department of Human Services. This compliance statement stipulates that all affiliated clubs and associations will implement and abide by the child safe environment policies and procedures.

Action:

All affiliated clubs and associations must complete the Child Safe Compliance Statement as outlined in Appendix A. This statement must be completed and submitted to Football SA, within the specified timeframe as outlined by Football SA, by affiliated clubs and associations that provide services to children and young people Under 18 years of age.

The adoption of a single compliance statement will ensure consistency across the whole of the sport. The single compliance statement also means that each individual club and/or association is not required to submit such a statement.

b. Working with Children Checks (WWCC)

South Australia has introduced stronger, more effective, and transparent screening laws for people working or volunteering with children. The new laws mean that everyone working or volunteering with children must have valid child-related screening.

The Working with Children Checks (WWCC) have replaced all other child screening checks including the National Police Certificates. Football SA stipulates that any person that holds a 'Prescribed Position', as outlined below, involving a person Under 18, must have a WWCC:

A prescribed position is:

- All people who have contact with or work in close proximity with children and young people under 18 years of age and are not directly supervised:
- Manage or supervise volunteers or paid staff that work with people Under 18 year of age:

- Have access to records in relation to people Under 18 years of age.

A person is not required to have a WWCC if they:

- a sworn police officer with the South Australian Police or the Australian Federal Police;
- work in the same capacity as a child (e.g. you work at a checkout in a supermarket that also hires people under 18 in the same type of role);
- don't work with children for more than seven days (consecutive or not) in a calendar year*;
- live interstate, have a current child-related check from your home state, and are working at an organised event in South Australia lasting no more than 10 consecutive days;
- are under the age of 14.

*The seven-day exclusion does not apply if the person is involved with an overnight activity (e.g. end of season camp) or has close contact with children with disability.

Football SA has already developed a policy relating to the WWCC. This policy clearly outlines who needs to complete a WWCC and the process that needs to be undertaken to obtain such a screening.

There are many different roles undertaken within a football club, with some of these roles being performed by volunteer on a rotational basis. Such roles include ground steward and club assistant referee. Where the volunteer is not consistently performing this role (7 or less times) a WWCC is not required. If they are undertaking the role regularly, then the club would require the volunteer to get a WWCC. The club may wish to implement a blanket requirement that all volunteers, regardless of their time commitment, provide a WWCC.

Action:

All affiliated clubs and associations must implement the Football SA WWC requirements.

c. Mandated Notifiers

The *Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017* makes it a legal requirement for certain people to report a reasonable suspicion or incidences of harm or risk of harm. This obligation is known as mandatory notification and a penalty may stem from an individual's failure to comply.

Notifications must be made to the Department for Child Protection - *Child Abuse Report Line (CARL) on 13 14 78*.

Definition

Mandated notifiers are an employee of, or volunteer in, a government or non-government organisation that provides health, welfare, education, sporting or recreational, childcare or residential services wholly or partly for children.

These people:

- are engaged in the actual delivery of those services to children and young people, or
- hold a management position in the relevant organisation the duties of which include direct responsibility for, or direct supervision of, the provision of those services to children and young people

Based on the above definition, coaches, trainers, managers, any person that is providing services to children and young people, and leaders within the affiliated club and/or association are required by law to report harm or risk of harm to children and young people.

What does this Mean?

Volunteers must advise the Department for Child Protection of their suspicions of risk or harm by contacting the Child Abuse Report Line (CARL) by phone, or online. 13 14 78. The CARL phone line is available 24 hours a day 7 days a week

Types of risk and harm that may be experienced by a child or young person include:

- Domestic or Family Violence
- Physical Harm
- Neglect
- Sexual Abuse and 'grooming'
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Concerns
- Disclosure by a Child or Young person

When is a person required to notify?

A person should make a notification when there are reasonable grounds to form a suspicion that a child or young person may be at risk. This may include:

- when a child or young person tells you they are at risk or have been harmed
- when your own observations of a particular child or young person's behaviour and/or injuries lead you to suspect they are at risk, or harm is occurring
- when a child or young person tells you that they know of someone who is at risk or has been harmed (they may possibly be referring to themselves)

- when you hear about risk or harm to a child or young person from someone who is in a position to provide reliable information, perhaps a relative or friend, neighbour or sibling of the child or young person.

For more information on the role of a mandated notifier please visit:

<https://www.childprotection.sa.gov.au/reporting-child-abuse/mandated-notifiers-and-their-role>

Action Required:

All affiliated clubs and associations are to inform the relevant people within their organisation of their legal obligation as a mandated notifier. In providing this information it is important for the club/association to emphasise, the role of the mandated notifier and that a failure by a mandated notifier to report a suspicion formed on reasonable grounds that a child or young person is or may be at risk may result in a person being prosecuted and a court imposing a fine.

4. Child Safe Requirements to be implemented

To ensure that your club/association is child safe compliant, the following requirements are to be implemented:

- a. Read and discuss the contents of this document with your club and/or association board/committee.
- b. Sign the compliance form as outlined in Appendix A agreeing to abide by the Member Protection Framework and the adoption of policies and procedures relating to this framework. The compliance form is only required to be signed once. Clubs and/or associations that are new to Football SA are required to sign the compliance form at the time of nominating.
- c. The documents relating to the Member Protection Framework are to be made accessible and promoted to all stakeholders of the club/association. This can be undertaken by placing the documents on the club/association website or by posting a link direct to the Football SA website for access to the information.
- d. Ensure that your organisation is registered with the Department for Human Services Screening Unit for the purpose of registering your club/association's volunteers.
- e. Ensure that the information relating to Working with Children Check's (WWCC) is provided to your volunteers at the time of being appointed and ensure that all appointed volunteers,

required to have a WWCC, registers for the WWCC and provides the details to the club/association.

- f. The club /association is to nominate at least one person to become a Child Safe Officer (CSO) and ensure that this person undertakes the required training. CSO training is available through [Sport SA](#). Larger clubs/associations should consider appointing multiple CSO. Once the CSO's have been appointed their name and how to contact them should be made available to the club/association stakeholders. This can be provided as part of the club/association information handbook provided to players at the time of registration, or through the club/association digital platforms.
- g. Interview and seek references for all volunteers that are to be appointed to your club/association.
- h. All volunteers must be registered on the National Registration System and enter their WWCC information during the registration process.
- i. Provide all volunteers with an induction session and information pack relating to their role at the club/association.
- j. Football SA has developed Code of Conducts for volunteers. Clubs and associations are to provide a copy of the relevant Code of Conduct to the volunteer at the time of appointment. Code of Conducts can be accessed [here](#).
- k. Encourage all volunteers to undertake the FREE online Child Protection training available through www.playbytherules.net.au.
- l. Undertake a risk assessment of the club's/association's facilities and practices to identify any potential risks to the safety of children. Address any identified risks as soon as possible. Keep a register of your club's/association's actions.
- m. Engage children and young people so they can have a say on issues that impact their involvement. This may be simply through feedback/survey forms or via other forums.
- n. Ensure that all stakeholders are aware of the process to raise a grievance/complaint within the club.

- o. Build and maintain a commitment to provide a child safe environment which is embedded in the culture of the club/association. This will ensure that the club/association is a safe and welcoming place for children and young people and will encourage other people to join your club/association

5. Identifying and Analyse of Risk

Football SA has a Risk Management Policy and Registry, which identifies potential risks to the organization, the likelihood of their occurrence, the potential impact and how the risks are to be managed. The Risk Registry includes risks relating to child safe environment.

To mitigate risk Football SA has developed and implemented policies, that are required to be implemented by all affiliated clubs and associations.

These policies include:

- Alcohol Policy
- Displaying and Acquiring of Images of Children
- Smoke Free Policy
- Travel Policy for Teams

Football SA also requires all affiliated clubs and associations to implement the Football Australia Safeguarding Policy that outlines the roles and responsibilities of volunteers in the areas of:

- Sexual Relationships and Sexual Misconduct
- Giving Gifts to a Child
- Children and Behaviour Management Strategies
- Use of Language and Tone of Voice
- Supervision
- Use of Electronic or Online Communication and Social Media
- Physical Contact with Children
- Overnight Stays and Sleeping Arrangements
- Changeroom and Toilet Supervision and Arrangements
- Transporting Children

6. Further Information

If your club/association requires any further assistance in relation to this document or the requirements outlined in this document, please contact Football SA. Further Information can also be gained from the links below:

Department of Child Protection

<https://www.childprotection.sa.gov.au/>

Department of Human Services

www.dhs.sa.gov.au/cse

Office for Recreation and Sport

[ORSR - Create a child safe environment](#)

Play by the Rules

<https://www.playbytherules.net.au/>

Football Australia

<https://www.footballaustralia.com.au/governance/member-protection-framework>

Football SA

<https://www.footballsacom.au/child-safe-environments>

FOOTBALL SA COMPLAINTS PROCESS

Rationale

Football SA is committed to providing a high-quality service to all our stakeholders. If a stakeholder has a complaint or grievance, it needs to be addressed firstly with the party that the complaint/grievance relates to. Football SA recommends that the matter is addressed at the level that it occurs so that it can be dealt within a timely matter and to avoid the matter being escalated higher.

If the complaint/grievance is raised with the club/association and is not addressed,, the matter can then be referred to Football SA. Generally, Football SA will not address the matter if the club/association has not been provided with the opportunity to remedy the complaint/grievance.

Complaints may vary in severity and complexity and may be addressed informally or formally. Any complaint received should be addressed in a timely manner and should not be avoided as it may result in a minor complaint becoming significant. Football SA aims to provide consistency and fair handling of all complaints through this procedure.

Required Outcome 1:

To ensure that all affiliated clubs and associations abide by the Football Australia (FA) and Football SA Competition Rules and Regulations, policies and procedures.

Required Outcome 2:

To provide a clear and concise complaints handling process including an appeal process.

Required Outcome 3:

To provide consistency and fair handling of all complaints and grievances.

COMPLAINT PROCESS

Prior to Submitting a Formal Complaint to Football SA.

1. Prior to contacting Football SA in relation to a complaint, the complainant should consider whether the matter has been addressed with the person/s concerned. If the complaint is in relation to a club or association, in the first instance, the club and/or association should be provided with the opportunity to resolve the matter.

2. In submitting a complaint to a club or association, this may in the first instance be undertaken informally. This may involve having a conversation with the relevant person about the complaint/grievance. If the matter is resolved no further action is required.
3. If the matter cannot be resolved informally, the complaint/grievance should be submitted in writing to the relevant party outlining the nature of the complaint and the outcome that is being sought. Any formal correspondence should provide a timeframe for a response, normally 7 days. If the matter is resolved no further action is required.
4. If the complaint/grievance is not resolved by the club/association following informal and formal process, a formal complaint may be made to Football SA. Prior to doing so, a person may contact Football SA to determine if the matter can be resolved without making a formal complaint. In undertaking this process the Football SA will only provide advice; a determination will not be made and the person will not be instructed what action they should or should not undertake.

Submission of a Formal Complaint to Football SA.

1. All complaints are to be submitted in writing. The information should be specific and provide details relating to the actual complaint.
2. If the complaint/grievance is in relation to a competition matter, it should be addressed to the relevant Competition Administrator. Please note that Football SA Competition Staff will not address matters with individuals if they have not been addressed through their club.
3. If the complainant is unsure who the matter is to be addressed to, they may contact Football SA for further information.

Investigating a Complaint

1. Once the complaint/grievance has been received, it will be reviewed and investigated. Investigation may entail requesting additional information, referring the matter to another person within the organisation or referring the matter to the Football SA Grievance and Disciplinary Committee.
2. If the matter is not referred to the Grievance/Disciplinary Committee and a determination is made, a written response relating to the findings and the action to be implemented will be conveyed to the complainant.

Grievance/Disciplinary Committee

1. Football SA Grievance and Disciplinary Committee is an independent body.
2. If the matter is referred to this committee, a hearing date and time will be conveyed to the complainant.
3. The complainant and any witnesses, where applicable, will be required to attend the hearing.
4. The Grievance and Disciplinary Committee will hear the matter and provide a finding. The outcome of the hearing may be provided verbally at the hearing. All findings will be provided in writing to the complainant within 7 days, where possible.

Appeal Process

1. A person may appeal a decision of Football SA or the Grievance and Disciplinary Committee in accordance with the National Disciplinary Regulations and Football SA Grievance and Disciplinary Regulations.
2. To lodge an appeal, the appeal must be submitted on the prescribed form and must be accompanied by the appeal fee.
3. On receipt of the appeal, Football SA will refer the matter to the Appeal Committee.
4. An Appeal Hearing will be scheduled and notified to the person who submitted the appeal.
5. The Appeal Committee will hear the matter and provide a finding. The outcome of the hearing may be provided verbally at the hearing. All findings will be provided in writing to the complainant within 7 days, where possible.

National Grievance Procedure

1. If a complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of the above process, a grievance may be submitted to the FA in accordance with the National Grievance Resolution Regulations.