



MENTONE ATHLETIC CLUB

Member Protection Policy

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MENTONE ATHLETIC CLUB

1. Introduction

Mentone Athletic Club Vision

To be a club that is friendly, inclusive and recognises all abilities across a diverse range of competitions, with over 100 members.

Mission Statement for 2014-15

In 2014-15, we aim to grow the club to 80 members, with a focus on building a strong club culture that reflects our vision.

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, athletes, parents and spectators.

4. Exent 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.



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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 Athletics Victoria or Victoria Police (whichever is most appropriate)

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

Mentone Athletic 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 volunteers and encourage their active participation in building and maintaining a secure environment for all participants.

Mentone Athletic Club acknowledges that our members and volunteers provide a valuable contribution to the positive experiences of children involved in our sport. Mentone Athletic 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 Mentone Athletic 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.



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> 7.1.2: Develop Codes of Conduct for Adults and Children

The Mentone Athletic 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 Mentone Athletic 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). The Mentone Athletic Club will ensure that working with children checks are conducted for employees and volunteers working with children, where an assessment is required by law. **(See Attachment 1)**

> 7.1.4: Support, Train, Supervise and Enhance Performance

The Mentone Athletic 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 Mentone Athletic 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 Mentone Athletic Club will ensure that volunteers and employees are able to identify and respond to children at risk of harm.

The Mentone Athletic 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 Mentone Athletic Club will deal with the problem.

7.2. Taking Images Of Children

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.



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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 welcome and encourage members from all areas of our community to participate at the club.

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.

10. Dispute Resolution

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 Athletics Victoria.

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.



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10.2. Complaint Handling Process

When a complaint is received by our club, the person receiving the complaint (the President or Secretary) 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. 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:

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 Athletics Victoria ; 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 Athletics Victoria 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 Athletic Victoria'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.



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Possible measures that may be taken include:

- verbal and/or written apology;
- counselling to address behaviour;
- withdrawal of any awards, records, 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 Athletics Victoria. 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.



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Attachment 1 - Working With Children Check Requirements

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

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



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Attachment 2 - Codes Of Behaviour

Mentone Athletic Club Vision

To be a club that is friendly, inclusive and recognises all abilities across a diverse range of competitions, with over 100 members.

Mission Statement

We aim to grow the club to 80 to 100 members, with a focus on building a strong club culture that reflects our vision.

What does this mean?

- Open and friendly atmosphere at Dolamore Reserve and more social activities
- Inclusive club culture, members who respect each other and compete at a variety of levels and competitions
- A diverse offering of participation (social, AV, professionals, masters, all-abilities, etc)

What will the committee do?

- Improve the club culture by being positive role models – friendly, get to know the members and coaches, actively seek feedback
- Create a strategic plan – identify opportunities for new activities to improve the culture, while maintaining a focus on core AV activities
- Continue to focus on membership growth – aim for 80 to 100 members (continue developing Little Aths pathways, schools and other)

What do we want our members to do?

- Access and utilise the facilities and coaches during club training times where possible
- Participate in fundraising and social activities
- Participate in team competitions (relays, interclub, etc)
- Support your fellow members at other competitions (let others know when you are competing, cheer them on even if you are not competing).



Name of person receiving complaint	Date: / /	
Complainant's Name	<input type="checkbox"/> Over 18 <input type="checkbox"/> Under 18	
Complainant's contact details	Phone: Email:	
Complainant's role/status in Club	<div> <input type="checkbox"/> Administrator (volunteer) <input type="checkbox"/> Parent </div> <div> <input type="checkbox"/> Athlete/player <input type="checkbox"/> Spectator </div> <div> <input type="checkbox"/> Coach/Assistant Coach <input type="checkbox"/> Support Personnel </div> <div> <input type="checkbox"/> Employee (paid) <input type="checkbox"/> Other </div> <div> <input type="checkbox"/> Official </div>	
Name of person complained about	<input type="checkbox"/> Over 18 <input type="checkbox"/> Under 18	
Person complained about role/status in Club	<div> <input type="checkbox"/> Administrator (volunteer) <input type="checkbox"/> Parent </div> <div> <input type="checkbox"/> Athlete/player <input type="checkbox"/> Spectator </div> <div> <input type="checkbox"/> Coach/Assistant Coach <input type="checkbox"/> Support Personnel </div> <div> <input type="checkbox"/> Employee (paid) <input type="checkbox"/> Other </div> <div> <input type="checkbox"/> Official </div>	
Location/event of alleged issue		
Description of alleged issue		



<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 <input type="checkbox"/> Sexual/sexist <input type="checkbox"/> Selection dispute <input type="checkbox"/> Coaching methods </p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sexuality <input type="checkbox"/> Personality clash <input type="checkbox"/> Verbal abuse • Race <input type="checkbox"/> Bullying <input type="checkbox"/> Physical abuse • Religion <input type="checkbox"/> Disability <input type="checkbox"/> Victimisation • Pregnancy <input type="checkbox"/> Child Abuse <input type="checkbox"/> Unfair decision • Other
<p>What they want to happen to fix issue</p>	
<p>Information provided to them</p>	
<p>Resolution and/or action taken</p>	



Follow-up action	
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