



BLACKWOOD FOOTBALL CLUB

MEMBER PROTECTION POLICY

VERSION 1

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EXCELLENCE

PRIDE

COMMUNITY SPIRIT

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MEMBER PROTECTION POLICY

1. Introduction

Values

- **Excellence:** being uncompromising around the quality of football we play, involving the best people for the club's development.
- **Pride:** being Proud of our History and accomplishments as a club (see attachment 1)
- **Community Spirit:** being inclusive and community oriented with the teams, membership and the general public.

Mission Statement

- To provide an opportunity for local members to play at the highest level, to experience the highs and lows that team sport brings and to reach their full potential in the best facilities that the club can provide.
- To provide a safe and friendly environment by promoting respectful positive behavior and values amongst the members.
- To foster and encourage a supportive and family environment to members of the club and the community.
- To offer Sponsors and supporters of the club opportunities to financially support the club.
- To promote unity and good fellowship amongst members of the club and between members of the club and other clubs.
- To be the most successful club in the Association in which the club has chosen to participate.

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, members, life members, coaches, support personnel, officials (umpires/referees), employees, 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 Office for Recreation and Sport SA.
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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 codes of behaviour outlined in our policy (see Procedure 3.1, 3.2, 3.3 & 3.4);
- always 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;
- complying with any decision and/or disciplinary measure imposed under this policy.

7. Protection of Children

7.1 Child Protection

The Blackwood Football 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.

Blackwood Football Club acknowledges that our staff, members and volunteers provide a valuable contribution to the positive experiences of children involved in our sport. Our aim is 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 Blackwood Football 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 Blackwood Football 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 attachments 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4)

7.1.3: Choose Suitable Employees and Volunteers

The Blackwood Football 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. (see attachment 2.1)

The Blackwood Football Club 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. (see attachment 2.2)

If a criminal history report is obtained as part of their screening process, the Club will ensure that the criminal history information is dealt with in accordance with relevant state requirements.

7.1.4: Support, Train, Supervise and Enhance Performance

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

The Blackwood Football 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 attachment 2.2 Guidelines for Reporting Abuse or Neglect)

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 Item 10: Responding to Complaints of this policy. This will explain what to do about the behaviour and how the Blackwood Football Club will deal with the problem.

7.2 Supervision

Members under the age of 18 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 18 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 Item 10: 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 or gender are welcome at our club. We strive to provide a safe environment for participation and will take action over any homophobic or transphobic behaviour.

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 Hills Football League or the Office for Recreation and Sport SA.

If the complaint relates to suspected child abuse, sexual assault or other criminal activity, then our club will 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 (see attachment 2.);
- 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 Hills Football League or affiliated association; 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 affiliated association 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 affiliated association'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 Board or affiliated association. 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.

11. COMMUNICATION

OUR COMMITMENT

Electronic communication is essential for sharing club news and information with our members. Our communication will be timely, appropriate and related to club business.

WHAT WE WILL DO

We use a range of electronic tools to communicate with our members.

Our communication will protect members' privacy, maintain clear boundaries and ensure that bullying and harassment does not occur.

A Communication Officer will be appointed to provide accountability and control over material published on our club's website and any related discussion groups or social media websites, such as Facebook, YouTube or Twitter.

Website

- Our website will include current information on competitions, social events, committees, policies, constitution, rules and by-laws.
- No offensive content or photos will be published.
- If we intend to publish a photo of a child, we will first seek permission from his or her parents and take care not to provide identifying information.
- We will seek feedback from members to improve the information available on the site.

SMS and email

Committee members, coaches and team managers may use SMS and email to provide information about competition, training, club-sanctioned social events and other club business, however:

- SMS messages should be short and about club/team matters
- email communication will be used when more information is required
- communication involving children will be directed through their parents.

Social media websites

- We treat all social media postings, blogs, status updates and tweets as public 'comment'.
- Postings (written, photos or videos) will be family-friendly and feature positive club news and events.
- No personal information about our members will be disclosed.
- No statements will be made that are misleading, false or likely to injure a person's reputation.
- No statements will be made that might bring our club into disrepute.
- Abusive, discriminatory, intimidating or offensive statements will not be tolerated. Offending posts will be removed and those responsible will be blocked from the site.

WHAT WE ASK YOU TO DO

We expect our members to conduct themselves appropriately when using electronic communication to share information with other members or posting material on public websites connected to the club.

Electronic communication:

- should be restricted to club matters
- must not offend, intimidate, humiliate or bully another person
- must not be misleading, false or injure the reputation of another person
- should respect and maintain the privacy of members
- must not bring the club into disrepute.

Coaches and others who work with children and young people must direct electronic communication through the child's parents.

NON-COMPLIANCE

Members may face disciplinary action for sending inappropriate electronic communication or posting online content or comments that harass, offend, intimidate or humiliate another member, as outlined in our member protection policy or code of conduct.

Under certain circumstances, cyber bullying (e.g. bullying that is carried out through an internet service such as email, a chat room, discussion group, instant messaging or website) is a criminal offence that can be reported to the police.

In addition, members who publish false or misleading comments about another person in the public domain (e.g., Facebook, YouTube or Twitter) may be liable for defamation.

12. ALCOHOL

OUR COMMITMENT

Our club supports the responsible consumption of alcohol and takes seriously any inappropriate behaviour that results from excessive drinking. Alcohol-free social events will be provided for young people and families. We will not endorse or support events, celebrations or end of season trips that involve excessive consumption of alcohol.

WHAT WE WILL DO

Serving Alcohol

Alcohol will be served in compliance with the requirements of our club's liquor licence and in accordance with the safety and wellbeing of patrons.

- Only trained servers will be permitted to serve alcohol. They are not permitted to drink while serving alcohol.
- The liquor licence will be displayed at the bar.
- Excessive or rapid consumption of alcohol will be discouraged.
- A person aged under 18 will not be permitted to be behind the bar under any circumstances.
- A committee member will be present at events where alcohol is served.

Intoxicated patrons

- Alcohol will not be served to any person who is intoxicated. Signs of intoxication include slurred speech, impaired balance, poor coordination and reduced inhibition, aggressive, belligerent and disrespectful behaviour.
- Servers will follow procedures, provided in their training by the Liquor Licensing Commission, for dealing with and refusing alcohol to intoxicated patrons.
- Intoxicated patrons will be asked to leave. Safe travel options will be suggested.

Underage drinking

- People aged under 18 will not knowingly be served alcohol.
- Staff will request proof of age, where appropriate, and only photo ID will be accepted.

Safe transport

- We will prominently display taxi phone numbers in the venue.
- Club members and bar staff will encourage intoxicated patrons to take safe transport home.
- Our club encourages members to appoint a designated driver amongst friendship groups.

Food and other drinks

- A range of snacks and meals will be available when alcohol is served.
- The club will provide a selection of low-alcohol and alcohol-free drinks, such as fruit juice and soft drink, at the bar and at social functions. Free jugs of water will also be available.
- Tea and coffee will be available during social functions.

Promoting the responsible use of alcohol

- Posters about responsible drinking and standard drinks measures will be prominently displayed.
- We will educate members and supporters about our alcohol policy through our website, newsletter and other club communication.

WHAT WE ASK YOU TO DO

All members and sporting personnel are required to comply with the following.

- Drink and behave responsibly at all club functions, events and away trips.
 - Do not supply alcohol to team members if they are aged under 18.
 - Do not drink alcohol at the club, club functions, and matches or while away on trips if you are aged under 18.
 - Do not bring alcohol into our club or its grounds.
 - Do not encourage others to drink alcohol excessively.
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- Do not encourage or take part in team bonding activities that involve alcohol.
- Do not spike another person's drink.

NON-COMPLIANCE

The club will take action for breaches of behaviour and responsibilities outlined in this policy.

- If members or sporting personnel become drunk at the club or other social events they will be asked to leave. Ongoing instances of intoxication will be in breach of our Code of Behaviour and can result in disciplinary action (e.g. suspension or termination of membership).
- Spiking of drinks is a criminal offence that can be reported to police by victims. It can lead to serious police charges being laid against the offender/s. Separate action can be taken as a breach of our state sporting organisation's and our club's Member Protection Policy to provide for the protection, safety and welfare of members.
- Serving alcohol to a minor is a criminal offence that can be reported to the police and the relevant liquor licensing authority by victims and their parents. It can lead to heavy fines. Separate action can be taken as a breach of our state sporting organisation's and our club's Member Protection Policy to provide for the protection, safety and welfare of children.
- Any person aged under 18 found to have consumed alcohol while at a club function or on a trip in the care of the club (e.g. while attending a country carnival) may be suspended for the remainder of the competition/tournament. The young person's parents shall be advised and will be responsible for getting their son/daughter home at their own expense.
- Any member or sporting personnel found to have behaved inappropriately because of over-consumption of alcohol (e.g. sexual harassment, verbal abuse, physical assault, and neglect of a child) will face disciplinary action as outlined in our Member Protection Policy or Code of Behaviour.

13. WORK HEALTH AND SAFETY

At all Board Meetings there must be an Agenda Item to discuss - WH&S.

On match days the Board shall appoint a match day official to oversee the safety of the club with respect to the following. (The designated match day official must not be affected by alcohol or drugs)

Board Member Responsibilities:

Must ensure the health, safety and welfare of all members and visitors.

Provide a safe working environment for all members and visitors including safe systems of work, plant equipment and substances.

Provide WH&S information, instruction and supervision to all members (in particular) playing members.

Provide adequate facilities.

Advise and work with the Council of any potential hazards and rectify asap.

Ensure persons at or near the club are not exposed to risks to their health and safety as a result of the workings of the club including any outside contractors, officials or visitors.

Implement procedures for the monitoring of WH&S of members and the conditions of the club

Provide members with easily understood information regarding potential hazards, policies, procedures and practices.

Demonstrate Leadership by communicating the commitment to WH&S.

Develop and maintain a positive workplace culture

Member and Official Responsibilities:

Ensure own safety and that of club members and visitors by taking reasonable care.

Cooperate with designated match day official and club WH&S Procedure.

Be alert too and report any hazards to the match day official or a Board member.

Emergency Evacuation Plan:

In the event of a fire, explosion or emergency all members and visitors of the club shall remove themselves as quickly and orderly as possible from the clubrooms via the nearest practical safe emergency exit point and assemble in the centre of the Oval.

The club match day official / board Member will do a head count.

No one is to leave this evacuation point until he / she is satisfied all are accounted for.

Emergency exit points are located at the entrances to the Members Bar, Beer Garden, Change rooms and Oval entrance.

13.1 RISK MANAGEMENT

Risk will always be part of everyday life and it is certainly a key aspect of sport and recreation. Without risk there would be limited opportunities for exploring physical and personal development. However, we aim to provide a healthier and 'legally' safer operating environment for our members, players and visitors by adopting risk management practices.

What is risk management?

A risk is anything untoward happening that can affect our objectives and operations by creating exposure to potential loss or damage. Risk management is systematically identifying threats (risks) and developing ways to minimise them from occurring. Our procedures aim to determine the most important risks and how we allocate resources to deal with them.

Risk management involves the development of a system of policies, processes and procedures and ensuring that they are followed. As stated previously, we can't eliminate all risks, but we can manage them appropriately. We aim for risk management to become a part of our club culture, even if the process used is informal it will be documented and managed.

Our Board's approach is to:

- Make a commitment to risk management and appoint one member to be responsible for the process.
- Identify key people to be involved in the process (stakeholders, coaches, treasurer, staff, event coordinators, etc.).
- Set up a committee to undertake the risk management process and report to the board regularly.
- Communicate your risk management strategies to everyone in your organisation.
- Monitor and review your risk management plan regularly.

Generally, risk management tends to focus on what can go wrong, but it is important to remember that any event, circumstance or situation that occurs can also provide an opportunity for improvement.

Risk Management Plan:

A Risk Management plan has being developed for the Blackwood Football Club. Please see the separate document on our website "BFC Risk Management Policy Overview 2017" for further information.

For more information refer to:

[Work Health And Safety Act 2012 \(SA\)](#) and the [Work Health and Safety Regulations 2012 \(SA\)](#)

13.2 VOLUNTEER AND STAFF MANAGEMENT

Volunteer philosophy

The achievement of the goals of the Blackwood Football Club is best served by the active participation of the members of the community. To this end, the club accepts and encourages the involvement of volunteers at all levels of the club and within all appropriate programs and activities.

Volunteer eligibility The club also accepts as volunteers those participating in student community service activities, student work experience projects, corporate volunteer programs and other volunteer referral programs. In each of these cases, a special agreement must be in effect with the organisation, school or program from whom the volunteers originate, and must identify responsibility for the management and care of the volunteers.

Volunteer rights and responsibilities Volunteers are viewed as a valuable resource to the club and its members. Volunteers shall be extended the right to be given meaningful assignments, the right to effective supervision and the right to recognition for work done. In return, volunteers shall agree to actively perform their duties to the best of their abilities and to remain loyal to the goals of the club.

Out-of-pocket expenses Volunteers are eligible for reimbursement of reasonable expenses incurred while undertaking business for the club. The volunteer coordinator shall distribute information to all volunteers regarding specific items that may be reimbursed. Prior approval must be sought for any major expense.

Record keeping A system of records will be maintained on each volunteer, with the club keeping information on dates of service, positions held, duties performed, evaluation of work and awards received. Volunteers and paid staff shall be responsible for submitting all appropriate information to the volunteer coordinator in a timely and accurate fashion. Volunteer personnel records shall be accorded the same confidentiality as paid staff personnel records.

Training and accreditation Additional training and educational opportunities should be made available to volunteers while at the club. This continuing education may include both additional information on performance of their current volunteer roles, as well as more general information, and may be provided either by the club or by assisting with a \$ amount to be determined on a case by case basis the volunteer to participate in educational programs provided by other groups.

Volunteers are encouraged to attend conferences and meetings that are relevant to their role. Prior approval from the volunteer coordinator should be obtained before attending any conference that may require reimbursement of expenses.

Absences Volunteers are expected to perform their duties on a regular scheduled and timely basis. If expecting to be absent from a duty, volunteers should notify their supervisor as far in advance as possible so that alternative arrangements can be made. Volunteers may be encouraged to find a replacement, however replacements may only be recruited from those already involved as volunteers within the club.

Conflict of interest No person who has conflict of interest with any activity or program of the club, whether personal, philosophical or financial shall serve as a volunteer with the club. When a potential conflict of interest does arise, volunteers must declare their interest.

Dismissing volunteers Volunteers who do not adhere to the rules and procedures of the club or who fail to satisfactorily perform their role are subject to dismissal. No volunteer will be dismissed until the volunteer has had an opportunity to discuss the reasons for possible dismissal with the volunteer coordinator.

Possible grounds for dismissal may include, but are not limited to, the following: gross misconduct, being under the influence of alcohol or drugs, theft of property, abuse or mistreatment of members, failure to abide by club policies and procedures and failure to satisfactorily perform assigned duties.

Prepared by the Policies & Procedures Committee of the Blackwood Football Club and endorsed by the Executive Board, February, 2017
