

# **ABA Member Protection Policy – Summary**

## **Purpose of policy**

Sporting organisations have legal and moral obligations to provide safe environments. Our Member Protection Policy (policy) assists us to adequately meet these obligations and to maintain responsible behaviour and ethical and informed decision-making within our sport. Our policy outlines our commitment to a person's right to be treated with respect and dignity, and to be safe and protected from abuse. It informs everyone 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 sport's activities.

## **Who the policy applies to**

The policy specifies who it applies to but generally this includes employees, board members, committee and sub-committee members, administrators, coaches, officials, support personnel and players/athletes in a paid or voluntary capacity (and whether they are appointed, elected or selected to these roles); life members; parents, spectators and sponsors; and *member associations and affiliated clubs*.

## **What it covers**

The policy states our position on and requirements relating to:

- *[child protection*
- *taking and using images of children*
- *anti-discrimination and harassment*
- *sexual relationships between coaches and the adult athletes that they coach*
- *participating while pregnant*
- *gender identity]*

It covers breaches of our codes of behaviour, any behaviour that brings or is likely to bring our sport into disrepute and other inappropriate behaviour whether that occurs at practice/training sessions, in the club rooms, at meetings, at events and activities organised or sanctioned by the sport, or away trips. It also clearly confirms that the following types of behaviour will not be tolerated:

- Child abuse
- Sexual assault and sexual misconduct
- Discrimination
- Bullying, harassment and vilification
- Physical assault and violence
- Verbal abuse and intimidation
- Actions that create a hostile environment
- Conduct that may cause psychological injury or distress.

## **Complaints**

Our sport takes all complaints about inappropriate behaviour, both on and off-field, seriously. A range of steps have been set out in the policy for dealing with groups or individuals who engage in any of the behaviour prohibited by the policy. It provides guidance for those with a complaint or concern, those who have had a complaint made against them and, those who have responsibility for handling a complaint.

All complaints will be handled based on the principles of procedural fairness (natural justice), that is:

- confidentially will be maintained;
- 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.

A person(s) found guilty of breaching the policy, including making a false or malicious allegation, may be sanctioned by a range of measures including from a verbal warning up to expulsion from the sport. A group/body found guilty of breaching the policy could be suspended or expelled from membership of the Australian/Victorian Biathlon Association Inc.

### **Working with Children Check requirements**

Underlying the policy is a range of laws which vary from state to state. Despite some differences, there are some universal minimum standards that the law applies to persons involved in sporting activities. These include anti-discrimination laws, criminal law and child protection laws. Our policy outlines the screening process for people in our sport who work, coach, supervise or have regular unsupervised contact with people under the age of 18 years.

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Our Member Protection Policy is one of the measures we have put in place to help us ensure that our sport is safe, welcoming and enjoyable. It provides assurances to all those involved and those wishing to be involved in our sport that improper conduct will not be tolerated.

**A copy of our Member Protection Policy is available from our website [www.biathlon.asn.au](http://www.biathlon.asn.au).**

**If you have any queries relating to the policy, please contact the Executive Officer of the association as per contact details listed on the Associations website.**