



## **Child Safety Policy**

**Approved 10 February 2018**

Amended 23 February 2018



## 1. Purpose of the Child Safety Policy and its scope

1.1. The purpose of this policy is to:

- a) Provide a statement of Hockey Victoria's commitment to Child safety; and
- b) Set out Hockey Victoria's Child safe processes.

1.2. This policy applies to:

- a) All Affiliates; and
- b) All participants, parents, spectators, contractors, officials, coaches, judges, visitors, Volunteers, and Staff involved in, attending or associated with any Hockey Victoria event or activity or its day to day operations.

1.3. Child safety is a shared responsibility between Hockey Victoria and its Staff, Affiliates, suppliers, associates, parents, guardians, spectators, Volunteers and all members of the Hockey Victoria community. Everyone who participates in Hockey Victoria's activities is responsible for the care and protection of Children, and reporting information about Child Abuse.

1.4. Should anyone wish to make any enquiries in relation to this policy, please contact Hockey Victoria, [admin@hockeyvictoria.org.au](mailto:admin@hockeyvictoria.org.au).

## 2. Hockey Victoria's Statement of Commitment to Child Safety

2.1. Hockey Victoria has zero tolerance of Child Abuse.

2.2. Hockey Victoria:

- a) Actively works to listen to, respect and empower Children, and to encourage their participation in Hockey;
- b) Has established policies and procedures that seek to protect Children from abuse, and will take all allegations and concerns very seriously and will respond to them consistently, in line with relevant policies and procedures, including this policy;
- c) Is committed to promoting cultural safety for Aboriginal Children, cultural safety for Children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, and to providing a safe environment for Children with a disability; and
- d) Is committed to regularly training and educating its Staff and Volunteers about Child Abuse risks.

## 3. Definitions

3.1. **Aboriginal Child/Children** means a person under the age of 18 years who:

- a) Is of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander background; and
- b) Is accepted as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander by an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander community.



- 3.2. **Affiliate** means a hockey club or association that is a member of Hockey Victoria Inc. under the terms of the Hockey Victoria Inc. Constitution.
- 3.3. **Child/Children** means a person who is under the age of 18 years.
- 3.4. **Child abuse** constitutes any act committed against a Child involving:
- a) **Physical abuse:** occurs when a Child has suffered, or is likely to suffer, significant harm as a result of a physical injury, such as a non-accidental physical injury.
  - b) **Sexual abuse:** occurs when a Child has suffered, or is likely to suffer, significant harm as a result of sexual abuse, such as when a Child is exploited, or used by another for his or her sexual gratification or sexual arousal, or for that of others.
  - c) **Serious emotional or psychological abuse:** occurs when a Child has suffered, or is likely to suffer, emotional or psychological harm of such a kind that the Child's emotional or intellectual development is or is likely to be significantly damaged; and
  - d) **Serious neglect:** occurs when a Child's physical development or health has been, or is likely to be significantly damaged. It refers to an omission, such as depriving a Child of food, clothing, warmth, hygiene, intellectual stimulation, supervision and safety, attachment to and affection from adults, or medical care.
- 3.5. **Child protection** means any responsibility, measure or activity undertaken to safeguard Children from harm.
- 3.6. **Children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds** means a Child or young person who identifies as having particular cultural or linguistic affiliations by virtue of their place of birth, ancestry or ethnic origin, religion, preferred language or language spoken at home or because of their parent' identification on a similar basis.
- 3.7. **Mandatory Reporter** means a person who is legally required to make a report to the Department of Human Services or the Police if they form a belief on reasonable grounds that a Child is in need of protection. It includes teachers, principals, registered psychologists, nurses, doctors and midwives.
- 3.8. **Member Protection Information Officer** means 'HV representative' appointed to the role by Hockey Victoria.
- 3.9. **Sexual offence** means a criminal offence involving sexual activity or actions of indecency or any act which exposes a Child to, or involves a Child in, sexual activity or matters beyond his or her understanding or contrary to accepted community standards. Sexually offensive behaviours can include the fondling of genitals, masturbation, oral sex, vaginal or anal penetration by a penis, finger or any other object, fondling of breasts, voyeurism, exhibitionism, and exposing the Child to or involving the Child in pornography. It includes Child grooming, which includes actions deliberately undertaken with the aim of befriending and establishing an emotional connection with a Child (or the Child's carer, family or supervisor) to lower the Child's inhibitions and prepare them for engagement in a sexual offence.
- 3.10. **Staff** includes members of the executive and management, casual and permanent employees

and contractors (who include umpires, coaches, team managers, physios, doctors, first aiders and officials) employed or engaged by Hockey Victoria.

3.11. **Volunteer** means a person engaged directly by Hockey Victoria to perform duties on voluntary basis.

#### 4. **HV's Child Safety Processes: Recognising and Reporting Child Abuse**

4.1. A person may, in the course of participating in the sport or other events, activities or the day to day operations of Hockey Victoria or in carrying out their work, form a belief on reasonable grounds that a Child is in need of protection from Child Abuse.

4.2. If a person is concerned about an immediate risk to a Child's safety, the person must phone "000" as soon as practicable.

4.3. If a person forms a reasonable belief or a belief on reasonable grounds that a Child is in need of protection, not falling within the terms in clause 4.2 above, the person may report the belief to any Staff or Volunteer, including the Hockey Victoria CEO or the Hockey Victoria Member Protection Information Officer.

4.4. If a person is a Mandatory Reporter, then he or she must report as soon as practicable, and after each occasion where he or she becomes aware of a further reasonable ground for the belief.

4.5. A reasonable belief is formed if a responsible person believes that:

- a) The Child is in need of protection;
- b) The Child has suffered or is likely to suffer significant harm as a result of physical or sexual injury; and
- c) The Child's parents are unable or unwilling to protect the Child.

4.6. To form a 'reasonable belief' or a 'belief on reasonable grounds', all the relevant facts should be considered objectively.

4.7. A 'reasonable belief' or a 'belief on reasonable grounds' is not the same as having proof, but is more than mere rumour or speculation.

4.8. Reasonable grounds to notify exist if:

- a) A Child states that they have been physically or sexually abused; in which case it is not necessary to question the Child further;
- b) A Child states that they know someone who has been physically or sexually abused (sometimes the Child may be talking about themselves;
- c) Someone who knows a Child states that the Child has been physically or sexually abused;
- d) Professional observations of the Child's behaviour or development leads a professional to form a belief that the Child has been physically or sexually abused or is likely to be abused; or

e) Signs of abuse lead to a belief that the Child has been physically or sexually abused.

4.9. If a person receives information that leads them to form a reasonable belief that a Sexual Offence has been committed in Victoria against a Child under the age of 16 years by another person (of or over the age of 18 years), the person has a legal obligation to disclose that information to the Police as soon as it is practicable. Individuals who fail to comply with this obligation under the *Crimes Act 1958* (Vic) may be subject to a penalty of imprisonment.

4.10. Hockey Victoria supports and encourages a person to make a report to the Police or DHHS if they form a belief on reasonable grounds that a Child is in need of protection, or they are concerned about the safety, health or wellbeing of a Child.

4.11. If a person is uncertain as to whether they should make a report to an external authority in relation to the safety of a Child, they may speak to the Hockey Victoria CEO or the Hockey Victoria Member Protection Information Officer for guidance and information.

## **5. HV's Child Safe Processes: HV Response to a Report of Child Abuse**

5.1. On receipt of a report or allegation of Child Abuse, Hockey Victoria will:

- a) Refer the report or allegation to the Police where there is a concern about an immediate risk to the Child's safety;
- b) Withdraw the accused person from active duty where they are a Hockey Victoria Staff member or Volunteer;
- c) Investigate the report or allegation in accordance with procedural fairness;
- d) Deal with the report or allegation in a confidential manner to the greatest extent possible;
- e) Cooperate with the Police and/or DHHS in relation to any investigation conducted by these authorities; and
- f) Keep a register of any allegations regarding inappropriate conduct in a private and confidential location on site.

## **6. HV's Child Safe Processes: Responsibilities of the Board and Management**

6.1. The Board and management staff of Hockey Victoria will ensure:

- a) They take a leadership role in ensuring Child safety is of paramount importance within Hockey Victoria and the wider Hockey community;
- b) They have read and understand this policy, as it is updated from time to time;
- c) That this policy and any updated policy is published at a location that is easily accessible by all Affiliates and their members, parents, spectators and Hockey Victoria Staff and Volunteers;
- d) That Child safety risks are adequately identified and managed at Board level.



## 7. HV's Child Safe Processes: Training and Education

7.1. Hockey Victoria will ensure that:

- a) The Board and all HV Staff undertake training in relation to identifying Child Abuse risks and how to manage them, understanding Aboriginal and other cultures and the importance of ensuring culturally safe environments, and the importance of understanding safe environments for Children with a disability (**Training**).
- b) It provides ongoing Training for the Board, Hockey Victoria Staff and for its Volunteers, including Staff and Volunteers who are working with junior players at any level (including junior players in senior teams).

## 8. HV's Child Safe Processes: Specific Guidance for Juniors' Teams

8.1. **Change Rooms** - Adult officials and Volunteers, regardless of gender, should only enter change rooms with a Child or Children if accompanied by another adult. Prior to entering change rooms, officials should notify the people in the change room of their intended entrance. For the avoidance of doubt this requirement does not apply to parents/legal guardians in a room with their Child, unless other Children are present in the change room at the same time.

8.2. **Hotel rooms and other accommodation and general proximity** - No official or Volunteer should be alone in the room of a Child or separate the Child from the group by a noticeable distance without the presence of another adult. The doors should always be open and the official and/or Volunteer within sight. Should it be necessary for an official or Volunteer to be alone with a Child, the Team Manager or other responsible official must be informed. For the avoidance of doubt this requirement does not apply to parents/legal guardians in a room with their Child, unless other Children are present in the change room at the same time.

8.3. **Travel** - All team members over 18 years of age retain an overriding responsibility for the safety and welfare of all Children they accompany during team travel activities.

8.4. **Sexual Relationships**– It is strictly prohibited for any officials, team managers, coaches, physios, umpires, Volunteers or any other person, including when they are travelling with a team that includes a Child or Children, to engage in any conduct of a sexual nature with any Child. Conduct of a sexual nature by any such person includes, but is not limited to the following:

- a) Inappropriate conversations of a sexual nature;
- b) Obscene language of a sexual nature;
- c) Suggestive remarks or actions;
- d) Jokes of a sexual nature;
- e) Obscene gestures;
- f) Unwarranted and inappropriate touching;
- g) Sexual exhibitionism;



- h) Use of any device to show/watch offensive material; or
- i) Any other action that could lead to a Child being physically, emotionally or psychologically harmed.

8.5. **Coaches** - All coaches must ensure that any physical contact with Children that occurs in relation to coaching is appropriate for the situation. It is strongly recommended that:

- a) Coaches ensure that there are other adults present whenever coaching;
- b) Coaches take care to explain the procedure to the Child prior to beginning any physical contact; and
- c) Coaches obtain consent from the athlete prior to beginning any physical contact.

## 9. **HV's Child Safe Processes: Recruitment**

9.1. The minimum standard for background checks of Staff and Volunteers of Hockey Victoria is the law as it applies in Victoria. Hockey Victoria may, in its discretion, require additional reference checks for its Staff and Volunteers, as it thinks fit.

9.2. Hockey Victoria will undertake a comprehensive recruitment and screening process for all Staff and Volunteers before their engagement, which aims to:

- a) Promote and protect the safety of all Children who participate in the activities of Hockey Victoria;
- b) Identify and recruit the most suitable candidates who share Hockey Victoria's values and commitment to protect Children; and
- c) Prevent a person from working at Hockey Victoria if they pose an unacceptable risk to Children.

9.3. As part of the screening and recruitment process, an applicant must provide appropriate evidence, including but not limited to a WWCC or other state equivalent and/or Police check, to show that they are suitable to work with Children and young people in a recreational setting.

9.4. The following personnel must have a valid WWCC or other State equivalent and/or a Police Check:

- a) All Hockey Victoria Staff;
- b) Those paid by Hockey Victoria for their services (including State or Zone roles where an individual is paid a gratuity payment for their services).
- c) Volunteers;
- d) Suppliers and service providers who may have access to Children; and
- e) Anyone else required by Hockey Victoria to obtain a WWCC due to the nature of the work that they are undertaking for Hockey Victoria.

9.5. Hockey Victoria will provide all Staff and Volunteers it engages with access to this policy, and Staff and Volunteers must read it and acknowledge their understanding of this policy.

9.6. Hockey Victoria requires Affiliates to ensure that:

- a) All of their staff, officials, coaches, parents, committee members, managers, members and Volunteers participating in 'child related work' have a current WWCC at all times; and
- b) A process for monitoring this is implemented.

## 10. HV's Child Safe Processes: Breach of this Policy

10.1. Hockey Victoria takes any breach of this policy very seriously. In determining an appropriate sanction for a breach, Hockey Victoria, and or the Hockey Victoria Board may refer to and adopt any process or sanction from any of the following, depending upon the nature and severity of the breach:

- a) HA Member Protection Policy;
- b) Hockey Victoria's Rules and Regulations.

## 11. Privacy

11.1. Hockey Victoria is committed to respecting the privacy of all individuals, including of Staff, Volunteers, Affiliates, parents, spectators, suppliers and Children, unless there is a risk to someone's safety.

## 12. Review Process

12.1. The Hockey Victoria Board will review this policy on a biennial basis. Updated policies will be circulated via the Hockey Victoria webpage, Hock-e-Comms or other accessible location.

12.2. Feedback in relation to this policy can be provided to Hockey Victoria by sending an email to the following address: [admin@hockeyvictoria.org.au](mailto:admin@hockeyvictoria.org.au)

## 13. Related Documents & Legislative Requirements

13.1. This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- a) The law of the Commonwealth and of Victoria including but not limited to:
  - i. *Children, Youth and Families Act 2005* (Vic);
  - ii. *Child Wellbeing and Safety Amendment (Child Safe Standards) Act 2015* (Vic);
  - iii. *Crimes Act 1958* (Vic); and
  - iv. *Working with Children Act 2005* (Vic)
- b) Hockey Victoria policies and procedures, including but not limited to:



# POLICY DOCUMENT



- i. Privacy Policy;
- ii. Constitution;
- iii. HA Member Protection Policy; and
- iv. Hockey Victoria's Rules and Regulations