

Marrickville FC Member Protection Policy

Marrickville FC (the Club) aims to provide a safe and enjoyable environment for all Members participating in football. Everyone involved in our sport should be treated with respect and dignity and be free to participate without being discriminated against, harassed, bullied, or abused.

The Club does not tolerate direct and indirect discrimination, unwelcome verbal or physical conduct and any unreasonable behaviour directed to an individual or group of persons.

The Club is also dedicated to the safety and wellbeing of all children participating in our sporting activities. The Club supports the rights and wellbeing of any child, its staff, and volunteers to ensure a safe environment for whoever participates in any Club activity.

The Club takes all reasonable steps to ensure that only suitable and appropriate people are engaged to work with children. This is achieved using a range of screening measures, primarily NSW WWCC. The Club requires that all members engaged to work with children adhere to the Child Safety Code of Conduct.

Marrickville FC's Member Protection Policy is part of the Club's ongoing commitment to ensuring there is an inclusive and safe culture for our members, which safeguards them against any forms of harassment and abuse in football.

The Policy applies to everyone involved in the activities of the Club, whether in a paid or voluntary capacity. Specifically, this includes but is not necessarily limited to all employees, members, volunteers, parents, and spectators, as well as sponsors or other guests attending Club events.

The Policy covers all matters directly and indirectly related to the Club and its activities. It also covers private behaviour where that behaviour brings the Club or sport into disrepute or there is suspicion of harm towards a child.

Club Responsibilities	Individual Responsibilities
<p style="text-align: center;">The Club Will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopt, implement, and comply with this policy • Publish this Policy and the consequences of breaches • Promote and model appropriate standards of behaviour • Deal with any breaches or complaints made under this Policy in a sensitive, fair, and timely manner • Enforce any penalty imposed by this Policy • where appropriate, seek advice from or refer serious issues to the Regional Sporting Organisation (RSO), State Sporting Organisation (SSO) or police. • Review the Policy every two years 	<p style="text-align: center;">Anyone associated with the Club must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make themselves aware of the contents of the Policy • Comply with all relevant provisions of the Policy. • Complete a New South Wales (NSW) Working with Children check (WWCC) when required by the Club. • Treat other people with respect • Place the safety and welfare of children above other considerations • Follow the guidelines outlined in this policy if they wish to make a complaint or report a concern. • Comply with any decisions and/or disciplinary measures imposed.

DISCRIMINATION, HARRASSMENT & BULLYING

<p style="text-align: center;">DISCRIMINATION</p>	<p>Unlawful discrimination is the less favourable treatment of a person on the basis of one or more of the personal characteristics protected by State or Commonwealth anti-discrimination laws.</p> <p>Discrimination includes both direct and indirect discrimination:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Direct Discrimination</u> occurs if a person treats, or proposes to treat, a person with a protected personal characteristic unfavourably because of that personal characteristic. • <u>Indirect Discrimination</u> occurs if a person imposes, or proposes to impose, a requirement, condition or practice that will disadvantage a person with a protected personal characteristic and that requirement, condition or practice is not reasonable. <p>The offender’s awareness and motive are irrelevant in determining whether discrimination has occurred.</p>
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HARRASSMENT

Harassment is any unwelcome conduct, verbal or physical, that intimidates, offends, or humiliates another person and which happens because a person has a certain personal characteristic protected by State or Commonwealth anti-discrimination legislation.

Harassment includes, but is not limited to, sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is not limited to members of the opposite sex.

The following is a list of all the personal characteristics that apply in Australia:

- Gender, race, colour, descent, national or ethnic origin, nationality, religious origin, immigration.
- National extraction or social origin.
- Marital status, relationship status, identity of spouse or domestic partner.
- Pregnancy, potential pregnancy, breastfeeding.
- Family or carer responsibilities, status as a parent of carer.
- Age.
- Religion, religious beliefs, or activities.
- Political beliefs or activities.
- Lawful sexual activity, sexual orientation, and gender identity.
- Profession, trade, occupation or calling.
- Irrelevant criminal record spent convictions.
- Irrelevant medical record.
- Member of association or organisation of employees or employers, industrial activity, trade union activity.
- Physical features.
- Disability, mental or physical impairment.
- Defence service.
- Personal association with someone who has, or is assumed to have, any of these personal characteristics.

Legislation also prohibits:

- Racial, religious, homosexual, transgender, non-binary and HIV/AIDS vilification.
- Victimisation resulting from a complaint.

BULLYING

Bullying is characterised by repeated, unreasonable behaviour directed at a person, or a group of persons, that creates a risk to health and safety. Bullying behaviour is that which a reasonable person in the circumstances would expect to victimise, humiliate, undermine, threaten, degrade, offend, or intimidate a person.

Bullying behaviour can include actions of an individual or group.

One off instances can also amount to bullying.

The following types of behaviour, where repeated or occurring as part of a pattern of behaviour, would be considered bullying:

- Verbal abuse including shouting, swearing, teasing, making belittling remarks or persistent unjustified criticism.
- Excluding or isolating a group or person.
- Spreading malicious rumours.
- Psychological harassment such as intimidation.
- Bullying includes cyber-bullying.

The Club does not tolerate abusive, discriminatory, intimidating, or offensive statements being made online. If any person believes they are being, or have been, bullied by a person or organisation bound by the Policy, they may make a complaint.

DIVERSITY

The Club is welcoming of members from all areas of the community, including, but not limited to people with a disability, people from diverse cultures, people of all genders, religions, sexual identities and pregnant women.

COMPLAINTS

The Club takes all complaints seriously. Complaints will be handled according to the principles of procedural fairness.

- The complainee will be given full details of the allegation against them and have the opportunity to respond to those allegations.
- Irrelevant matters will not be taken into account.
- Decisions will be unbiased
- Penalties imposed will be reasonable.

More serious complaints may be escalated to the RSO or SSO. If the complaint relates to suspected child abuse, sexual assault or other criminal activity, the Club may report the behaviour to the police and/or relevant authority.

In the instance of complaints by a player, or the parent/guardian of a player, we recommend that the first point of contact be the relevant team manager or coach (unless this is inappropriate i.e., the complaint is against the team manager and coach). The Club encourages all players and coaches to maintain a respectful and open relationship to avoid misunderstandings.

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:

- facilitating communication between the complainant and complainee, including external mediation if appropriate.
- gathering more information.
- seeking advice from the RSO, SSO or another relevant external agency AND/OR
- referring the complaint to the RSO or SSO or another relevant external agency.

Where a complaint is referred to the RSO or SSO and an investigation is conducted, the Club will:

- co-operate fully with the investigation
- where applicable, ensure the complainant is not placed in an unsupervised situation with the complainee; and
- respond to and act appropriately on the RSO's or SSO's recommendations.

At any stage, a person can seek advice from an appropriate external agency such as an anti-discrimination commission and, if the matter is within their jurisdiction, may lodge a complaint with that agency.

1. Communication: Raise the issue with the relevant person (e.g., manager or coach) to be addressed or passed onto the correct person.
2. If the issue is not resolved, submit a complaint in writing to the Clubs Managing Director.
3. The Managing Director will discuss the complaint with the Member Protection Officer. You will receive an email outlining the steps and the process for resolution.

Note that in some circumstances, step 1 will not apply, and the initial complaint should be made straight to the Member Protection Officer (e.g., allegation of child abuse).

In some instances, if the Club is unable to resolve the complaint, the issue may be referred to the RSO, SSO or other relevant external agency.

If disciplinary action is required, this will be handled in line with the Club's Disciplinary Policy.

MEMBER PROTECTION OFFICER

The Club appoints a Member Protection Officer to ensure that the principles in the Policy are upheld, provide member support and advice, receive member complaints, and ensure appropriate procedures are followed.