

Warrnambool Wolves Football Club

Member Protection Policy (MPP)



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President:	Sign: 	Name: Brett Gasper
Secretary	Sign: 	Name: Adrian Ciccocioppo

1. Purpose

Warrnambool Wolves Football Club has a legal and moral obligation to provide a safe environment for its members. Our Member Protection 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.

2. Scope

The policy applies to WWFC members including committee and sub-committee members, administrators, coaches, officials, support personnel and players (and whether they are appointed, elected or selected to these roles); life members; parents, spectators and sponsors.

3. Definitions

MPIO – Member Protection Information Officer

WWFC – Warrnambool Wolves Football Club

MPP – Member Protection Policy

4. Policy Objectives

The objective of the MPP is to cover breaches of our codes of behaviour, any behaviour that brings or is likely to bring our sport into disrepute and other

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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, sexual misconduct and sexual harassment
- 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.
- Taking and using images of children without parent/guardian consent
- Discrimination against gender identity

5. Complaints

WWFC takes all complaints about inappropriate behaviour, both on and off the 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. Complaints in the first instance can be referred to the club's MPIO Officer, or escalated as required.

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, fair and based on facts; 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 person found guilty of breaching the policy could be suspended or expelled from membership of the WWFC.

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Member Protection Information Officer

The MPIO's role has several different facets. First is to listen, and provide support without taking over. They should also provide information and options about what a person might do, without offering advice. They should support the claimant in taking the matter further if that is what the person wants, and the MPIO feels able to do so.

The MPIO needs to keep up-to-date with information on harassment, discrimination and other forms of inappropriate behaviour, and understand their sport's policies and procedures in relation to harassment and discrimination.

They need to be accessible and approachable, and able to maintain confidentiality.

To become a Member protection officer, a person is nominated by the committee and then completes an Australian Sports Commission approved course.

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. All Coaches and Managers and Committee members are to undergo a Working with Children Check and provide evidence of such.

Child Protection

Child protection is about creating safe and fair environments for children. The aim is to try and keep children and young people safe from abuse, discrimination and harassment, and protect them from people who are unsuitable to work with children.

Child protection is a legal requirement, an ethical obligation, and it's a vital consideration in our club meeting duty of care obligations.

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Vigilance counts when it comes to Member Protection, which can be as simple as keeping a friendly eye out on spectators, coaches and players alike.

6. Disputes and mediation

The grievance procedure set out in this clause applies to disputes between-

- a Member and another Member; or
- a Member and the Club; or
- the Club and a player; or
- a Member and a player; or
- a player and a player.

The parties to the dispute should aim to meet and discuss the matter in dispute, and, if possible, resolve the dispute within 14 days.

If the parties are unable to resolve the dispute, or if a party fails to attend that meeting, then the parties must, within 10 days, hold a meeting in the presence of a mediator.

The mediator must be:

- a) a person chosen by agreement between the parties or a person appointed by the Committee of the Club.
- b) The mediator cannot be a Member who is a party to the dispute.
- c) The parties to the dispute must, in good faith, attempt to settle the dispute by mediation.

The mediator, in conducting the mediation, must:

- (a) give the parties to the mediation process every opportunity to be heard; and
- (b) allow due consideration by all parties of any written statement submitted by any party; and
- (c) ensure that natural justice is accorded to the parties to the dispute throughout the mediation process.

A mediator must not and has no power to determine the dispute.



7. Code of Conduct

If the mediation process does not result in the dispute being resolved, the Club may refer to the following Code of Conduct:

Code of behaviour rules for players/officials:

- Play by the rules.
- Never argue with an official. If you disagree, have your captain, coach or manager approach the official during a break or after the Competition.
- Control your temper. Verbal abuse of officials and sledging other players, deliberately distracting or provoking an opponent are not acceptable or permitted behaviours in any sport.
- Work equally hard for yourself and/or your team. Your team's performance will benefit so will you.
- Be a good sport. Applaud all good plays whether they are made by your team or the opposition.
- Treat all participants in your sport as you like to be treated. Do not bully or take unfair advantage of another competitor.
- Cooperate with your coach, team mates and opponents. Without them there would be no competition.
- Participate for your own enjoyment and benefit, not just to please parents and coaches.
- Respect the rights, dignity and worth of all participants regardless of their gender, ability, cultural background or religion.

Codes of behaviour - Parent

- Remember that children participate in sport for their enjoyment, not yours.
- Encourage children to participate, do not force them.
- Focus on the child's efforts and performance rather than winning or losing.
- Encourage children always to play according to the rules and to settle disagreements without resorting to hostility or violence.

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- Never ridicule or yell at a child for making a mistake or losing a competition.
- Remember that children learn best by example. Appreciate good performances and skilful plays by all participants.
- Support all efforts to remove verbal and physical abuse from sporting activities.
- Respect officials' decisions and teach children to do likewise.
- Show appreciation for volunteer coaches, officials and administrators. Without them, your child could not participate.
- Respect the rights, dignity and worth of every young person regardless of their gender, ability, cultural background or religion.

Codes of behaviour - Spectators

- Remember that young people participate in sport for their enjoyment and benefit, not yours.
- Applaud good performance and efforts from all individuals and teams. Congratulate all participants on their performance regardless of the game's outcome.
- Respect the decisions of officials and teach young people to do the same.
- Never ridicule or scold a young player for making a mistake. Positive comments are motivational

Codes of behaviour - Coaches

- Remember that young people participate for pleasure and winning are only part of the fun.
- Never ridicule or yell at a young player for making a mistake or not coming first.
- Be reasonable in your demands on players' time, energy and enthusiasm.
- Operate within the rules and spirit of your sport and teach your players to do the same.
- Ensure that the time players spend with you is a positive experience. All young people are deserving of equal attention and opportunities.

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- Avoid overplaying the talented players; the just average need and deserve equal time.
- Ensure that equipment and facilities meet safety standards and are appropriate to the age and ability of all players.
- Display control, respect and professionalism to all involved with the sport. This includes opponents, coaches, officials, administrators, the media, parents and spectators. Encourage your players to do the same.
- Show concern and caution toward sick and injured players. Follow the advice of a physician when determining whether an injured player is ready to recommence training or competition.
- Obtain appropriate qualifications and keep up to date with the latest coaching practices and the principles of growth and development of young people.
- Any physical contact with a young person should be appropriate to the situation and necessary for the player's skill development.
- Respect the rights, dignity and worth of every young person regardless of their gender, ability, cultural background or religion.

Codes of behaviour - Officials

- Modify rules and regulations to match the skill levels and needs of young people.
- Compliment and encourage all participants.
- Be consistent, objective and courteous when making decisions.
- Condemn unsporting behaviour and promote respect for all opponents.
- Emphasise the spirit of the game rather than the errors.
- Encourage and promote rule changes, which will make participation more enjoyable.
- Be a good sport yourself. Actions speak louder than words.
- Keep up to date with the latest trends in officiating and the principles of growth and development of young people.
- Remember, you set an example. Your behaviour and comments should be positive and supportive.
- Place the safety and welfare of the participants above all else.

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- Give all young people a 'fair go' regardless of their gender, ability, cultural background or religion.
- Condemn the use of violence in any form, whether it is by spectators, coaches, officials or players.
- Show respect for your team's opponents. Without them there would be no game.
- Encourage players to follow the rules and the officials' decisions.
- Do not use foul language, sledge or harass players, coaches or officials.
- Respect the rights, dignity and worth of every young person regardless of their gender, ability, cultural background or religion.

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.

ENQUIRIES REGARDING OUR POLICY:

CONTACT: Brett Gasper

PHONE: 0437010451

EMAIL: brettgasper75@gmail.com