

AOC Child Safe Guidelines and Reporting

COMMITMENT

The Australian Olympic Committee (AOC) is committed to providing an environment where children and young people are safe, that it is reflective of AOC's values and in line with applicable laws.

We take seriously our responsibility to do our utmost to keep children and young people free from abuse and neglect and protect victims of abuse if we become aware.

OBJECTIVE

Provide clear guidelines for our people to follow to fulfil our commitment to provide an environment where children and people are safe and to ensure that we meet our legal obligations.

SCOPE

These guidelines apply to **All Persons** which is defined as the AOC Executive, Senior Management Team and Employees as well as volunteers and Olympic Games team members, including officials and coaches, and those who participate in Olympic Games and our AOC Community Programs. It sets out the principles and overarching requirements to ensure we do our utmost to keep children and young people free from abuse and neglect and protect victims of abuse if we become aware.

Our commitment to children and young people means we are inclusive of those from a range of different backgrounds. This includes, but is not limited to, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people, children and young people with a disability LGBTI children and young people and children and young people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

CONSEQUENCES

Failure to observe these guidelines and reporting requirements is considered misconduct, and the AOC will take appropriate disciplinary action. In addition to any internal disciplinary proceedings, we will report to Police all instances in which a breach of the law has or may have occurred.

There may be exceptional situations where these guidelines do not apply, for example, in an emergency situation. However, it is crucial that, where possible and when not placing a child or young person in immediate harm, you seek management authorisation prior to taking action that contravenes these guidelines or that you advise management as soon possible after any incident in which these guidelines are breached.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Position	Responsibility
CEO/ Senior Management Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement policy and procedures across the organisation • Ensure personnel have access to and understand this policy and related procedures • Ensure all managers/supervisors have access to support and advice to understand and implement procedures
Legal / People & Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review and update this document and supporting resources in consultation with relevant stakeholders • Provide training and advice in the application of procedures
Managers / Supervisors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure procedure is followed and implemented
Employees / Volunteers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compliance with procedure.

We require certain standards of behaviour of **all persons** involved in our organisation and our programs.

Behaviour expected include the requirement to:

- To display respect and courtesy towards everyone involved and prevent **discrimination** and harassment.
- To prioritise the safety and well-being of children and young people involved in our programs.
- To report any behaviour which is in breach of this code to help prevent the **abuse** of children and young people.

GUIDELINES

Sexual Misconduct

Under no circumstances is any form of ‘sexual behaviour’ to occur between, with, or in the presence of, children or young people. Engaging in sexual behaviour while participating in our programs is prohibited even if the young persons involved may be above the legal age of consent.

‘Sexual behaviour’ needs to be interpreted widely, to encompass the entire range of actions that would reasonably be considered as sexual in nature, including but not limited to:

- ‘contact behaviour’, such as sexual intercourse, kissing, fondling, sexual penetration or exploiting a child through prostitution.
- ‘non-contact behaviour’, such as flirting, sexual innuendo, inappropriate text messaging, inappropriate photography or exposure to pornography or nudity.

Positive Guidance and Discipline

We strive to ensure that children and young people participating in our programs are aware of the acceptable limits of their behaviour so that we can provide a positive experience for all participants. However, there are times when personnel may be required to use appropriate techniques and behaviour management strategies to ensure:

- An effective and positive environment; and
- The safety and/or wellbeing of children, young people or personnel participating in our programs and sport.

We require **all persons** to use strategies that are fair, respectful and appropriate to the

developmental stage of the children or young people involved. Children and young people need to be provided with clear directions and given an opportunity to redirect their misbehaviour in a positive manner.

Under no circumstances are **any persons involved** to take disciplinary action involving physical punishment or any form of treatment that could reasonably be considered as degrading, cruel, frightening or humiliating.

Adhering to Professional Boundaries

All persons should not, of their own volition or at the request of a stakeholder involved in our program, act outside the confines of their duties (as specified in their position description) when involved in our programs and must not:

- Provide unauthorised transportation;
- Engage in activities with children or young people who are program participants or part of an Olympic team outside authorised activities;
- Provide any form of support to a child or young person or their family, unrelated to our programs or the Olympics team; or
- Accept an invitation to attend any private social function at the request of a child or young person who has participated, or is participating, in our programs or the Olympic team – or at the request of their family.

All persons who become aware of a situation in which a child or young person requires assistance that is beyond the confines of that person's role, or beyond the sporting environment, should undertake any or all of the following at the earliest opportunity:

- Refer the matter to an appropriate support agency;
- Refer the child or young person to an appropriate support agency;
- Contact the child or young person's parent or guardian; and
- Seek advice from management.

Use of Language and Tone of Voice

Language and tone of voice used in the presence of children and young people should:

- Provide clear direction, boost their confidence, encourage or affirm them; and
- Not be harmful to children – in this respect, avoid language that is:
 - discriminatory, racist or sexist;
 - derogatory, belittling or negative, for example, by calling a child a 'loser' or telling them they are 'too fat';
 - intended to threaten or frighten; or
 - is profane or sexual.

Supervision

All persons are responsible for supervising the children and young people engaged in our programs to ensure participants:

- Engage positively with our programs and the Olympic Team;
- Behave appropriately toward one another; and
- Are in a safe environment and are protected from external threats.

All persons are required to avoid one-to-one unsupervised situations with children and young people to whom we provide services, and (where possible) to conduct all activities and/or discussions with service recipients in view of other personnel.

Use of Electronic or Online Communication

Wherever possible, email and text messages sent to a child or young person should be copied to their parent or guardian.

Where a parent is not included in the communication:

- Restrict such communication to issues directly associated with Olympic Team, such as advising that a scheduled event is cancelled;
- Limit the personal or social content in such communications to what is required to convey the service-related message in a polite, friendly manner. Do not communicate anything that a reasonable observer could view as being of a sexual nature;
- Do not use such communication to promote unauthorised 'social' activity or to arrange unauthorised contact;
- Do not request a child or young person to keep a communication a secret from their parents; and
- Do not communicate with children or young people using Internet chat rooms or similar forums such as social networking sites, game sites or instant messaging.

All persons are required to ensure appropriate monitoring of children and young people when they use our organisation's electronic communication equipment to ensure that they do not inadvertently place themselves at risk of **abuse** or exploitation via social networking sites, gaming sites or through web searches, or inappropriate email communication.

Giving Gifts

The Senior Management Team is to authorise any gifts to children or young people involved in our programs, or to their families, including rewards, prizes, treats, or second-hand equipment.

Photographs of Children and young people

Under these guidelines:

- children and young people to whom we deliver service are to be photographed while involved in our programs only if:
 - the context is directly related to participation in our programs;

- the child is appropriately dressed and posed;
- the image is taken in the presence of other personnel.
- Images are not to be distributed (including as an attachment to an email) to anyone outside our organisation other than the child photographed or their parent, without management knowledge and approval.
- Images (digital or hard copy) are to be stored in a manner that prevents unauthorised access by others.
- Images are not to be exhibited on our website or in publications (annual report) without parental knowledge and approval (through a signed image consent form), or such images must be presented in a manner that de-identifies the child or young person. Any caption or accompanying text may need to be checked so that it does not identify a child or young person if such identification is potentially detrimental.

Physical Contact with Children and Young People

Any physical contact with children and young people must be appropriate to the delivery of our programs and based on the needs of the child or young person (such as to assist or comfort a distressed young person) rather than on the needs of our personnel.

Under no circumstances should **All Persons** have contact with children or young people participating in our programs that:

- involves touching:
 - of genitals;
 - of buttocks;
 - of the breast area;
 - that is other than as part of delivering medical or allied health services
- would appear to a reasonable observer to have a sexual connotation;
- is intended to cause pain or distress to the child or young person – for example corporal punishment;
- is overly physical (for example, wrestling, horseplay, tickling or other roughhousing);
- is unnecessary (for example, assisting with toileting when a child does not require assistance);
- is initiated against the wishes of the child or young person, except if such contact may be necessary to prevent injury to the child/young person or to others, in which case:
 - physical restraint should be a last resort;
 - the level of force used must be appropriate to the specific circumstances, and aimed solely at restraining the child or young person to prevent harm to themselves or others; and
 - the incident must be reported to management as soon as possible.

All persons are required to report to management any physical contact initiated by a child or young person that is sexual and/or inappropriate, for example, acts of physical aggression, as soon as possible, to enable the situation to be managed in the interests of the safety of the child or young person, our personnel and any other participants.

Overnight stays and sleeping arrangements

Overnight stays are to occur only with the authorisation of Senior Management Team and of the parents/guardians of the children or young people involved. Such approval needs to be prior

written approval. Examples of prior written approval could include electronic messaging formats such as email or SMS and/ or Team Agreements,

Practices and behaviour by **all persons involved** during an overnight stay must be consistent with the practices and behaviour expected during delivery of our sport at other times.

Standards of conduct that must be observed by **all persons involved** during an overnight stay include:

- providing children and young people with privacy when bathing and dressing;
- observing appropriate dress standards when children and young people are present – such as no exposure to adult nudity;
- not allowing children or young people to be exposed to pornographic material, for example, through movies, television, the Internet or magazines;
- not leaving children under the supervision or protection of unauthorised persons such as hotel staff or friends;
- not involving sleeping arrangements that may compromise the safety of children and young people such as unsupervised sleeping arrangements, or an adult sleeping in the same bed as a child or young person;
- the right of children to contact their parents, or others, if they feel unsafe, uncomfortable or distressed during the stay; and
- parents expecting that their children can, if they wish, make contact.

Change Room Requirements

All persons involved are required to supervise children and young people in change rooms while balancing that requirement with a child or young person's right to privacy. In addition:

- avoid one-to-one situations with a child or young person in a change room area;
- **all persons** are not permitted to use the change room area to, for example, undress, while children and young people are present;
- **all persons** need to ensure adequate supervision in 'public' change rooms when they are used;
- **all persons** need to provide the level of supervision required for preventing **abuse** by members of the public, adult service users, peer service users, or general misbehaviour, while also respecting a child's privacy; and
- female personnel are not to enter male change rooms and male personnel are not to enter female change rooms.

Use of, Possession or Supply of Alcohol or Drugs

The AOC does not condone the use or possession of illegal drugs.

In addition, while on duty, **all persons** must not:

- use, possess or be under the influence of an illegal drug;
- use or be under the influence of alcohol;
- be incapacitated by any other legal drug such as prescription or over-the-counter drugs; or
- supply alcohol or drugs (including tobacco) to children and young people participating in our programs.

Use of legal drugs other than alcohol is permitted, provided such use does not interfere with your ability to care for children involved in our service.

Transporting Children and Young People

Children and young people are to be transported only in circumstances that are directly related to the delivery of our programs.

Children are to be transported only with prior authorisation from our Senior Management team and from the child's parent/guardian. Such approval needs to be in writing.

Examples of prior written approval could include electronic messaging formats such as email or SMS.

Gaining approval involves providing information about the proposed journey, including:

- the form of transport proposed, such as private car, taxi, self-drive bus, bus with driver, train, plane or boat;
- the reason for the journey;
- the route to be followed, including any stops or side trips;
- details of anyone who will be present during the journey other than our personnel who are involved in delivering our sport.

REPORTING AND RESPONDING TO CHILD ABUSE REPORTS AND ALLEGATIONS

Requirements

All persons are required to report any instance (witnessed, suspected or alleged) of serious abuse or neglect (cases in which a child or young person has suffered, or is likely to suffer, significant harm from abuse or neglect) immediately, or if that is not possible, no later than before ending that person's shift or session of work with our organisation.

If a child or young person is at **imminent risk** of harm or in **immediate danger**, **all persons** are required to report the situation directly to the relevant state or territory police, see appendix 1 for contact details.

In considering any reports made, individuals will need to consider the unique needs of a child including, for example, whether the child is Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, has a disability and/or has a culturally and linguistically diverse background.

Reporting of Concerns or Allegations regarding Abuse or Neglect by Family or Other External Sources

The AOC requires all staff, volunteers and team members to report any instance of child abuse or neglect that has resulted in, or is likely to result in, significant harm to a child or young person as follows:

During AOC Day-to-Day Programs and Activity:

Report to either:

- the relevant state or territory Police and/or relevant child protection authority; or
- the CEO of Australian Olympic Committee (AOC) or Head of People and Culture at the AOC who will ensure that the incident is reported to the relevant state or territory police or relevant child protection authority.

Relevant contact details for the above authorities or AOC contacts can be found in appendix 1.

At Olympic Games:

Report to either:

- the relevant state or territory Police and/or relevant child protection authority; or
- the Chef de Mission, CEO of Australian Olympic Committee (AOC) or Head of People and Culture at the AOC who will ensure that the incident is reported to the relevant state or territory police or relevant child protection authority.

Relevant contact details will be provided and available specific to each Olympic Games.

All persons also inform our CEO and/ or the Head of People and Culture of any report they make to those authorities, to enable our organisation to best provide support to the child or young person, their family and our staff and volunteers, where appropriate.

All persons retain the right to report directly to relevant authorities, such as Police or child protection, any concerns they may have in relation to the safety and welfare of a child or young person, regardless of whether they have also reported that matter internally.

In taking a report of concern, or of an incident, from others within our organisation our staff and volunteers are:

- Not to assess the validity of such allegations or concerns, but to report all allegations or concerns to the nominated person or persons within our organisation as described in this guideline (the validity of an allegation will then be assessed in the manner described in this guideline); and to
- Disregard factors such as the authority or position of the persons involved and any pre-existing views about the good character, or otherwise, of any person involved or under investigation.

In situations where a child or young person is making an allegation, our staff and volunteers are required to:

- Listen to the allegation or disclosure supportively, without dispute;
- Clarify the basic details, without seeking detailed information or asking suggestive or leading questions, using our organisation's 'Child abuse Incident Form';
- Record on the Child abuse Incident Form what was said (where possible, noting the exact words used by the person making the allegation);
- Date and sign the record;
- Explain to the child (if present) that other people may need to be told, in order to stop what is happening;
- Provide reassurance that our organisation will take immediate action in response to the allegation; and

- Report the matter as per organisational policy requirements (as stated earlier).

Additional Requirements - where concerns or allegations of abuse or neglect involve our staff, volunteers or team members.

All staff, volunteers and team members must report, immediately, any breach of the Code of Behaviour arising from an action by an employee or volunteer within our organisation. This report must go to **the CEO of the Australian Olympic Committee (AOC) or Head of People and Culture at the AOC or the Chef de Mission, CEO or Head of People and Culture during Olympic Games.**

In response to any instance of 'serious' breaches which relate to abuse or neglect ('serious' being cases in which the abuse or neglect has resulted in, or is likely to result in, significant harm to a child or young person) our **Head of People and Culture** will investigate and deal with allegations of inappropriate and unacceptable behaviour towards a child in line with our organisation's general procedures for complaint resolution and disciplinary measures and in consultation with Police and other authorities.

If a 'serious' allegation has been made against a staff member, team member or volunteer of our organisation, our **Head of People and Culture** will:

- fill in a 'Child Abuse Incident Form' form to ensure all relevant details are documented
- cooperate with the Police and other authorities and assist in their investigation of the allegation;
- take any action necessary to safeguard the child or young person (or other children or young people in our care), in consultation with the CEO and Chef de Mission during (during the Olympic Games) from additional harm through options such as:
 - redeploying that staff member, volunteer or team member to a position where they do not work with children
 - additional supervision of that staff member
 - removing/suspending that staff member from duty until the validity of the allegations is determined
- assist in addressing the support needs of those impacted by the allegation including considerations of cultural safety for:
 - the child and their family (this includes any specific support needs for those from an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander; Culturally and Linguistically Diverse; or person with a disability background);
 - the person against whom the complaint is made by, for example, offering professional counselling
 - other staff and volunteers impacted by the allegations
- make clear to all other staff, volunteers and team members who are aware of the allegation that:
 - the allegation does not mean the person is guilty, and that the allegation will be properly investigated and will include the right to 'procedural fairness'
 - they are not to discuss the matter with any person, except as directed by police, child protection authorities and/or our **Head of People and Culture** and only in direct relation to investigation of the allegation.

All instances, allegations, disclosures or reasonable concerns of abuse or neglect of a child or young person arising from an action by an employee or volunteer within our organisation will be investigated and will be the subject of a critical incident review, ensuring confidentiality for those involved.

No staff member, volunteer or team member who makes a report on reasonable grounds shall be threatened, intimidated or caused damage, loss or disadvantage because they have

reported or propose to report suspected abuse or neglect.

Confidentiality and Privacy

Our organisation maintains the confidentiality and privacy of all concerned (including the alleged perpetrator), except if doing so would compromise the welfare of the child or young person and/or investigation of the allegation.

Documentation

As part of our policy for responding to reports or allegations of child abuse, we have developed a Child Abuse Incident Form, which is to be used by any of our people to document any allegation, disclosure, incident or concern regarding child abuse. In situations where our staff and volunteers become aware of abuse whether through observation of potential indicators, such as bruises or cuts, or by directly observing potentially abusive behaviour towards a child or young person, they are required to use our Child abuse Incident Form to record their observations and concerns as accurately as possible.

Our **Head of People and Culture** will oversee creation of a file to contain the completed Child Abuse Incident Form and any other documentation relating to the allegation and subsequent action.

So as to prevent access by unauthorised persons, our organisation stores any documentation associated with an allegation of abuse or neglect of a child or young person by having:

- hard-copy documentation stored in a locked filing cabinet (or similar)
- electronic documentation stored in a password-protected folder (or similar).

We maintain and regularly monitor records of child abuse reports as part of our Incident Management processes to ensure that they are responded to effectively in accordance with this policy and that requirements for reporting to external authorities are complied with.

MONITORING AND REVIEW

This document will be reviewed annually, in consultation with stakeholders. Some circumstances may trigger an early review, this includes but not limited to legislative changes, organisational changes, incident outcomes and other matters deemed appropriate by the Executive and/or Chief Executive Officer.

RELATED DOCUMENTS

- Play By the Rules, <https://www.playbytherules.net.au>
- Child Safe Commitment
- Child Abuse Incident Form

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