



## Child Protection Working with Children

This brochure outlines aspects of the AFL Child Protection Policy ([Click here](#)). Children should be able to develop and enjoy their sporting experience in a safe environment, protected from the risk of harm or abuse.

Most people who volunteer or work with children do so to help children develop to their full potential. They make a positive contribution to the lives of children in the community and should be recognised and valued for their work.

Unfortunately, not all children are safe. Research suggests that child abuse occurs across all sectors of the community, including areas of sport. The AFL NSW/ACT is committed to supporting Child Protection legislation obligations and aims to create an environment where children can participate in playing AFL and be safe from any form of abuse. This requires making a firm and open commitment to child protection and adopting procedures and practices that will minimise the risk of a child being abused.

All Clubs must appoint a Child Protection Officer (**CPO**) (who preferably is independent of the club's committee) and ensure that:

- Working with Children Checks (**WWCC**) and clearances are completed by the appropriate people
- within the club environment, ensure that all WWCC are verified online
- increase the awareness of child abuse
- implement a child safe environment
- educate parents and participants on the AFL Child Protection Policy
- know what to do if you suspect abuse

These procedures will help foster a safe and positive environment for children and young people to participate in AFL. By adhering to the Child Safe Policy processes outlined in this brochure, you will take a positive step to ensuring your club is safe for all children

There is a phasing in period provided to complete the task of obtaining clearances for our volunteers, that period can commence immediately and AFL Sydney Juniors expect that all applications for 2015 required, should be completed by **June 30, 2015**.

Under the legislation, there are exemptions for some categories of volunteers under the Child Protection (Working with Children) Regulation 2013. They are:

- Children (under the age of 18)
- Volunteering by a parent or close relative with a team, program or other activity in which the child usually participates or is a team member; except where the work is part of a formal mentoring program or involves personal care of children with a disability. (Part 4, Clause 20)
- Clubs or other bodies providing services for children if the work is work as an umpire, a Club Official and the work does not ordinarily involve contact with children for extended periods without other adults being present.

With regards to the exemptions, AFL Sydney Juniors believes it is more appropriate that all Coaches and Team Managers should be cleared. The Competition Bylaws provide that any person who has not complied with the requirements of the Child Protection Legislation as it applies to them, or the specific requirements of AFL Sydney Juniors in relation to the Child Protection Legislation, is in breach of these Rules. Such breach is, for an Official, a Reportable Offence and for any other person is a breach of the Code of Conduct.

### **HOW DO I GET A WORKING WITH CHILDREN CHECK**

The application process for Volunteers is a three (3) step process (This process is mandatory for PAID employees)

#### **STEP 1:**

You need to fill in an online application form. [Click here](#). If you do not have access to the internet, please call (02) 9286 7219 for assistance.

Please make sure the details you provide are **EXACTLY THE SAME** as the details on your identity documents. If you have submitted the form with a mistake, please redo the form to avoid problems with the proof of identity requirement at step two.

Ensure you select the correct category: paid or volunteer worker. The \$80 fee for paid workers is not refundable if you are a volunteer and you choose 'paid worker' by mistake. A Check for paid workers will cover both paid and volunteer work in NSW for five years. **VOLUNTEERS DO NOT PAY ANY FEE FOR THE CHECK.**

Once you have submitted the form, you will receive by email an application number that looks like this: APP1234567.

## **STEP 2**

You will then need to present yourself to a NSW Motor Registry or NSW Council Agency that offers Road and Maritime Services. [Click here](#) to find the nearest location to you: Before you go to an RMS location, be aware:

- You cannot submit proof of identity on behalf of someone else. You must appear in person with your own documentation.
- Proof of identity cannot be performed outside of NSW. It must be completed at a NSW motor registry or NSW Council Agency that offers RMS services.

You will need your application number (referred to above) and proof of your identity (same as for a NSW driver's licence). You must have both of these items for your application to proceed. If you are a paid worker, you will also be required to pay an \$80 fee for a five year clearance.

## **STEP 3**

After a period of days you will receive your outcome and Working with Children Check number by email (or post if you do not have an email address). A copy of the Clearance form should then be provided to your nominated Club Child Protection Officer. The additional information the Club will require, if they don't already have it, is your date of birth.

This number stays with you the individual – only one check is required per person regardless of different organisations that you work or volunteer for.

The Club then have a verification process which they have to go through. They will retain the copy of your information for seven years for Volunteers and 5 Years for Paid workers.

## **PRACTICAL TIPS FOR VOLUNTEERS FOR A CHILD SAFE CLUB**

- avoid being alone with a child
- always meet with a child where others can see you both
- foster an environment of friendship, cooperation, tolerance and good sportsmanship
- ensure that all physical contact with a child is appropriate to the situation or the skill being taught
- never enter the change room without first knocking or loudly announcing that you are entering
- males should only enter male change rooms. Females should only enter female change rooms.

## **WHAT DO YOU DO IF?**

If you suspect abuse is occurring, or a child tells you that they have been abused, you should:

- reassure the child that something will be done to keep them safe, and
- listen carefully

You should tell them

- that you believe them
- it is not their fault and they are not responsible for abuse
- that telling you is the right thing to do

You should not:

- promise not to tell anyone
- force the child to give you details of the abuse
- ask leading questions
- dismiss anything a child tells you
- discuss the circumstances of the child with others not directly involved

## **REPORTING A DISCLOSURE OR SUSPICION**

You should, as soon as possible, report the circumstances directly to:

- Child Protection Helpline 132 111; and
- your club's Child Protection Officer and
- The AFL/NSW/ACT Member Protection Information Officer (MPIO)  
Name: Taleah Neowhouse  
Email: Taleah.neowhouse@aflnswact.com.au  
Phone: (02) 8333 8014

All reports made to the Police and the CPO/MPIO are completely confidential.

## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

### **When do I need to get the Working with Children Check?**

The AFL NSW/ACT expects all volunteers who are required to obtain a WWCC clearance do so as soon as possible and by **30 June 2015**.

### **I am under 18 years of age. Do I need to get a clearance?**

A volunteer or worker who is under the age of 18 years is exempt from the legislation and does not require a Working With Children Check clearance.

### **Where can I get more information?**

If you have any questions if or if you would like further information contact:

NSW Office of the Children's Guardian [click here](#)

The AFL/NSW/ACT Member Protection Information Officer (MPIO)

Name: Taleah Neowhouse  
Email: Taleah.neowhouse@aflnswact.com.au  
Phone: (02) 8333 8014

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