



# MEMBER PROTECTION POLICY

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## 1. Introduction

The University of Canberra Football Club was established in 1971 and has been participating in Capital Football competitions ever since. UC Stars provide a fun and inclusive atmosphere for players to participate in football and develop their game whilst making lasting connections at the same time. UC Stars Football club is focused on creating a competitive environment that you can have fun and socialise at the same time.

## 2. Purpose of Our Policy

The main objective of the UC Stars Football Club (“our”, “us” or “we”) Member Protection Policy (“policy”) is to maintain responsible behaviour and the making of informed decisions by members and other participants in this club. It outlines our commitment to a person’s right to be treated with respect and dignity, and to be safe and protected from discrimination, harassment and abuse. Our policy informs everyone involved in our club of their legal and ethical rights and responsibilities and the standards of behaviour that are expected of them. It also covers the care and protection of children participating in our club’s activities.

## 3. Who Our Policy Applies To

This policy applies to everyone involved in the activities of our club whether they are in a paid or unpaid/voluntary capacity and including:

- club committee members, administrators and other club officials;
- coaches and assistant coaches and other personnel participating in events and activities, including training sessions;
- support personnel, including managers, physiotherapists, masseurs, sport trainers and others;
- referees, umpires and other officials;
- members, including any life members;
- parents;
- spectators

## 4. Extent of Our Policy

Our policy covers all matters directly and indirectly related to the UC Stars Football Club and its activities. In particular, the policy governs unfair selection decisions and actions, breaches of our code of behaviour and behaviour that occurs at training sessions, in the club rooms, at social events organised or sanctioned by the club (or Capital Football), and on away and overnight trips. It also covers private behaviour where that behaviour brings our club or football into disrepute or there is suspicion of harm towards a child or young person.

## 5. Club Responsibilities

We will:

- adopt, implement and comply with this policy;
- ensure that this policy is enforceable;
- publish, distribute and promote this policy and the consequences of any breaches of this policy;
- promote and model appropriate standards of behaviour at all times;
- deal with any complaints made under this policy in an appropriate manner;
- deal with any breaches of this policy in an appropriate manner;
- recognise and enforce any penalty imposed under this policy;
- ensure that a copy of this policy is available or accessible to all people and organisations to whom this policy applies;
- review this policy every 12-18 months; and
- seek advice from and refer serious issues to Capital Football

Serious issues include unlawful behaviour that involves or could lead to significant harm and includes criminal behaviour (e.g. physical assault, sexual assault, child abuse) and any other issues that our state or national bodies request to be referred to them.

## 6. Individual Responsibilities

Everyone associated with our club must:

- make themselves aware of the contents of this policy;

- comply with all relevant provisions of this policy, including the standards of behaviour outlined in this policy;
- consent to the screening requirements set out in this policy, and any state or territory Working with Children checks if the person holds or applies for a role that involves regular unsupervised contact with a child or young person under the age of 18, or where otherwise required by law;
- treat other people with respect;
- always place the safety and welfare of children above other considerations;
- be responsible and accountable for their behaviour; and
- follow the guidelines outlined in this policy if they wish to make a complaint or report a concern about possible child abuse, discrimination, harassment, bullying or other inappropriate behaviour; and
- comply with any decisions and/or disciplinary measures imposed under this policy.

## 7. Protection of Children

### 7.1 Child Protection

UC Stars Football Club is committed to the safety and wellbeing of teenagers and young people who participate in our clubs activities or use our services. We support the rights of the child and will act at all times to ensure that a safe environment is maintained. We also support the rights and wellbeing of our staff and volunteers and encourage their active participation in building and maintaining a secure and safe environment for all participants.

UC Stars acknowledges the valuable contribution made by our staff, members and volunteers and we encourage their active participation in providing a safe, fair and inclusive environment for all participants.

#### 7.1.1: Members Code of Conduct

We will promote the members code of conduct that specifies standards of conduct and care we expect of members when they deal and interact with all participants including children, particularly those in our care.

The codes will clearly describe professional boundaries, ethical behaviour and unacceptable behaviour. A copy of the Members Code of Conduct can be found on the club website.

### 7.1.2: Choosing Suitable Employees and Volunteers

The Club will ensure that the organisation takes all reasonable steps to ensure that it engages the most suitable and appropriate people to work with members, especially those in positions that involve regular unsupervised contact with people under the age of 18.

The Club will ensure that Working with Children Checks and criminal history assessments are conducted for employees and volunteers working with children, where an assessment is required by law. If a criminal history report is obtained as part of the screening process, the Club will ensure that the criminal history information is dealt with confidentially and in accordance with relevant legal requirements.

### 7.1.3: Report and Respond Appropriately to Suspected Abuse and Neglect

The Club will ensure that employees and volunteers are able to identify and respond appropriately to people under the age of 18 at risk of harm and that they are aware of their responsibilities under state laws to make a report if they suspect on reasonable ground that a child has been, or is being, abused or neglected (See Attachment 2).

In addition to any legal obligations, if any person believes that another person or organisation bound by this policy is acting inappropriately towards a person under the age of 18 or is in breach of this policy they may make an internal complaint.

If a member needs to report a case of suspected child abuse, please contact the UC Stars Football Club Board for further documentation.

Any person who believes a child is in immediate danger or in a life threatening situation, should contact the police immediately.

## 8. Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying

Our club is committed to providing an environment in which people are treated fairly and equitably and that is, as far as practicable, free from all forms of discrimination, harassment and bullying.

We recognise that people may not be able to enjoy themselves or perform at their best if they are treated unfairly, discriminated against, harassed or bullied.

## 8.1 Discrimination

Unlawful discrimination involves the less favourable treatment of a person on the basis of one or more of the personal characteristics protected by State or Federal anti-discrimination laws.

Discrimination includes both direct and indirect discrimination:

- Direct discrimination occurs if a person treats, or proposes to treat, a person with a protected personal characteristic unfavourably because of that personal characteristic.
- Indirect discrimination 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.

For the purpose of determining discrimination, the offender's awareness and motive are irrelevant.

## 8.2 Harassment

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 Federal anti-discrimination legislation.

The offensive behaviour does not have to take place a number of times, a single incident can constitute harassment.

Sexual harassment is one type of harassment. Sexual harassment involves unwelcome conduct, remarks or innuendo of a sexual nature. It covers a wide range of behaviours and can be verbal, written, visual or physical. Sexual harassment is not limited to members of the opposite sex.

Every person is covered by the anti-discrimination laws that apply in their State as well as the Federal anti-discrimination laws.

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

- gender;
- race, colour, descent, national or ethnic origin, nationality, ethno-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 or 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; and
- personal association with someone who has, or is assumed to have, any of these personal characteristics.

Legislation also prohibits:

- racial, religious, homosexual, transgender and HIV/AIDS vilification; and
- victimization resulting from a complaint.

### 8.3 Bullying

The Club is committed to providing an environment that is free from bullying. We understand that bullying has the potential to result in significant negative consequences for an individual's health and wellbeing, and we regard bullying in all forms as unacceptable at our club.

Bullying is characterised by repeated, unreasonable behaviour directed at a person, or 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.

Whilst generally characterised by repeated behaviours, one off instances can 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; or



- psychological harassment such as intimidation.

Bullying includes cyber-bullying which occurs through the use of technology. New technologies and communication tools, such as smartphones and social networking websites, have greatly increased the potential for people to be bullied through unwanted and inappropriate comments. We will not tolerate abusive, discriminatory, intimidating or offensive statements being made online.

If any person believes they are being, or have been, bullied by another person or organisation bound by this policy, he or she may make a complaint. (Refer to Item 10 of this policy.)

## 9. Inclusive practices

Our club is welcoming and we will seek to include members from all areas of our community.

The following are examples of some of our inclusive practices.

### 9.1 People with a disability

The club will not discriminate against any person because they have a disability. A members level of participation will be set by the competition regulations of capital football.

### 9.2 People from diverse cultures

We will support, respect and encourage people from diverse cultures and religions to participate in our club and where possible we will accommodate requests for flexibility (e.g. modifications to uniforms).

### 9.3 Sexual & Gender Identity

All people, regardless of their sexuality or gender identity, are welcome at our club. We strive to provide a safe environment for participation and will not tolerate any form of discrimination or harassment because of a person's sexuality or gender identity.

We note that Federal anti-discrimination laws provide that it is not unlawful to discriminate on grounds of sex by excluding persons from participation in any competitive sporting activity in which the strength, stamina or physique of competitors is relevant.

Members are encouraged to play in the competition that aligns with their gender identity, given their ability is suitable for the competition level.

## 9.4 Pregnancy

The Club is committed to treating pregnant women fairly and to removing any unreasonable barriers to their full participation in our club's activities. We will not tolerate any discrimination or harassment against pregnant women.

We will take reasonable care to ensure the continuing safety, health and wellbeing of pregnant women. We will advise pregnant women that there may be risks involved with their continuing participation in sport, and we will encourage them to obtain medical advice about those risks. Pregnant women should be aware that their own health and wellbeing, and that of their unborn child, is of utmost importance in their decision-making about the extent they choose to participate in our sport.

We encourage all pregnant women to talk with their medical advisers, make themselves aware of the facts about pregnancy in sport and ensure that they make informed decisions about their participation in our sport. Pregnant women should make these decisions themselves, in consultation with their medical advisers and in discussion with UC Stars. We will only require pregnant women to sign a disclaimer in relation to their participation in our sport whilst they are pregnant if all other participants are required to sign one in similar circumstances. We will not require women to undertake a pregnancy test.

If a pregnant woman believes they are being, or has been, harassed or discriminated against by another person bound by this policy, they may make a complaint (see section 10).

# 10. Responding to Complaints

## 10.1 Complaints

Our club takes all complaints about on and off-field behaviour seriously. Our club will handle complaints based on the principles of procedural fairness, and ensure:

- all complaints will be taken seriously;
- the person making the complaint (complainant) will be given full details of what is being alleged against them and have the opportunity to respond to those allegations;
- irrelevant matters will not be taken into account;
- decisions will be unbiased; and
- any penalties imposed will be reasonable.

More serious complaints may be escalated to Capital Football.

If the complaint relates to suspected child abuse, sexual assault or other criminal activity, then our club may need to report the behaviour to the police and/or relevant government authority.

## 10.2 Making a complaint

Members who would like to submit a complaint should email [respect@ucstarsfootball.com](mailto:respect@ucstarsfootball.com). The club's Member Protection Information Officer will respond asking the member to outline the complaint by completing a google form.

## 10.3 Complaint Handling Process

When a complaint is received by our club, the person receiving the complaint (e.g. President, Member Protection Information Officer) will:

- listen carefully and ask questions to understand the nature and extent of the concern;
- ask what the complainant how they would like their concern to be resolved and if they need any support;
- explain the different options available to help resolve the complainant's concern;
- inform the relevant government authorities and/or police, if required by law to do so; and
- where possible and appropriate, maintain confidentiality but not necessarily anonymity.

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:

- supporting the person complaining to talk to the person being complained about;
- bringing all the people involved in the complaint together to talk objectively through the problem (this could include external mediation);
- gathering more information (e.g. from other people that may have seen the behaviour);
- seeking advice from our district, regional, state and/or national body or from an external agency (e.g. State Department of Sport or anti-discrimination agency);
- referring the complaint to our Capital Football; and/or
- referring the complainant to an external agency such as a community mediation centre, police or anti-discrimination agency.

In situations where a complaint is referred to Capital Football and an investigation is conducted, the club will:

- cooperate fully with the investigation;
- where applicable, ensure the complainant is not placed in an unsupervised situation with the respondent(s); and
- act on Capital Football's recommendations.

At any stage of the process, a person can seek advice from an anti-discrimination commission or other external agency and, if the matter is within their jurisdiction, may lodge a complaint with the anti-discrimination commission or other external agency.

#### 10.4 Disciplinary Measures

Our club may take disciplinary action against anyone found to have breached our policy or made false and malicious allegations. Any disciplinary measure imposed under our policy must:

- be applied consistent with any contractual and employment rules and requirements;
- be fair and reasonable;
- be based on the evidence and information presented and the seriousness of the breach; and
- be determined by our constituent documents, by Laws and the rules of the game.

Possible sanctions that may be taken include:

- a direction that the individual make verbal and/or written apology;
- counselling of the individual to address behaviour;
- withdrawal of any awards, placings, records, achievements bestowed in any tournaments, activities or events held or sanctioned by our club;
- suspension or termination of membership, participation or engagement in a role or activity;
- de-registration of accreditation for a period of time or permanently;
- a fine; or
- any other form of discipline that our club considers reasonable and appropriate.

## 10.5 Appeals

The complainant or respondent may be entitled to lodge an appeal against a decision made in relation to a complaint (including a decision where disciplinary sanctions are imposed by our club) to Capital Football. Appeals must be based on any right of appeal provided for in the relevant constituent documents, rules, regulations or by laws.

## Attachment 1.1: MEMBER PROTECTION DECLARATION

UC Stars Football Club has a duty of care to all those associated with our club and to the individuals and organisations to whom this policy applies. As a requirement of our Member Protection Policy, we must inquire into the background of those who undertake any work, coaching or regular unsupervised contact with people under the age of 18 years.

I ..... (name) of .....  
..... (address) born ...../...../.....

sincerely declare:

1. I do not have any criminal charges pending before the courts.
2. I do not have any criminal convictions or findings of guilt for sexual offenses, offenses related to children or acts of violence.
3. I have not had any disciplinary proceedings brought against me by an employer, sporting organisation or similar body involving child abuse, sexual misconduct or harassment, other forms of harassment or acts of violence.
4. To my knowledge there is no other matter that the club may consider to constitute a risk to its members, employees, volunteers, athletes or reputation by engaging me.
5. I will notify the President of the club immediately upon becoming aware that any of the matters set out in clauses 1 to 4 above has changed.

Declared in the State/Territory of .....

on ...../...../.....(date) Signature .....

*Parent/Guardian Consent (in respect of a person under the age of 18 years)*

I have read and understood the declaration provided by my child. I confirm and warrant that the contents of the declaration provided by my child are true and correct in every particular.

Name:..... Date: .....

Signature:.....

## Attachment 1.2: WORKING WITH CHILDREN CHECK REQUIREMENTS

Working with Children Checks aim to create a child-safe environment and to protect children and young people involved in our sport from physical and sexual harm.

They assess the suitability of people to work with children and young people and can involve:

- criminal history checks;
- signed declarations;
- referee checks; and
- other relevant background checks to assess a person's suitability to work with children and young people.

Working with Children Check requirements vary across Australia. [Fact Sheets](#) for each state and territory are available on the Play by the Rules website: [www.playbytherules.net](http://www.playbytherules.net)

Detailed information, including the forms required to complete a Working with Children Check, are available from the relevant agencies in each state and territory.

Australian Capital Territory

Contact the Office of Regulatory Services

Website: [www.ors.act.gov.au/community/working\\_with\\_vulnerable\\_people\\_wwvp](http://www.ors.act.gov.au/community/working_with_vulnerable_people_wwvp)

Phone: 02 6207 3000

### Travelling to other states or territories

It is important to remember that when travelling to other states or territories, representatives of sporting organisations must comply with the legislative requirements of that particular state or territory.

In certain jurisdictions, temporary, time limited exemptions from working with children checks may be available for interstate visitors with a Working with Children Check in their home state.

The laws providing interstate exemptions are not consistent across Australia.

If an employee or volunteer for your club is travelling interstate to do work that would normally require a working for children check, you will need to check the relevant requirements of that state or territory.

## Attachment 2: MEMBERS CODE OF CONDUCT

Every member plays an essential role at UC Stars Football Club. Our club required all players, regardless of experience or years at the club, to abide by the following Code of Conduct. Your membership of the club means that you accept to abide by the following expectations of behaviour.

Thanks for your support and if you have any questions, please contact the UC Stars Board via [info@ucstarsfootball.com](mailto:info@ucstarsfootball.com).

All members have the following expectations of behaviour

- I will set an example of fair play and inclusion at all games and training, treating all players with respect at all times
- I will respect match officials and their decisions and will ignore a perceived injustice and focus on the game
- I will not use intimidating or threatening behaviour towards players, coaches, officials or spectators
- I will not use foul or abusive language, or racial, ethnic, sexualised or gender based (or any other discriminatory) slurs while at any activity associated with the UC Stars. I will not condone the use of the same by my players
- I will not publicly criticise or engage in demeaning descriptions of players, coaches, members of the board or the club.
- I will condemn the use of violence in any form by players, spectators, coaches or officials

In addition to the above expectations, coaches will also abide by the following

- I will only make reasonable demands on the player's time, energy and enthusiasm
- I will respect match officials and their decisions and will encourage my team to ignore a perceived injustice and focus on the game
- I will ensure that equipment is accounted for after trainings and games, returning all equipment, including playing strips, when instructed by the UC Stars
- I will endeavour to keep up to date with the latest coaching practices and coaching development opportunities provided by the club
- I will complete the mandatory online training sessions through Sport Integrity Australia as instructed by the UC Stars Board
- If I have a player in my squad who is under the age of 18, I will obtain my Working With Vulnerable People Card within a reasonable amount of time
- I will actively encourage my players to attend and promote the social events organised by the club, as well as ensure my team meets the obligations of the club's sponsorship arrangements

Acceptance of a coaching position is regarded as an acceptance of the Code of Conduct. Failure to do so may result in a review of your position as a coach by the UC Stars Board.





|  |  |
|--|--|
| <p>Nature of complaint (category/basis/grounds)</p> <p>Can circle more than one option</p> | <p><input type="radio"/> Harassment or <input type="radio"/> Discrimination</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Sexual/sexist      <input type="radio"/> Selection dispute      <input type="radio"/> Coaching methods</p> <p>Sexuality                      Personality clash                      Verbal abuse</p> <p>Race                              Bullying                              Physical abuse</p> <p>Religion                              Disability                              Victimisation</p> <p>Pregnancy                              Child Abuse                              Unfair decision</p> <p>Other .....</p> |
| <p>What they want to happen to fix issue</p>   |  |
| <p>Information provided to them</p>  |  |
| <p>Resolution and/or action taken</p>  |  |
| <p>Follow-up action</p>  |  |