

Member Protection Policy

PART A: Member Protection Policy

1. Purpose of Policy

- (a) This Policy implements the FFA National Member Protection Policy. It will work towards maintaining ethical and informed decision-making and responsible behaviours within our sport. It outlines our commitment to ensure every person covered by this Policy is treated with respect and dignity and is protected from discrimination, harassment and abuse. This Policy seeks to ensure that everyone is aware of his or her key legal and ethical rights and responsibilities and the standards of behaviour that are expected of them.
- (b) The attachments to this Policy outline the procedures that support our commitment to eliminating discrimination, harassment, child abuse and other forms of inappropriate behaviour from our sport. As part of this commitment, this Policy allows Monaro Panthers FC to take disciplinary action against any person bound by this Policy if they breach it.

2. Who this Policy Applies To

This Policy applies to the Monaro Panthers FC Committee, members, staff, coaches, volunteers and players. To the fullest extent possible, it also applies to parents and guardians of players and to spectators at matches. This Policy will continue to apply to a person, even after they have stopped their association or employment with Monaro Panthers FC, if disciplinary action against that person has commenced.

3. Responsibilities of Monaro Panthers FC

Monaro Panthers FC must:

- (a) Adopt, implement and comply with this Policy;
- (b) Publish, distribute and promote this Policy and the consequences of breaches of this Policy;
- (c) Promote and model appropriate standards of behaviour at all times;
- (d) Promptly deal with any complaints made under this Policy in an appropriate manner;
- (e) Deal with any breaches of this Policy in an appropriate manner;
- (f) Recognise and enforce any penalty imposed under this Policy;
- (g) Ensure that a copy of this Policy is available or accessible to the persons to whom this Policy applies;
- (h) Appoint an appropriately trained person to the position of Member Protection Information Officer (MPIO); and
- (i) Monitor and review this Policy on a regular basis.

4. Individual Responsibilities

Individuals bound by this Policy must:

- (a) Make themselves aware of the contents of this Policy;
- (b) Comply with all relevant provisions of this Policy, including any codes of conduct and steps for making a complaint set out in this Policy;

- (c) Consent to any state/territory checks if the person holds or applies for a role that involves regular unsupervised contact with a child or vulnerable person or where otherwise required by law;
- (d) Place the safety and welfare of children above other considerations;
- (e) Be accountable for their behaviour; and
- (f) Comply with any decisions and/or disciplinary measures imposed under this Policy.

5. Position Statements

5.1 Child Protection

Monaro Panthers FC is committed to the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people participating in our sport. We support the rights of the child and will act without hesitation to ensure that a child safe environment is maintained at all times.

5.1.1 Identifying and Analysing Risk of Harm

Monaro Panthers FC will develop and implement risk management strategies, which includes a review of existing child protection practices, to determine how child-safe and child-friendly Monaro Panthers FC is and to determine what additional strategies are required to minimise and prevent risk of harm to children because of the action of an employee, volunteer or another child.

5.1.2 Developing Codes of Conduct for Adults and Children

Monaro Panthers FC will ensure that there are Codes of Conduct that specifies standards of conduct and care when dealing and interacting with children (see Part B).

5.1.3 Choosing Suitable Employees and Volunteers

Monaro Panthers FC will ensure that all reasonable steps are taken to ensure that the most suitable and appropriate people to work with children are engaged.

Monaro Panthers FC will ensure that Working With Vulnerable People/Children Checks and criminal history assessments are conducted for employees and volunteers where an assessment is required by law.

5.1.4 Supporting, Training, Supervising and Enhancing Performance

Monaro Panthers FC will ensure that their volunteers and employees who work with children or children's records have ongoing supervision, support and training such that their performance is developed and enhanced to promote the establishment and maintenance of a child-safe environment.

5.1.5 Empowering and Promoting the Participation of Children in Decision-Making and Service Development

Monaro Panthers FC will promote the involvement and participation of children and young people in developing and maintaining child-safe environments.

5.1.6 Report and Respond Appropriately to Suspected Abuse and Neglect

Monaro Panthers FC will ensure that volunteers and employees are able to identify and respond to children at risk of harm.

Monaro Panthers FC will make all volunteers and employees aware of their legal responsibilities if they have a suspicion on reasonable grounds that a child has been or is being abused or neglected.

5.2 Taking Images of Children

Monaro Panthers FC requires that individuals, wherever possible, obtain permission from a child's parent/guardian before taking an image of a child who is not their own and ensure that the parent knows how the image will be used. We also require the privacy of others to be respected and disallow the use of camera phones, videos and cameras inside changing areas, showers and toilets which we control or are used in connection with our sport.

If Monaro Panthers FC uses an image of a child it will avoid naming or identifying the child. Monaro Panthers FC will not display personal information such as residential address, email address or telephone numbers without gaining consent from the child's parent/guardian. Monaro Panthers FC will not display information about hobbies, likes/dislikes, school, etc. Monaro Panthers FC will only use appropriate images of a child, relevant to our sport and ensure that the child is suitably clothed in a manner that promotes the sport, displays its successes, etc. Where possible Monaro Panthers FC will seek permission to use these images.

5.3 Anti-Discrimination and Harassment

Monaro Panthers FC opposes all forms of harassment, discrimination and bullying. Monaro Panthers FC 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 and harassment. This includes treating or proposing to treat someone less favourably because of a particular characteristic; imposing or intending to impose an unreasonable requirement, condition or practice which has an unequal or disproportionate effect on people with a particular characteristic; or any behaviour that is offensive, abusive, belittling, intimidating or threatening – whether this is face-to-face, indirectly or via communication technologies such as mobile phone and computers.

5.3.1 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, Territory or Federal anti-discrimination laws.

Discrimination can be either direct or indirect. 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 purposes of determining discrimination, the offender's awareness and motive are irrelevant.

5.3.2 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, Territory or Federal anti-discrimination laws. 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 is 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.

5.3.3 Prohibition against Discrimination and Harassment

We prohibit all forms of Harassment and Discrimination. Any person who believes they are being, or have been, harassed or discriminated against by another person bound by this Policy may make a complaint.

5.4 Intimate Relationships

Consensual intimate relationships between coaches or officials and the adult athletes that they coach should be avoided.

If a consensual intimate relationship does exist or develop between an adult athlete and a coach or official, the coach or official is expected to ensure that the relationship is appropriate and that it does not compromise impartiality, professional standards or the relationship of trust the coach or official has with the athlete and/or other athletes. In assessing the appropriateness of an intimate relationship between an athlete and a coach or official, relevant factors include, but are not limited to:

- the relative age and maturity of the athlete;
- any potential vulnerability of the athlete;
- the emotional dependence of the athlete on the coach or official;
- the ability of the coach or official to influence the progress, outcomes or progression of the athlete's performance;
- the extent of the power imbalance between the athlete and the coach or official; and
- the likelihood of the relationship having any adverse impact on the athlete and/or other athletes.

If it is determined that an intimate relationship between an athlete and coach or official is inappropriate or unprofessional, disciplinary action may be taken against the coach or official, including dismissal. Further, action may be taken to stop the coaching relationship with the athlete.

5.5 Pregnancy

Monaro Panthers FC is committed to treating pregnant women fairly and to removing any unreasonable barriers to participation by them in our sport. Monaro Panthers FC will not tolerate any discrimination or harassment against pregnant women.

While many sporting activities are safe for pregnant women, there may be particular risks that apply to some women during pregnancy. Those risks will depend on the nature of the sporting activity and the particular pregnant woman's circumstances. Pregnant women should be aware that their own health and wellbeing, and that of their unborn children, should be of utmost importance in their decision making about the way they participate in football.

Monaro Panthers FC recommends that pregnant women wanting to participate in our sport consult with their medical advisers, make themselves aware of the facts about pregnancy in sport, and ensure that they make informed decisions about participation. Monaro Panthers FC will only require pregnant women to sign a disclaimer in relation to their participation in our sport whilst they are pregnant if we require other participants to sign one in similar circumstances. Monaro Panthers FC will not require women to undertake a pregnancy test.

If a pregnant woman believes she is being, or has been harassed or discriminated against by another person or organisation bound by this Policy, she may make a complaint.

5.6 Gender Identity

Gender identity means the gender-related identity, appearance or mannerisms or other gender-related characteristics of a person. This includes the way people express or present their gender and recognises that a person's gender identity may be an identity other than male or female. Some terms used to describe a person's gender identity include trans, transgender and gender diverse.

5.6.1 Gender identity Discrimination and Harassment

Federal, State and Territory anti-discrimination laws provide protection from discrimination against people on the basis of their gender identity.

Monaro Panthers FC will not tolerate any unlawful discrimination or harassment of a person because of their gender identity. This includes discrimination or harassment of a person who is transgender or transsexual or who is assumed to be transgender or transsexual or has an association with someone who has or is assumed to be transgender or transsexual.

If a person believes that they are being, or have been harassed or discriminated against by another person bound by this Policy because of their gender identity, he or she may make a complaint.

5.6.2 Intersex Status

Federal anti-discrimination law, and some State and Territory anti-discrimination laws, provide protection from discrimination against a person on the basis of their Intersex status.

Monaro Panthers FC will not tolerate any unlawful discrimination or harassment of a person because of their Intersex status.

5.7 Smoking Policy

- (a) No smoking shall occur at or near any sporting event or competition involving persons under the age of 18;
- (b) Monaro Panthers FC social functions shall be smoke free;
- (c) Coaches, officials, trainers, volunteers and players will refrain from smoking and remain smoke free while involved in an official capacity for Monaro Panthers FC, on and off the field.

5.8 Bullying

Monaro Panthers FC is committed to providing an environment that is free from bullying. We understand that bullying has the potential to result in serious negative consequences for an individual's health and wellbeing, and all forms of bullying is regarded by the Monaro Panthers FC as unacceptable in this sport.

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, threaten, degrade, offend or intimidate a person. Bullying behaviour can include actions of an individual or a group.

Whilst characterised by repeated behaviours, one-off instances can amount to bullying.

The following types of behaviour, where repeated or occupying 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. Frustration at a referee, player, coach, or sporting body should never be communicated on social network channels.

If a person believes they are being, or have been, bullied by another person bound by this Policy, he or she may make a complaint.

6. Complaints Procedure

6.1 Complaints

Any person may report a complaint about a person bound by this Policy if they reasonably think that a person has breached this Policy or has otherwise engaged in unethical or inappropriate conduct or behaviour. Such complaints should be reported to the MPIO.

Monaro Panthers FC:

- (a) must deal with any complaints about breaches of this Policy promptly, seriously, sensitively and confidentially and in accordance with the Complaints Procedure (see Part C);
- (b) must keep complaints confidential and will not disclose to another person without the complainant's consent, except if required by law or if disclosure is necessary to effectively deal with the complaint; and
- (c) recognises that procedural fairness is the minimum standard of fairness to be applied in the investigation and adjudication of a complaint.

A Complainant:

- (a) must initially attempt to resolve the complaint with the person involved; and
- (b) if this is not possible or reasonable given the sensitivity of the complaint, or that attempt does not provide a satisfactory outcome, the Complainant may notify the MPIO and make an informal or formal complaint.

A complaint may be dealt with informally or formally, depending on whether an informal or formal complaint was lodged in accordance with this Policy. Individuals may also pursue their complaint externally under anti-discrimination, child protection, criminal or other relevant legislation.

6.2 Improper Complaints & Victimisation

Monaro Panthers FC aims for the Complaint Procedure to have integrity and be free of unfair repercussions or victimisation against any person making a complaint.

If at any point the MPIO considers that a complainant has knowingly made an untrue complaint or the complaint is malicious or inappropriately intended to cause distress to the person complained of, the

matter may be referred in writing to the Monaro Panthers FC Committee for appropriate action which may include disciplinary action against the complainant.

Monaro Panthers FC will take all necessary steps to make sure that people involved in a complaint are not victimised. Disciplinary measures can be imposed on anyone who harasses or victimises another person for making a complaint or supporting another person's complaint.

7. What is a Breach of this Policy

It is a breach of this Policy for any person to which this Policy applies to do anything contrary to this Policy, including but not limited to:

- (a) Breaching the Codes of Conduct;
- (b) Bringing football and/or Monaro Panthers FC into disrepute, or acting in a manner likely to bring football and/or Monaro Panthers FC into disrepute;
- (c) Failing to follow Monaro Panthers FC's policies (including this Policy) and procedures for the protection, safety and wellbeing of children;
- (d) Discriminating against, harassing or bullying any person;
- (e) Victimising another person for reporting a complaint;
- (f) Engaging in a sexually inappropriate relationship with a person that they supervise, or have influence, authority or power over;
- (g) Verbally or physically assaulting another person, intimidating another person or creating a hostile environment within the sport;
- (h) Disclosing to any unauthorised person or organisation any information of Monaro Panthers FC that is of a private, confidential or privileged nature;
- (i) Making a complaint they knew to be untrue, vexatious, malicious or improper;
- (j) Failing to comply with a penalty imposed after a finding that the individual has breached this Policy; or
- (k) Failing to comply with a direction given to the individual during the discipline process.

8. Disciplinary Measures

If an individual to whom this Policy applies breaches this Policy, one or more forms of discipline may be imposed. Any disciplinary measure imposed under this Policy must:

- (a) Be applied consistent with any contractual and employment rules and requirements;
- (b) Be fair and reasonable; and
- (c) Be based on the evidence and information presented and the seriousness of the breach.

Subject to contractual and employment requirements, if a finding is made by the Monaro Panthers FC Committee that an individual has breached this Policy, one or more of the following forms of discipline may be imposed:

- (a) A direction that the individual make a verbal and/or written apology;
- (b) A written warning;
- (c) A direction that the individual attend counseling to address their behaviour;
- (d) A withdrawal of any awards, scholarships, placings, records, achievements bestowed in any tournaments, activities or events held or sanctioned by Monaro Panthers FC;
- (e) A demotion or transfer of the individual to another role;

- (f) A suspension or termination of the individual's membership or participation or engagement in a role or activity.

8.1 Factors to consider

The form of discipline to be imposed on an individual will depend on factors such as:

- (a) The nature and seriousness of the breach;
- (b) If the person(s) knew or should have known that the behaviour was a breach;
- (c) The level of contrition;
- (d) The effect of the proposed disciplinary measures on the person(s) including any personal, professional or financial consequences;
- (e) If there have been relevant prior warnings or disciplinary action;
- (f) The ability to enforce discipline if the person(s) is a parent or spectator (even if they are bound by the Policy); and/or
- (g) Any other mitigating circumstances.

9. Dictionary


All terms in this Policy are defined in accordance with the Dictionary contained in the FFA National Member Protection Policy.

PART B: Codes of Conduct

1. Coaches and Officials

Coaches and officials must meet the following requirements during any activity held or sanctioned by Monaro Panthers FC and in their role as a coach or official of Monaro Panthers FC:

- (a) Promote integrity and good character amongst players.
- (b) Encourage and support opportunities for players to learn appropriate behaviours and skills in all aspects of the sport.
- (c) Treat each player as an individual.
- (d) Help each player reach their potential - respect the talent, developmental stage and goals of each individual and encourage with positive and supportive feedback.
- (e) Wherever practical, avoid unaccompanied and unobserved one-on-one activity (when in a supervisory capacity or where a power imbalance will exist) with players under the age of 18 years.
- (f) Place the safety and welfare of the players above all else.
- (g) Maintain consistency and impartiality when making decisions.
- (h) Address unsporting behaviour and promote respect for all players.
- (i) Adopt appropriate and responsible behaviour and ensure that your decisions and actions contribute toward creating an environment which minimises participant behaviour likely to bring the game of football into disrepute. Such behaviour is not to be tolerated and includes:
 - i. Discriminatory behaviour, including public disparagement of, discrimination against, or vilification of, a person on account of their gender, ability, cultural background or religion;
 - ii. Offensive behaviour, including abusive, obscene, harmful, provocative or insulting gestures, language or chanting;

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- iii. Intimidation of match officials, coaches or administrators or the use of actions to pressure a match official, coach or administrator to take or omit to take certain action regardless of where such action is taken;
 - iv. Unwelcome physical contact or harassment which makes a person feel offended, humiliated and/or intimidated where that reaction is reasonable in the circumstances;
 - v. Abuse of position to obtain personal benefit;
 - vi. Commission or charge of a criminal offence; or
 - vii. Any other conduct, behaviour or statement that materially injures the reputation and goodwill of Monaro Panthers FC or football generally.

2. Players

Players must meet the following requirements during any activity held or sanctioned by Monaro Panthers FC and in their role as players of Monaro Panthers FC:

- (a) Respect the rights, dignity and worth of fellow players, coaches, officials and spectators.
- (b) Care and respect the equipment provided to you.
- (c) Be frank and honest with your coach concerning illness and injury.
- (d) Ensure that you do not exhibit behaviour that is likely to be construed as bringing Monaro Panthers FC or the game of football into disrepute.

3. Parents/Guardians and Spectators

Parents/Guardians and Spectators must meet the following requirements during any activity held or sanctioned by Monaro Panthers FC:

- (a) Respect the decisions of officials and coaches, and teach children to do the same.
- (b) Treat your child the same irrespective of them winning or losing.
- (c) Respect the rights, dignity and worth of every person regardless of their gender, ability, race, colour, religion, language, politics, national or ethnic origin.
- (d) Not use violence in any form, whether against other spectators, officials, coaches or players.
- (e) Not engage in discrimination, harassment or abuse in any form.
- (f) Comply with any terms of entry of a venue.
- (g) Not enter the field of play or its surrounds without lawful authority.
- (h) Conduct themselves in a manner that enhances, rather than injures, the reputation and goodwill of Monaro Panthers FC and football generally.

PART C: Complaints Procedure

All complaints will be kept confidential where possible and will not be disclosed to another person without the complainant's consent except if law requires disclosure or if disclosure is necessary to effectively deal with the complaint.

Depending on the nature of the complaint, individuals may also pursue their complaint externally under anti-discrimination, child protection or other relevant legislation.

If you wish to remain anonymous, Monaro Panthers FC may have difficulty assisting you to resolve your complaint. Procedural Fairness means that Monaro Panthers FC is required to provide the person/people you have complained about with full details of the complaint so they have an opportunity to be heard and/ or to respond.

Informal complaints

Step 1: Talk with the other person (where this is reasonable, safe and appropriate)

In the first instance, you (Complainant) should try to sort out the problem with the person or people involved (Respondent) if you feel able to do so.

Step 2: Contact the Member Protection Information Officer

Talk with the MPIO if:

- The first step is not appropriate;
- You are not sure how to handle the problem by yourself;
- You want to talk confidentially about the problem with someone and obtain more information about what you can do; or
- The concern continues after you tried to approach the person or people involved.

The contact information for the MPIO can be found on the Monaro Panthers FC website.

The MPIO will:

- Take confidential notes about your complaint;
- Try to find out the facts;
- Ask what outcome/how you want your concern to be resolved and if you need support;
- Provide information about possible options for you to address your concern;
- Explain how the Complaints Procedure works;
- Act as a support person if you so wish;
- Keep a written record;
- Refer you to an appropriate person (e.g. mediator) to help you address your concern, if appropriate (see Attachment C1);
- Inform the relevant government authorities and/or police if required by law to do so; - Where possible and appropriate, maintain confidentiality.

Step 3: Outcomes from initial contact

After talking with the MPIO, you may decide:

- There is no problem;
- The problem is minor and you do not wish to take the matter forward;
- To try and work out your own resolution (with or without a support person such as the MPIO); - To seek a mediated resolution with the help of a third person (such as a mediator); or - To make a formal written complaint.

Formal complaints

Step 4: Making a formal complaint

If informal approaches have not resolved the complaint to your satisfaction or are not appropriate or possible, you may:

- Make a formal complaint in writing; or -
- Approach a relevant external agency.

Step 5: Investigation of the complaint

Where a formal complaint is made, the Monaro Panthers FC Committee will determine the appropriate response, and may:

- Refer the complaint to mediation (see Attachment C1);
- Appoint an investigator to gather more information;
- Take disciplinary action where the Committee is of the view that a breach of the Policy has been established;
- Refer the complaint to Capital Football; or
- Refer the complaint to Police or any other appropriate authority.

Step 6: Documenting the resolution

The MPIO will document the complaint, the process and the outcome. This document will be stored in a confidential and secure place.

Attachment C1: Mediation

Mediation is a process during which people in conflict are helped to communicate with each other to identify the areas of dispute and to make decisions about resolving it.

The mediator does not decide who is right or wrong and does not tell either side what they must do. Instead, he or she helps those involved to discuss the issues and seeks to facilitate a mutually agreed outcome.

This attachment outlines the general procedure of mediation that will be followed by the Monaro Panthers FC.

1. The MPIO will, in consultation with the Complainant and the Respondent(s), arrange a mediator.
2. The mediator's role is to assist the Complainant and Respondent(s) reach an agreement on how to resolve the problem. The mediator, in consultation with the Complainant and Respondent(s), will choose the procedures to be followed during the mediation. At a minimum, an agenda of issues for discussion will be prepared by the mediator.
3. The mediation will be conducted confidentially and without prejudice to the rights of the Complainant and the Respondent(s) to pursue an alternative process if the complaint is not resolved.
4. At the end of a successful mediation, where appropriate the mediator may seek to ensure that the parties execute a document that sets out the agreement reached, which will be signed by them as their agreement to the resolution.
5. Mediation will not be recommended if:
 - a. The persons involved have a completely different version of the events and will not deviate from these;
 - b. The Complainant or Respondent are unwilling to attempt mediation;
 - c. Due to the nature of the complaint, the relationship between the Complainant and the Respondent(s) or any other relevant factors, the complaint is not suitable for mediation;or

- d. The matter involves proven serious allegations, regardless of the wishes of the Complainant.

