



FFSA Child Safe Environment Guidelines

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Establishing Child Safe environments as required by Children's Protection Act 1993 in South Australia

The *Children's Protection Act 1993* in South Australia requires some organisations to take a number of steps help protect children in their care.

Some organisations need to:

- Conduct Relevant History Assessments on certain employees, contractors and volunteers who are working with children (unless an exemption applies); and
- Lodge a Child Safe Environment Compliance Statement with the Department for Education and Child Development.

Which organisations are affected?

This applies to all government, non-government and local government organisations that provide the following services wholly or partly to children:

- child care
- cultural
- education
- entertainment and party
- health
- religious or spiritual
- residential service
- sporting or recreational
- welfare

How does this affect Football?

The Football Federation Australia (FFA) provides a comprehensive Membership Protection Policy, which the Football Federation SA (FFSA) and all affiliated associations must abide by.

This Policy applies to the Football Federation Australia, Member Federations, District (Country) Associations, Competition Administrators, Clubs, Officials, Agents and Players. To the fullest extent possible, it also applies to parents or guardians of Players and to spectators at Matches.

The FFA Member Protection Policy aims to ensure that the sports core values, good reputation and positive behaviour and attitudes are maintained and upheld. It assists to ensure that every person involved in our sport is treated with respect and dignity, and is safe and protected from abuse. The aim of this Policy will also ensure that everyone involved in Football is aware of his or her legal and ethical rights and responsibilities.

By affiliating and/or registering with the FFSA you are agreeing to adopt the FFA Member Protection Policy. A copy of the FFA Member Protection Policy can be accessed at [here](#).

Child Safe Environment Requirements

a. Lodging a Compliance Statement.

From January 2011 sport and recreation organisations that provide services for children are required to lodge a child safe environment compliance statement with the Department of Education and Child Development: Families SA.

This is a once only requirement. Football Federation SA has submitted a single compliance statement on behalf of all clubs and affiliated associations. This compliance statement stipulates that all affiliated

clubs and associations are providing and abiding by the necessary policies and procedures to ensure that there is a child safe environment within our sport.

Action:

To be covered by this compliance statement all affiliated clubs and associations must complete the attached form (Appendix A) agreeing to implement and abide by the policies and procedures of Football Federation SA (this document) relating to child safe environment.

The adoption of a single compliance statement will ensure consistency across the whole of the sport. The single compliance statement will also mean that each individual club and/or association is not required to submit such a statement.

b. Relevant History Assessments

Football Federation SA stipulates that any person that holds a 'Prescribed Position', as outlined below, involving a person 17 years of age or under must complete a Relevant History Assessment which includes a police check. The exemption to undertaking a Relevant History Assessment is also outlined below:

*** A prescribed position is:**

- All people who have regular contact with children or regular work in close proximity to children and are not directly supervised.
- Manage or supervise such personnel.
- Have access to records in relation to children that are prescribed by regulation (child protection services, education services, health services, disability services, court orders, and proceedings).

**** Exemptions:**

- A person who volunteers who is less than 18 years of age.
- A person working or volunteering for a short-term event or activity of less than 10 days duration or for no more than 1 day in a month.
- A person occupying a position in which all work involving children is undertaken in the presence of the child's parents or guardians and in which there is ordinarily no physical contact with the children.
- A person who undertakes, or a position that only involves, work that is not for the exclusive benefit of children and is not provided to any child on an individual basis.
- A person who is a police officer or a registered teacher.

Football Federation SA has already developed a policy relating to the National Police Check. This policy clearly outlines who needs to complete a National Police Check and the process that needs to be undertaken to obtain such a check. (Appendix B)

As an affiliate of Football Federation SA there will be no need for you to develop your own policy, as the Football Federation SA policy will be adopted. In addition, as an affiliate you will also have access to the Football Federation SA Volunteer Organisation Authorisation Number (VOAN), this will enable your volunteers to obtain a police check free of charge. The adoption of the National Police Check procedure will ensure that your association has an adequate policy in place without having to spend time developing one.

Action:

Implement the Football Federation SA policy relating to the National Police Check.

c. Mandated Notifiers

The *Children's Protection Act 1993* makes it a legal requirement for certain people to report a reasonable suspicion or incidences of abuse or neglect. This obligation is known as mandatory notification and a penalty may stem from an individual's failure to comply. Notifications must be made to the Families SA *Child Abuse Report Line on 13 14 78*.

Reasonable grounds may include:

- a disclosure of abuse by a child.
- professional judgment, based on the notifier's experience and observations.
- disclosure by a child or an adult that a child is being abused or is at risk.

Definition

Mandated notifiers are an employee of, or volunteer in, a government or non government organisation that provides health, welfare, education, sporting or recreational, child care or residential services wholly or partly for children.

These people:

- are engaged in the actual delivery of those services to children, or
- hold a management position in the relevant organisation the duties of which include direct responsibility for, or direct supervision of, the provision of those services to children.

Staff and volunteers of recreation and sporting bodies who work with children fit these descriptions and so have a legal obligation (are mandated) to report any suspected child abuse and/or neglect. The law also stipulates that no person shall threaten or intimidate, or cause damage, loss or disadvantage to another person because that person has made a notification or proposes to make a notification pursuant to the *Children's Protection Act 1993* (maximum penalty \$10,000).

Action:

Your club and/or association should identify and advise persons affected by this requirement that they now have this legal responsibility.

d. What does your club or association need to do?

To fully ensure that all affiliated clubs and associations are compliant the following steps must be completed:

Step 1:

- Information outlined in this document is read and discussed by your club and/or association committee.
- Your club or association are required to sign the compliance form (Appendix A) agreeing to abide by the FFA Member Protection policy, including the adoption of policies and procedures relating to the Child Safe Environments.

On receipt of this statement you will be forwarded by the FFSA an 'Our Club: Supports Kids, Is Safe For Kids, Is Fun for Kids' poster to be placed on your notice board.

Step 2:

- Your club and/or association is required to communicate with your members the adoption of the FFA Member Protection and Child Safe Environment processes and procedures either by placing the documents on your club's or association's website or by posting a link direct to the Football Federation SA website for access to the information.

You should also display prominently your 'Our Club: Supports Kids' poster.

- Ensure that all of the information relating to the National Police Check is presented to your members and ensure that all volunteers that are required to have a National Police Check undertake this process.
- The club or association is to nominate at least one person to become a Child Safe Officer (CSO) and ensure that this person undertakes the required training. A course providing training to support the CSO role is available through the Office for Recreation and Sport. Once they have been appointed and have undertaken the training add this person's photo to the 'Our Club: Supports Kids' poster.

(The CSO course is free and is only a 3 hour course. To find details of where and when these courses are available and to register go to http://ors.sa.gov.au/upcoming_courses_and_events

- Make sure all of your staff, coaches, officials and volunteers working with children (17 and Under) at your club/association receive a copy of the FFSA and club/associations Code of Conduct. Club officials including: coaches, managers, administrators and volunteers undertake the FREE online training available at www.playbytherules.net.au
- Undertake a risk assessment of the clubs facilities and practices to identify any potential risks to the safety of children. Address these as soon as possible. Keep a register of your clubs actions.
- Engage children and young people so they can have a say on issues that impact on their involvement. This may simply be through feedback forms or you may consider other opportunities for comment.
- Ensure they are aware of their rights and responsibilities as members of the club and know who they can approach if they have an issue (ie. the CSO).
- Build and maintain a commitment to provide a child safe environment which is embedded in the club's culture. This will ensure the club is a safe and welcoming place for children and young people.

Further Information

If your club or association requires any further assistance in regards to this document or the requirements outlined in this document please contact Football Federation SA.

Information can also be gained by clicking on the links below

Families SA-Child Safe Environments
Office for Recreation and Sport

www.families.sa.gov.au/childsafes
www.ors.sa.gov.au/create_a_child_safe_environment

Appendix B – National Police Clearance Policy (Extract)

4. Completion and Lodgment of a National Police Check (NPC) Application Form

- 4.1 To complete a National Police Check (NPC), the applicant must complete a South Australia Police NPC Application online form. This form can be located [here](#).
- 4.2 The applicant shall complete the Application Form online. Once the form is completed, the applicant will be required to print the form. If an applicant is unable to complete the form online, the applicant will be required to request a hardcopy from the Records Release Unit by contacting 8204 1408.
- 4.3 Once the form is completed and printed, the applicant will be required to present the completed form along with 100 points of ID to a local police station. On presentation of this information, it will be verified and stamped. If the applicant is submitting this form as a volunteer of a FFSA affiliated Club and/or association, the form must be retained by the volunteer and submitted to FFSA to insert a Volunteer Organisation Authorisation Number (VOAN), which waives the fee for volunteers. Please note that the VOAN is only applicable to volunteers. Paid employees of any club and/or association shall pay the fee for the NPC. **Please note that if the form is retained at the Police Station a fee will be payable. If an applicant does pay a fee, FFSA will not reimburse the fee.**
- 4.4 The form submitted to FFSA must bear the original signature of the applicant and must not be a copy of the original application form. The form will be checked by a designated FFSA representative and the VOAN inserted. On completion the form will be signed by the FFSA representative.
- 4.5 Once the form has been signed by a FFSA Representative, FFSA will submit the form into Records Release Unit of South Australia Police.

5. Procedure following receipt of National Police Check (NPC)

- 5.1 The National Police Check (NPC) Certificate will be sent direct to the applicant. On receipt of the certificate, the applicant is to provide the certificate to the designated person at their club and/or association to sight. For privacy reasons, a club must appoint a person who is responsible for the reviewing and recording of all NPCs.
- 5.2 On sighting the certificate the appointed person will assess the NPC.
- 5.3 Once the assessment is complete the club/association representative will record the name of the person and the relevant details on the NPC template provided by FFSA. The club/association will allocate a code against the volunteer as either STV (Suitable to Volunteer) or NSTV (Not Suitable to Volunteer).

FFSA, club or association are not permitted to take a copy of the certificate or retain the original certificate. It must be retained by the individual.

- 5.4 The completed NPC template must be provided to FFSA and where applicable affiliated association, prior to the commencement of each season. The onus is on the club/association to ensure that all volunteers have provided a valid Police Check.
- 5.5 If a criminal history report is provided that is not obtained through South Australia Police, the club, association or FFSA may accept a criminal history report from an approved crimtrac organisation. A DCSI clearance or working with children clearance from another State or Territory, if someone has recently moved to South Australia, would also be accepted.

A full copy of the FFSA National Police Check Procedure can be obtained from the FFSA website.

FOOTBALL FEDERATION SA COMPLAINTS PROCESS

Rationale

Football Federation SA (FFSA) is committed to providing a high-quality service to all our stakeholders. If a stakeholder has a complaint, it needs to be addressed firstly with the party that the complaint relates to, this may be a club or affiliated association. If the complaint is not addressed at this level, it can then be referred to FFSA so that appropriate action may be implemented.

Complaints may vary in severity and complexity, and may be addressed informally or formally. Any complaint received should be addressed in a timely manner and should not be avoided as it may result in a minor complaint becoming significant. FFSA aims to provide consistency and fair handling of all complaints through this procedure.

Required Outcome 1:

To ensure that all clubs and affiliated associations abide by the Football Federation Australia (FFA) and FFSA Competition Rules and Regulations, policies and procedures.

Required Outcome 2:

To provide a clear and concise complaints process including an appeal process.

Required Outcome 3:

To provide consistency and fair handling of all complaints.

COMPLAINT PROCESS

Prior to Submitting a Formal Complaint.

1. Prior to contacting FFSA in relation to a complaint, the complainant should consider whether the matter has been addressed with the person/s concerned. If the complaint is in relation to a club or association, in the first instance, the club and/or association should be provided with the opportunity to resolve the matter.
2. Prior to submitting a formal complaint, a person may contact FFSA to determine if the matter can be resolved without making a formal complaint. In undertaking this process the FFSA will only provide information, they will not make a determination or tell the person what action they should or should not undertake.

Submission of a Formal Complaint.

1. All complaints are to be submitted in writing. The information should be specific and provide details relating to the actual complaint.
2. If the complaint is in relation to a competition matter, it should be addressed to the relevant Competition Administrator.
3. If the complainant is unsure who the matter is to be addressed to, they may contact the FFSA for further information.

Investigating a Complaint

1. Once the complaint has been received, it will be reviewed and investigated. Investigation may entail gaining more information, referring the matter to another person within the organisation or referring the matter to the FFSA Grievance/Disciplinary Committee.
2. Once the matter has been investigated, a written response relating to the findings and the action to be implemented will be conveyed to the complainant.

Grievance/Disciplinary Committee

1. FFSA Grievance/Disciplinary Committee is an independent body.
2. If the matter is referred to this committee, a hearing date and time will be conveyed to the complainant.
3. The complainant and any witnesses, where applicable, will be required to attend the hearing.
4. The Grievance/Disciplinary Committee will hear the matter and provide a finding. The finding may be provided at the hearing or conveyed to the FFSA within 7 days of the hearing. All findings will be provided to the complainant within 7 days where possible.

Appeal Process

1. A person may appeal a decision of FFSA or the Grievance/Disciplinary Committee in accordance with the National Disciplinary Regulations and FFSA Grievance and Disciplinary Regulations.
2. To lodge an appeal, the appeal must be in writing and must be accompanied by the appeal fee.
3. On receipt of the appeal, FFSA will refer the matter to the Appeal Committee.
4. An Appeal Hearing will be scheduled and notified to the person who submitted the appeal.
5. The Appeal Committee will hear the matter and provide a finding. The finding may be provided at the hearing or conveyed to the FFSA within 7 days of the hearing. All findings will be provided to the complainant within 7 days where possible.

National Grievance Procedure

1. If a complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of the above process, a grievance may be submitted to the FFA in accordance with the National Grievance Resolution Regulations.