



MEMBER PROTECTION POLICY

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PREFACE

The Board of Management of Table Tennis Queensland has adopted this Member Protection Policy to ensure a safe environment for all members of the table tennis community. The Policy includes a commitment to ensure an environment that is safe for children, one that is free from harassment and abuse and one that promotes respectful values and behaviour.

This comprehensive document applies to all levels of the sport of table tennis in Queensland. It forms the basis of appropriate and ethical conduct by which everyone participating in table tennis is expected to abide. This document has been largely based on the Member Protection Regulation of Table Tennis Australia.

By adopting, implementing and ensuring adherence to this document Table Tennis Queensland will provide a safe and enjoyable environment for participation in table tennis.

1. PURPOSE OF THIS POLICY

This Member Protection Policy (hereafter referred to as “Policy”) aims to ensure that every person involved in the sport of table tennis is treated with respect and dignity and is protected from abuse. This policy also ensures that everyone involved in table tennis is aware of his or her legal and ethical rights and responsibilities regarding:

- Child Protection
- Anti-Discrimination
- Harassment

In upholding this policy, Table Tennis Queensland (TTQ) will take disciplinary action against any person or organisation bound by this Policy if they breach it.

This Policy has been endorsed by the TTQ Board and will become effective from 15th September 2006 and will operate until replaced [a schedule of updates is included in Appendix B]. A copy of the Policy can be obtained from our website www.tabletennisqld.org or by contacting the TTQ office directly.

2. WHO THIS POLICY APPLIES TO

This Policy applies to TTQ and the following individuals and organisations in Queensland:

- Individuals sitting on boards, committees and sub-committees;
- Employees and volunteers;
- Coaches and assistant coaches;
- Players;
- Referees, umpires and other officials;
- Members, as defined in Section 4 of the TTQ Constitution;
- Parents, guardians, spectators and sponsors to the full extent that is possible.

In the case of an allegation of child abuse, any disciplinary action initiated against a person will continue even after they have stopped their association or employment with TTQ.

3. CODE OF CONDUCT

TTQ requires every individual and organisation bound by this Policy to:

- 3.1 Be ethical, fair and honest in all their dealings with other people in the Queensland table tennis community;
- 3.2 Treat all persons with respect and courtesy and have proper regard for their dignity, rights and obligations;
- 3.3 Place the safety and welfare of children above other considerations;
- 3.4 Operate within the rules and spirit of the sport;
- 3.5 Comply with all applicable Federal and State Laws, particularly anti-discrimination and child protection laws;
- 3.6 Be responsible and accountable for their conduct; and
- 3.7 Abide by the TTQ Code of Conduct.

4. ORGANISATIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES

TTQ and its affiliated clubs / associations must:

- 4.1 Adopt, implement, comply and enforce this Policy and to the full extent possible, ensure their members adopt, implement, comply and enforce this Policy.
- 4.2 Publish, distribute and promote this Policy and the consequences for breaching it;
- 4.3 Promote appropriate standards of conduct at all times;
- 4.4 Promptly deal with any breaches of, or complaints made under this Policy in an impartial, sensitive, fair, timely and confidential manner;
- 4.5 Enforce any penalty imposed under this Policy;
- 4.6 Ensure that a copy of this Policy is readily accessible to the persons to whom this Policy applies;
- 4.7 At all times have at least one appointed Complaints Manager who must be easily accessible for the purpose of making a complaint and be knowledgeable with the relevant Complaints Procedure and this Policy.
- 4.8 Display the name and contact details of the Complaints Manager in a way that is readily accessible.

5. INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Individuals bound by this Policy are responsible for:

- 5.1 Making themselves aware of the Policy and complying with the Code of Conduct;
- 5.2 Consenting to a national police check if the individual holds or applies for a role that entails contact with children;
- 5.3 Contributing to, and not detracting from, a sporting environment that is free from discrimination, child abuse and harassment;
- 5.4 Not in any way engaging in conduct that may reasonably be considered to be abuse, child abuse, harassment or discrimination against any person or persons or acts or omits to act in any way that permits such conduct.

6. POLICY POSITION STATEMENTS

6.1 Child Protection

TTQ acknowledges that staff and volunteers throughout Queensland make a valuable contribution to the positive experiences of our juniors. To ensure these positive experiences continue TTQ aims to ensure that the safety and welfare of its junior participants are protected. Several measures will be used to achieve this such as:

- Carefully selecting and screening people whose role requires them to work with, or have unsupervised contact with children (Screening procedures are outlined in **Appendix B** of this Policy);
- Ensuring TTQ's Code of Conduct, particularly for roles associated with junior sport, are promoted and enforced;
- Providing procedures for raising concerns or complaints which are workable, fair and reflect the requirements and intent of this Policy; and
- Providing education and/or information to those involved in our sport on child abuse and child protection.

Anyone bound by this Policy who reasonably suspects that a child has been or is being abused by someone within our sport, is morally bound to report it immediately to the **Juvenile Aid Bureau of the Queensland Police Service** or the **Department of Child Safety** and **TTQ**. Descriptions of the sorts of activity that may be abuse are in the **Dictionary at Appendix A**.

TTQ will deal with all allegations of child abuse promptly, seriously, sensitively and confidentially. A person will not be victimised for reporting an allegation of child abuse and the privacy of all persons concerned will be respected. TTQ's procedures for handling allegations of child abuse are outlined in the TTQ Complaints Procedure.

6.2 Anti-Discrimination and Harassment

TTQ aims to provide a sporting environment where all those involved in its activities are treated with dignity and respect, and without harassment or discrimination.

TTQ recognises that all those involved in its activities cannot enjoy themselves, perform to their best, be effective or fully productive if they are being treated unfairly, discriminated against or harassed because of their:

- Age;
- Disability;
- Marital status;
- Parental/carer status;
- Physical features;
- Political belief/activity;
- Pregnancy;
- Race;
- Religious belief/activity;
- Gender;
- Sexual orientation;
- Trade union membership/activity;
- Transgender orientation.

TTQ prohibits at all levels of table tennis all forms of harassment and discrimination not only because it may be against the law, but because it can be extremely distressing, offensive, humiliating and/or threatening and can create an uncomfortable and unpleasant environment.

Descriptions of some of the types of behaviour that could be regarded as harassment or discrimination are provided in the **Dictionary at Section 10**.

If any person feels they are being harassed or discriminated against by another person or organisation bound by this Policy, they should complain to the TTQ Complaints Manager. The Complaints Manager will explain how TTQ will deal with the problem.

7. COMPLAINTS

7.1 COMPLAINTS

TTQ aims to provide an easy to use, confidential and trustworthy procedure for complaints based on the principles of natural justice. Any person (complainant) may report a complaint about a person/s or organisation bound by this Policy if they reasonably believe that a person/s or an organisation has breached this Policy. A complaint should be reported to the TTQ Complaints Manager.

All complaints will, as far as is practicable, be dealt with promptly, seriously, sensitively and confidentially as per the **Table Tennis Queensland Complaints Procedure** (Appendix 15B of the TTQ By-Laws).

7.2 VEXATIOUS COMPLAINTS

TTQ aims to ensure its Complaints Procedure has integrity and is free of unfair repercussions. If at any point in the complaint process TTQ considers that a complainant has **knowingly** made an untrue complaint or the complaint is vexatious or malicious, the matter may be referred to the Judicial Panel for appropriate action, which may include disciplinary action against the complainant. See the **TTQ Complaints Procedure** for more information on the Judicial Panel.

7.3 VICTIMISATION

TTQ will also take all necessary steps to make sure that people involved in a complaint are not victimised by anyone for coming forward with a complaint or for helping to resolve that complaint. Disciplinary measures will be imposed on anyone who victimises another person for making a complaint.

7.4 MEDIATION

TTQ aims to resolve complaints with the minimum of fuss wherever possible. In many cases, complaints can be resolved by agreement between the people involved with no need for disciplinary action. The people involved in a formal complaint - the complainant and the person complained about (respondent) - may seek the assistance of a neutral third person or a trained mediator.

Mediation may occur either before or after an investigation of a complaint. If a complainant and respondent wish to try to resolve the complaint with the assistance of a

mediator, the Executive Officer will, in consultation with the complainant and respondent, arrange for a trained mediator to mediate the complaint.

8. WHAT IS A BREACH OF THE MEMBER PROTECTION POLICY?

It is a breach of this Policy for any person or organisation to which this Policy applies, to have been found to have:

- 8.1** Done anything in contravention of this Policy;
- 8.2** Breached the TTQ Code of Conduct;
- 8.3** Engaged in conduct that if publicly (or not publicly) known would bring or would be likely to bring TTQ or the sport of table tennis into disrepute or censure;
- 8.4** Engaged in a sexually inappropriate relationship or behaved in a sexually inappropriate manner with a child or person that the person supervises, or has influence, authority or power over;
- 8.5** Disclosed to any unauthorised person or organisation any TTQ information that is of a private, confidential or privileged nature;
- 8.6** Failed to comply with a penalty imposed after a finding that the individual or organisation has breached this Policy;
- 8.7** Failed to impose a penalty or sanction on a person found to be in breach of this Policy; and/or
- 8.8** Failed to comply with a direction reasonably given to the individual or organisation during the discipline process.

9. FORMS OF DISCIPLINE

If an individual or organisation to which this Policy applies breaches this Policy, one or more forms of discipline may be imposed. These may include (but is not limited to) making a verbal or written apology, being suspended or having a person's appointment or employment terminated.

APPENDIX A: DICTIONARY OF TERMS

This Dictionary sets out the meaning of words used in this Policy and its Attachments without limiting the ordinary and natural meaning of the words. Specific definitions and more detail on some of the words in this dictionary can be obtained from the Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian www.childcomm.qld.gov.au or the Anti-Discrimination Commission Queensland www.adcq.qld.gov.au

Abuse is a form of harassment and includes physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, neglect, and abuse of power. Examples of abusive behaviour include bullying, humiliation, verbal abuse and insults.

Affiliated club means member association/club of TTQ (Refer to section 4 of the TTQ Constitution for further detail).

Child means a person who is under the age of 18 years (see also definition of young person)

Child abuse relates to children put at risk of harm by a person (usually by adults, sometimes by other children and often by those they know and trust). It can take many forms. Children may be harmed by both verbal and physical actions and by people failing to provide them with basic care. Child abuse may include:

- Physical abuse by hurting a child or a child's development (e.g. hitting, shaking or other physical harm; giving a child alcohol or drugs; giving bad nutritional advice; or training that exceeds the child's development or maturity).
- Sexual abuse by adults or other children where a child is encouraged or forced to watch or engage in sexual activity or where a child is subject to any other inappropriate conduct of a sexual nature (e.g. sexual intercourse, masturbation, oral sex, pornography including child pornography or inappropriate touching or conversations).
- Emotional abuse by ill-treating a child (e.g. humiliation, taunting, sarcasm, yelling, negative criticism, name calling, ignoring or placing unrealistic expectations on a child).
- Neglect (e.g. failing to give food, water, shelter or clothing or to protect a child from danger or foreseeable risk of harm or injury).

Complaint means a complaint made under the TTQ Complaints Procedure – Appendix 15B of the TTQ By-Laws.

Complaints Manager means an appropriately trained person to receive and handle complaints and allegations.

Complainant means the person making a complaint.

Discrimination means treating or proposing to treat a person less favourably than someone else in certain areas of public life on the basis of an attribute or personal characteristic they have. The relevant attributes or characteristics are:

- Age;
- Disability;
- Marital status;
- Parental/carer status;
- Physical features;
- Political belief/activity;
- Pregnancy;

- Race;
- Religious belief/activity;
- Gender;
- Sexual orientation;
- Trade union membership/activity;
- Transgender orientation.

Discrimination is not permitted in the areas of employment (including volunteer and unpaid employment); the provision of goods and services; the selection or otherwise of any person for competition or a team; entry or otherwise of any player or other person to any competition; obtaining or retaining membership of an organisation (including the rights and privileges of membership).

Requesting, assisting, instructing, inducing or encouraging another person to engage in discrimination may also be discriminatory conduct.

Discrimination may be direct or indirect. **Direct discrimination** is treating, or proposing to treat someone less favourably because of a characteristic (such as race, sex, age etc), in the same or similar circumstances. **Indirect discrimination** is imposing or intending to impose a requirement, condition or practice that is the same for everyone but which has an unequal or disproportionate effect on particular individuals or groups (such as race, sex, age etc.).

Harassment is any type of behaviour that the other person finds unwelcome and is offensive, abusive, belittling and / or threatening. The behaviour is unwelcome and of a type that a reasonable person would recognise as being unwelcome and likely to cause the recipient to feel offended, humiliated or intimidated.

Unlawful harassment includes the above but is either sexual or targets a person because of their race, sex, pregnancy, marital status, sexuality or other characteristic (see characteristic list under Discrimination).

Whether or not the behaviour is harassment is determined from the point of view of the person receiving the harassment. The basic rule is if someone else finds it harassing then it could be harassment. Harassment may be a single incident or repeated. It may be explicit or implicit, verbal or non-verbal.

Junior means a person under the age of eighteen (18) years who is participating in an activity of table tennis.

Mediator means a person appointed to mediate complaints made under this policy. It is preferable that the mediator has relevant skills, qualifications and/or training in mediation.

Member means Participant Member as per Section 4 of the TTQ Constitution.

Member Protection is a term used by the Australian sporting industry to describe the practices and procedures that protect members – both individual members such as players, coaches and officials, and the member organisations such as clubs, state associations, other affiliated associations and the national body. Member protection involves:

- Protecting those that are involved in sporting activities from harassment, abuse, discrimination and other forms of inappropriate behaviour;
- Adopting appropriate measures to ensure the appropriate people are involved in an organisation particularly those involved with juniors; and
- Providing education to members about the implementation of a Member Protection Policy.

Natural justice incorporates the following principles:

- a person who is the subject of a complaint must be fully informed of the allegations against them;
- a person who is the subject of a complaint must be given full opportunity to respond to the allegations and raise any matters in their own defence;
- all parties need to be heard and all relevant submissions considered;
- no person may judge their own case;
- the decision maker/s must be unbiased, fair and just; and
- the penalties imposed must not outweigh the 'crime'.

Police check means a national criminal history record check conducted as a prudent pre-employment or pre-engagement background check on a person.

Policy and **this Policy** mean the TTQ Member Protection Policy.

Respondent means the person who is being complained about.

Sexual harassment means unwanted, unwelcome or uninvited behaviour of a sexual nature that makes a person feel humiliated, intimidated, offended or uncomfortable. Sexual harassment can take many different forms and may include unwanted physical contact, verbal comments, jokes, propositions, display of pornographic or offensive material or other behaviour that creates a sexually hostile environment.

Sexual harassment is not behaviour based on mutual attraction, friendship and respect. If the interaction is between consenting adults, it is not sexual harassment.

Sexual offence means a criminal offence involving sexual activity or acts of indecency *including but not limited to (due to differences under state/territory legislation)*:

- Rape
- Indecent assault
- Sexual assault
- Assault with intent to have sexual intercourse
- Incest
- Sexual penetration of child under the age of 16
- Indecent act with a child under the age of 16
- Sexual relationship with a child under the age of 16
- Sexual offences against people with impaired mental functioning
- Abduction and detention
- Procuring sexual penetration by threats or fraud
- Procuring sexual penetration of child under the age of 16
- Bestiality
- Soliciting acts of sexual penetration or indecent acts
- Promoting or engaging in acts of child prostitution
- Obtaining benefits from child prostitution
- Possession of child pornography
- Publishing child pornography and indecent articles.

Victimisation means subjecting a person, or threatening to subject a person, to any detriment or unfair treatment because that person has, or intends to pursue their rights to make a complaint under government legislation (e.g. anti-discrimination) or under this Policy, or for supporting another person to make a complaint.



Vilification involves a person or organisation doing public acts to incite hatred towards, serious contempt for, or severe ridicule of a person or group of persons having any of the attributes or characteristics within the meaning of discrimination. Public acts that may amount to vilification include any form of communication to the public and any conduct observable by the public.

Young People/person means a child in the 13 – 18 year age group.

APPENDIX B: CHILD PROTECTION REQUIREMENTS

All employees and volunteers who work for Table Tennis Queensland and its member organisations will be assessed (where appropriate) for their suitability to work with children under the *Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian Act 2000 (Qld)*. The act requires people who work with children under 18 in particular categories of businesses, paid or voluntary employment to be screened – The Working with Children Check.

A person whose screening application is approved is issued with a positive notice (letter) and blue card. If a person's application is refused, they are issued with a negative notice, which prohibits them from working with children in the sport of Table Tennis in Queensland. If TTQ and its affiliates do not comply with their obligations under the Act, penalties apply, including fines and terms of imprisonment.

Table Tennis Queensland and its member organisations are required to ensure that everyone working with children is in possession of a valid blue card, by maintaining a database of blue card information for all relevant employees and volunteers. Volunteers and employees must supply the information required to be able to validate a current blue card: Name on Card, Card Number and Expiry Date when requested by TTQ or its member organisations. TTQ will then validate all Blue Card Information received upon receipt.

As of January 2006 Child Safety Risk Management Plans are a further requirement of the act. TTQ and its affiliates are legally obligated to develop, follow and update these plans in the interest of protecting children from harm.

For further information regarding child protection requirements, information about applying for a blue card and definitions under the Act visit www.childcomm.qld.gov.au

APPENDIX C: SCHEDULE OF UPDATES

First Approved	15 September 2006
Updated	8 August 2010
Updated	15 May 2011