



# CHILD SAFETY POLICY

**Volleyball Queensland**

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## 1. Introduction

Volleyball Queensland's (VQ) Child Safety Policy has been implemented to demonstrate the strong commitment of the VQ Board, management, permanent, temporary and casual employees, work experience or industry placements, coaches, trainers, service providers, athletes, volunteers, members and affiliates to child safety and safeguarding procedures.

VQ is committed to promoting a safe and friendly environment for all children, by placing their safety and welfare first. VQ supports the rights of all children and will act immediately to ensure safe and friendly environments are maintained at all times.

VQ acknowledges that it is the right of every child that attends a VQ or VQ endorsed event to feel safe and protected at all times. It is VQ's priority to create and maintain safe environments for all children to reflect this.

Should a person wish to make any enquiries in relation to this Policy, please contact:

VQ's Club Services Coordinator (07) 3367 1991 or email [clubs@vq.org.au](mailto:clubs@vq.org.au).

## 2. Scope

VQ requires anyone who has a reasonable suspicion or concern regarding the abuse or risk of a child within Volleyball, or whether by that child's parent/s or caregiver/s or others, to immediately report that concern to the Police or relevant governing body (i.e. Department for Child Protection of Families, Seniors, Disability Services and Child Safety (**DCS**)), and additionally to VQ where it relates to a VQ staff member.

It is the role of the Police or relevant government body to investigate any report or notification and therefore VQ will not investigate any incident or concern beyond a report or notification to relevant parties (i.e. Police, Department for Child Protection DCS). VQ however may need to take advice from the relevant authorities.

VQ encourages all children to participate in Volleyball events and actively seek the opinions,



views, and suggestions of other children and parents. VQ also encourage children and parents who are members or associated with VQ to have constructive input into the development of a safe and protective environment for all children.

VQ provides information and support to children about what to do in the event they feel unsafe or if they are subject to harassment or abuse. VQ will immediately respond to any concerns from children and/or parents regarding child abuse.

### 3. Policy

VQ's Child Safety Policy highlights the dedication of VQ to protect all children from abuse, harassment and mistreatment, by incorporating our values of inclusivity, equity, respect, pride and commitment.

By Australian law, a person is deemed a child if they are under the age of 18 years old. Under the *Child Protection Act (1999)*, "*harm*" (hereinafter, 'child abuse') is defined to mean any detrimental effect of a significant nature on a child's physical, psychosocial or emotional wellbeing, it being immaterial how the harm is caused. child abuse is classified as any form of physical and/or emotional abuse that a child may experience or be at risk of harm by adults or other children.

Child abuse can be caused by physical, psychological or emotional abuse or neglect or by sexual abuse or exploitation and may be caused by a single incident, or can be a number of different incidents that take place over time. Child abuse can often vary in form and severity, however VQ will treat every variant of child abuse as very serious and is committed to promptly addressing any issue/s that arises.

### 4. Definitions

**Child:** is an individual under 18 years of age.

**Child protection:** any responsibility, measure or activity undertaken to safeguard children from harm.

**Parent:** is the child's mother, father or someone else, having or exercising parental responsibility for the child.

**Caregiver:** is an individual who provides, in a non-contractual and unpaid capacity, ongoing care or assistance to another person who, because of disability, frailty, chronic illness or pain, requires assistance with everyday tasks.

**Breach:** any action or inaction by VQ staff, children or parents/guardians who fail to comply with the VQ Child Safety Policy.

**Mandatory reporter:** any person who is legally required to make a report to the Department of Human Services or the Police if they form a belief on reasonable grounds that a child needs protection. It includes teachers, principals, registered psychologists, nurses, doctors and midwives.

**Affiliate:** is an association, club or other organisation that is an affiliated member of VQ.

**Grooming:** is when an individual/s builds a relationship, trust and/or emotional connection with a child with the intent to manipulate, exploit and abuse the child.

## 5. Behaviour Standards

The table below provides clear guidelines to assist and educate all VQ staff to understand and identify what Volleyball Queensland deems as 'appropriate' and 'inappropriate' behaviour when working with children.

| BEHAVIOUR            | APPROPRIATE                                                                                                                                                           | INAPPROPRIATE                                                                                                                                                                     |
|----------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Language</b>      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Using encouraging and/or positive words and a positive tone of voice</li> <li>Open and honest communication</li> </ul>         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Insults, criticisms or name calling</li> <li>Bullying, swearing or yelling</li> <li>Sexually suggestive comments and/or jokes</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Relationships</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Being a positive influence</li> <li>Building relationships based on care and trust.</li> <li>Empowering children to</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Favouritism or giving gifts</li> <li>Spending excessive amounts of time alone with children</li> <li>Bullying and/or harassment</li> </ul> |

|                         |                                                                                                                                                                                          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|-------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                         | share in the decision-making process                                                                                                                                                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ‘Grooming’ children</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                            |
| <b>Physical contact</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allowing for personal space</li> <li>• Touching due to medical emergency or protecting from physical harm</li> <li>• Non-threatening</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Violent or aggressive behaviour including hitting, kicking, slapping or pushing.</li> <li>• Kissing or touching of a sexual nature consistent with ‘grooming’.</li> </ul> |
| <b>Other</b>            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appropriate attire/clothing for role e.g. the VQ uniform</li> <li>• Use of internet/mobile phone for work related purposes only</li> </ul>      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Using alcohol and/or other substances before or during work</li> <li>• Inappropriate clothing.</li> <li>• Sending inappropriate emails, texts, photos etc.</li> </ul>     |

## 6. Procedures to minimise harm to children

This section outlines procedures for ensuring that the harm to children is minimised in the following situations:

### 6.1. Physical Contact

Physical contact with children should only occur in the event of:

- Developing sport skills.
- Preventing or responding to an injury in an emergency.
- Preventing or responding to an injury as part of normal role, and/or Meeting sport specific requirements.

All physical contact by VQ staff should fulfil the following criteria:

- Physical contact should be appropriate for the development of a sport skill.
- Children should be congratulated or comforted in public, not in an isolated setting.
- VQ staff should not initiate physical contact with children, except in accordance with this Policy, and should be aware of their proximity to children at all times.

- VQ staff are to follow the procedures outlined in this policy in demonstrating techniques related to specific activities. However, VQ staff must also ensure they do not compromise the quality of an activity due to concern over having their actions misconstrued. VQ staff must act diligently in their duties at all times, including undertaking activities and demonstrating techniques to children, and
- Where possible, and subject to the nature of the activity and environmental conditions, it is preferable for VQ staff to work with children in a group setting, rather than in a one on one setting.

## **6.2. Demonstrating technique and/or developing skills**

VQ staff are to demonstrate techniques and/or develop skills relating to a particular activity only in full view of other persons and never in private. The following guidelines are to be followed:

- Prior to touching a child or young person: VQ staff are to give a verbal explanation of how, where, when and why so that the child and other persons can hear.
- Ask the child or young person for permission: After the verbal explanation, VQ staff are to ask the child if touching for the purpose of carrying out the activity is ok. If permission is granted, the demonstration is to continue.

## **6.3. Being alone with children**

VQ staff should not be alone with children and should have at least one (1) other person present (preferably an adult), apart from exceptional circumstances, such as a life threatening situation where first aid is required to be administered.

If a child or young person approaches a VQ staff member and wishes to talk to the VQ staff member privately about a matter, the VQ staff member should endeavour to immediately address the situation in an open area and in the sight of other adults (e.g. coaches, officials, parents/guardians).

Ideally, the VQ staff member should advise another VQ staff member or parent and ask them to





stay within sight while he/she discusses the matter with the child. If the child becomes emotional, the VQ staff member should seek support from the nearby adult to address the child's concerns.

#### **6.4. Collection arrangements**

VQ staff should contact parents/guardians to notify of collection procedures and must comply with the following procedures:

- Notify children and their parents/guardians of the times of practices and games, when the parent can expect to collect the child and that it is not the responsibility of a VQ staff member to transport children home if parents/guardians are delayed.
- It is desirable that the parent/guardian of the second to last child/young person take the last child home or wait with a VQ staff member and the child until the last child has been collected. This will allow the VQ staff member to concentrate on making contact with the parent/guardian of the last child, and
- Ensure that VQ staff have access to a phone so they can attempt to contact the child's parent/guardian in the event that a child has not been collected in a timely manner.

Parents/guardians of children are required to provide annual written consent to collection arrangements.

#### **6.5. Transport of children**

All children should have their own transportation to and from training and sporting events, unless written approval is provided from parents/guardians that the team travel together. In this event, VQ staff should ensure that:

- The travel has been approved by the child's parents/guardians in writing, and
- VQ staff are not alone with any child in the vehicle at any time.

#### **6.6. Clothing standard**

All children are required to wear appropriate clothing when attending VQ events,



training sessions or recovery sessions (i.e. team uniforms and/or appropriate training gear). Any child who does not comply with the relevant clothing standards is not permitted to participate in the required activity.

## **6.7. Injuries and Illness**

Only VQ staff who are qualified in administering first aid or treating sports injuries should attempt to treat an injury. VQ staff should avoid treating injuries out of sight of others.

Other considerations include:

- The comfort level and dignity of the child.
- If necessary, seek medical attention as soon as possible, and
- VQ staff must always report injuries and any treatment to parents, as well as document the incident in the VQ Incident Report via the Incident Reporting process within the VQ Work Health and Safety Policy.

## **6.8. Smoking, alcohol and the use of illegal drugs**

Smoking (including vaping) and the consumption of alcohol and illegal drugs is prohibited on any VQ premises.

## **6.9. Photographing children**

VQ staff must always be mindful of people at sporting events, particularly those who take photos of children on behalf of VQ. Any suspicious or irregular activity must be reported to the event organiser for further action.

Parents/guardians are required to provide written consent by signing the VQ Membership Terms and Conditions to print, digital and electronic media (including photographs and video recordings) of their child being used for VQ promotional, training and educational purposes. and consent to such media being held indefinitely.

If the parent/guardian of a child wishes to take photos of any child that is not their child, they

should be advised to seek permission from the other child's parents/guardians prior to taking any photographs.

## **6.10. Use of technology and social media**

VQ staff must follow the guidelines set out in the VQ Social Media Policy.

When on VQ premises or representing VQ at an event, VQ staff and children must only use technology, including mobile phones and social media in accordance with their code of conduct. For instance, VQ staff may use the internet provided by VQ to research VQ related content, but not to look up inappropriate material that is unrelated to their role.

Any VQ staff member or child who brings VQ into disrepute through the use of technology or social media may be subject to disciplinary action. For example, a child may be considered to bring the VQ into disrepute if they post an inappropriate picture of themselves wearing a VQ uniform on Facebook.

## **7. Managing suspicions and/or disclosures of child abuse or harm**

### **7.1. Process**

This section provides an overview of the process for managing suspicions and/or disclosures of child abuse or harm. This process is summarised in the 'Process for Responding to a Disclosure of Harm to a Child' (Appendix 2), which VQ staff should regularly refer to.

### **7.2. Four categories of child abuse or harm**

1. **Physical abuse:** occurs when a child has suffered, or is at risk of suffering nonaccidental physical trauma or injury. Physical abuse can include, but not be limited to hitting, shaking, throwing, burning, biting or poisoning.

2. **Sexual abuse:** occurs when an adult, stronger child or adolescent uses their power or authority to involve a child in sexual activity. Sexual abuse can include, but not be limited to kissing or holding a child in a sexual manner, exposing a sexual body part to a child, having sexual relations with a child under 16 years of age, talking in a sexually explicit way that is not age or developmentally appropriate, making obscene phone calls or remarks to a child, sending obscene mobile text messages or emails to a child, fondling a child in a sexual manner, oral sex, rape or forcing a child to watch a sexual act.
3. **Emotional abuse** – occurs when a child’s social, emotional, cognitive or intellectual development is impaired or threatened. Emotional abuse can include, but not be limited to rejection, hostility, teasing/bullying, yelling, criticism, exposure of a child to domestic or family violence.
4. **Neglect** – occurs when a child’s basic necessities of life are not met and their health and development are affected. Basic necessities can include, but not be limited to food, housing, health care, adequate clothing, personal hygiene, hygienic living conditions, timely provision of medical treatment or adequate supervision.

VQ services a large number of junior members and volunteers and as such is committed to not only building an organisation that consistently supports children but also one that provides a safe and protective environment.

### **7.3. Reasonable grounds to suspect harm**

VQ staff will have ‘reasonable grounds’ to suspect harm if:

- A child informs VQ staff that he/she has been harmed.
- A child informs VQ staff that he/she knows another child who has been harmed.
- Someone who knows a child informs VQ staff that the child has been abused.
- Professional observations of the child’s behaviour or development leads a professional to form a belief that the child has been harmed or is likely to be harmed.
- VQ staff are concerned at significant changes in the behaviour of a child, or the presence of new unexplained and/or suspicious injuries, and/or
- VQ staff witness the harm occurring. If this is the case, VQ staff should

intervene immediately and call the police on 000 (provided it is safe to do so).

#### **7.4. Examples of a disclosure of harm**

A disclosure of harm may sound like:

- “I think I saw...”
- “Somebody told me that...”
- “I just think you should know...”
- “I’m not sure what you can do but...”

#### **7.5. Responding to a suspicion and/or disclosure of harm**

All incidents or disclosures of harm or suspicions of harm are to be taken seriously and actioned immediately, regardless of whom perpetrated the harm, in an efficient and effective way. VQ staff should:

- Not react in a shocked or a critical way or with disbelief to a disclosure.
- Identify a private place to talk to ensure confidentiality (preferably in sight of another adult and not in a closed office) and to make the child or young person making the disclosure more comfortable and less concerned.
- Not give an assurance to the child that the information provided will be kept secret. VQ staff are encouraged to advise the child that they have done the right thing in making the disclosure, but the disclosure must be reported so that someone can help keep them safe.
- Not attempt to conduct their own investigation or mediate an outcome between the parties.
- Only ask enough questions to confirm the need to report the matter. VQ staff should avoid asking probing questions as this could cause distress, confusion and interfere with any later enquiries. For instance, VQ staff should ask nonleading questions such as “What happened then?” or “Can you tell me about that?” as opposed to leading questions such as “Did X touch you?”
- Act on the basis that the information the person is providing is accurate.
- Ensure the child or young person in question is safe, and/or

- Maintain the safety of other children.

## **7.6. Documenting disclosure suspicion and/or disclosure of harm**

VQ staff must immediately document a disclosure/suspicion of harm, preferably using the Confidential Record of Child Abuse Allegation (Appendix 3). In the event that the record is not readily available, the VQ staff member must record the following information:

- Date and time that record was made.
- The name, age and address of the child.
- Time, date and location of incident.
- The complainant (if not the child).
- Who was present (i.e. the complainant, receiver of the complaint and any other person).
- Reason for suspecting abuse or harm (for example observation, injury, information).
- Exactly what the person disclosing said, using “I said..”, “they said”.
- The questions asked by the VQ staff member.
- Any comments the VQ staff member made, and
- The actions the VQ staff member took following disclosure, including arrangements for the immediate protection of the child.

The VQ staff member must complete the Confidential Record of Child Abuse Allegation as soon as possible and attach their notes to the document.

## ***7.7. Reporting disclosure/suspicion of harm***

VQ supports and encourages a person to report any form of child abuse to the Police if they form a belief on reasonable grounds that a child is in need of protection, or they are concerned about the safety, health or wellbeing of a child.

Any person(s) who reports child abuse in good faith in accordance with their reporting obligations (whether mandatory or discretionary) will be fully supported by VQ and will not be penalised or victimized for making the report.

If any person(s) is uncertain as to whether they should report child abuse to an external authority in regards to child safety, he or she is advised to speak to the VQ Chief Executive Officer. If in doubt, please ask for assistance.

If an allegation is made against a VQ staff member, VQ will take all steps to ensure that the safety of the child is paramount. An initial step will involve the withdrawal of the accused person(s) from active duty (e.g. standing down, reassignment to a role without direct contact with children, working under closer supervision during an investigation, working from home, or any other measures deemed appropriate depending on the seriousness of the allegation). VQ will investigate allegations of inappropriate conduct against a child in accordance with procedural fairness and will handle the allegations in a confidential manner.

VQ will cooperate with the directions of the Police regarding any investigation conducted by these authorities. VQ will keep a register of any allegations regarding inappropriate conduct.

## **7.8. Reporting actual harm**

In the event a VQ staff member observes actual harm towards a child, the VQ staff member must intervene immediately, provided it is safe to do so, and as soon as possible inform the police. If it is unsafe to intervene, immediately call the police for assistance on 000.

As soon as possible, the VQ staff member must notify their supervisor or manager who will alert the VQ CEO.

## **7.9. Actions following a disclosure/suspicion of harm**

In accordance with the *Child Protection Act 1999*, a person who reports suspected child abuse is protected from civil or criminal legal actions and is not considered to have broken any code of conduct or ethics.

Details of the person who made the report are to be kept completely confidential and will not be made available to the family of the child or young person, or the person against whom the

allegation has been made.

If the person who is alleged to have harmed a child is a VQ staff member, their duties must be reviewed. If they continue to interact/work with children, ensure that they are appropriately supervised at all times. The VQ CEO will seek legal advice as to the extent to which that person can carry out duties in the organisation.

## **8. Roles and Responsibilities of Personnel Protecting Children**

Personnel involved in protecting children include the VQ Board, management, permanent, temporary and casual employees, work experience or industry placements, coaches, trainers, service providers, athletes, volunteers, members and affiliates. These people have responsibilities regarding the protection of children and are expected to fulfill the following:

- Understand the rights of children, as appropriate to their role.
- Respect the cultural and religious practices of families who access VQ services, programs or events.
- Understand and appropriately respond to the needs of children with developmental delays or disabilities.
- Appropriately act on any concerns raised by children.
- Understand the definitions, indicators and impact of child abuse.
- Know and follow regulations in relation to the care of children.
- Co-operate with police and/or other formal investigations to the best of their ability; and
- Not harm or exploit children who access VQ services.

## **9. Guidelines to Prevent and Manage Child Abuse**

### **9.1. Change Rooms/Toilets**

VQ staff, regardless of gender, should only enter change rooms if accompanied by a supervisor who is responsible for having the athletes appropriately dressed for the scheduled activity in a



timely manner. However, if this is not possible, VQ staff are required to supervise the children and appropriate protocols should be followed.

These protocols include waiting in close proximity to the entrance of the change room/toilet for the children (e.g. in the corridor outside) but not actually entering the facility, unless there is a valid reason to do so, such as an emergency situation. In this situation, it is preferable for a VQ staff member of the same gender to supervise children, although it is acknowledged that this is not always possible.

Prior to entering change rooms/toilets, VQ staff should, where possible, notify their supervisor of their intended entrance, and **must** loudly and clearly announce to the occupants in the room before entering to ensure privacy and respect for all. For the avoidance of doubt, this requirement does not apply to parents/legal guardians when in a change room/toilet with their child. Photos must not be taken in change rooms/toilets.

## **9.2. Hotel rooms and other accommodation**

No VQ staff member should be alone in the hotel room of a child without the presence of another adult. The doors should always be open. Should it be necessary for an official to be alone in the room of a child, the Team Manager or other responsible official must be informed. VQ staff must always obtain separate sleeping accommodation from children (i.e. separate rooms). For the avoidance of doubt this requirement does not apply to parents/legal guardians when in a room with their child.

In the event that a VQ staff member is required to respond to an emergency raised by a child on an overnight trip, the VQ staff member should, where possible, attend with another adult to address the issue. No VQ staff member is to take photos in hotel rooms and other sleeping accommodation.

## **9.3. Travel**

All team members over 18 years of age retain an overriding responsibility for the welfare of all

athletes they accompany during team travel activities. They have a 'duty of care' for athletes and they must meet that duty and avoid unaccompanied and unobserved activities with persons less than 18 years of age wherever possible. For the avoidance of doubt this requirement does not apply to parents/legal guardians when in a room with their child.

#### **9.4.      Billeting**

Where possible, two (2) children or young persons should be billeted together. VQ staff must take into consideration gender and put males with males and females with females. VQ staff must ensure the billeting family have blue cards or another State or Territory valid working with children check. The accommodation for billeting children must have suitable facilities and not be under construction.

#### **9.5.      Sexual Relationships while on tour**

During all team travel activities, officials must not, under any circumstances, engage in conduct of a sexual nature with a child. Improper conduct of a sexual nature by an official towards a child includes any form of child sexual abuse as well as, but not limited to the following:

- Inappropriate conversations of a sexual nature.
- Obscene language of a sexual nature.
- Suggestive remarks or action.
- Jokes of a sexual nature.
- Obscene gestures.
- Unwarranted and inappropriate touching.
- Sexual exhibitionism.
- Use of any device to show/watch offensive material; and
- Any other action that could lead to an athlete being physically, emotionally or psychologically harmed.

#### **9.6.      Coach Assistance**

All coaches must ensure that all physical contact with children, which occurs when coaching, is appropriate for the situation and necessary for the child's safety. It is strongly recommended that:

- Coaches ensure that there are other adults present whenever coaching.
- Coaches take care to explain the procedure to the child prior to beginning any physical contact; and
- Coaches obtain consent from the child prior to beginning any physical contact.

## **9.7. Engaging New Personnel**

- The minimum standard for background checks of VQ staff is the law as it applies in Queensland. VQ undertakes a comprehensive recruitment and screening process for all staff and volunteers which aims to:
  - Promote and protect the safety of all children who participate in the activities of VQ.
  - Identify and recruit the safest and most suitable candidates who share VQ's values and commitment to protect children; and
  - Prevent a person from working at VQ if they pose an unacceptable risk to children.
- 

VQ require all staff to pass the recruitment and screening process prior to commencing their engagement. VQ requires all affiliated club personnel including owners, Committee Members, Volunteers, Coaches and Referees, and anyone else who has contact with children to possess a valid working with children check. Any costs associated with gaining a valid WWCC will be dealt with in a manner determined by that club.

## **10. Breach of Policy**

This section outlines the steps to be taken following a breach of the policy in order to address the breach in a fair and supportive manner. As outlined in the definitions section, a breach is any action or inaction by VQ staff, children or parents/guardians who fail to comply with the VQ Child Safety Policy.

This includes any breach in relation to:

- Statement of commitment to the safety and wellbeing of children and the protection of children from harm.
- Codes of Conduct for interacting with children.
- Procedures for recruiting, selecting, training and managing paid employees and volunteers.
- Policies and procedure for handling disclosures or suspicions of harm, including reporting guidelines.
- Policies and procedures for implementing and reviewing the children and youth risk management strategy and maintaining an employee register
- Risk management plans for high risk activities, and strategies for communication and support.

### **10.1. Process to manage a breach**

Breaches will be managed in a fair, unbiased and supportive manner. The following procedures are to be followed:

- All people concerned will be advised of the process.
- All people concerned will be able to provide their version of events.
- The details of the breach, including the versions of all parties and the outcomes will be recorded.
- Matters discussed in relation to the breach will be kept confidential, and an appropriate outcome will be decided.

### **10.2. Suitable Managerial Responses to Alleged outcomes for breaches**

Where a VQ staff member is alleged to have committed harm to a child, their roles and duties must be reviewed by the VQ CEO.

Depending on the nature of the alleged breach, managerial responses outcomes may include:

- Providing additional training to employees relating to the VQ Child Safety Policy.
- Providing closer supervision of a particular VQ staff member/contractor and/or review

their roles and duties, and

- The complaint or allegation will be referred by the VQ CEO to be dealt with in accordance with VQ's Complaint Handling Procedure. the appropriate delegate who will investigate the incident or appoint an independent investigator to investigate the substance of the allegations.

Any findings of unacceptable conduct resulting from an investigation either internal or by an external law enforcement agency will be considered in accordance with the VQ's Complaint Handling Procedure and Code of Conduct. This may result in further disciplinary action being taken against the employee.

## **11. VQ Blue Card requirements:**

- All VQ staff (including volunteers and trainees) must hold a valid Working with Children Blue Card.
- Blue Cards are issued by Blue Card Services, Public Safety Business Agency and the Queensland Government. Forms to apply for a Blue Card can be obtained from the VQ Pathways Coordinator or via the website <http://www.bluecard.qld.gov.au/>.
- Failure to obtain a valid Blue Card will lead to the review of an employee's current employment status and duties.

### **11.1. Records of employee Blue Cards**

VQ staff without valid Blue Cards must not access VQ facilities, nor work with children.

The Workforce Relations and Safety unit, Corporate Services processes the criminal history checks and Blue Card applications for all new VQ employees. The VQ Pathways Coordinator maintains a confidential register containing the personal details and

- i. when the person applied and/or the date of issue of the positive notice and Blue Card
- ii. the expiry date of the blue card, and
- iii. the renewal date (this will be set at least 30 business days before expiry to allow employees to continue working in child-related employment).



The VQ Pathways Coordinator also maintains a written record of the following information for all VQ staff:

- Whether a negative notice has been issued.
- Any change in status to a blue card (e.g. a change in police information, the positive notice and blue card is cancelled or suspended).
- When there is a change in police information, when VQ informed Blue Card Services of the change, and
- Any changes of personal information of an employee, including the date they informed Blue Card Services.

Within 60 business days of the renewal date for an employee's blue card, the VQ Pathways Coordinator notifies the employee that they need to apply for a Blue Card before that date. The VQ Pathways Coordinator highlights that VQ will not cover any application costs associated with a staff member's renewal of their blue card. The VQ Pathways Coordinator will send a follow up reminder within 40 business days.

The VQ Pathways Coordinator also advises staff members, once a year and when reminding them to renew their Blue Card, that they must notify Blue Card Services using the appropriate form of any change to their personal details within 14 days, highlighting that a failure to notify is an offence.

## **11.2. Notifying Blue Card Services**

Where a staff member holding a Blue Card advises VQ that there has been a change in their police information, the VQ Pathways Coordinator is to be informed and they will advise Blue Card Services immediately through submitting a change in police information notification form.

VQ must not allow continue to employee the VQ staff member to work with children until the form has been submitted and any revised status of the employee's Blue Card is known. The VQ staff member is not required to disclose the specific nature of the change, only that a change has occurred.

Where a VQ staff member is no longer employed by VQ, the VQ Pathways Coordinator will also submit a 'no longer with organisation' form to Blue Card Services.

Where a person is to relieve/backfill in a VQ position that has been determined as a role requiring a Blue Card, the person must hold a current Blue Card prior to their commencement in the role (regardless of the period of relieving/backfilling). Confirmation occurs when the relevant VQ delegate undertakes the appropriate employment screening checks, in accordance with the Department's Employee Screening Policy and Procedure.

### **11.3. Training**

VQ recognises that training in child protection related matters enhances skills and knowledge of all staff and, therefore, minimises the risk of harm to children.

VQ provides support and information to new staff when they begin their role through an induction process. New and existing VQ staff receive annual training during team meetings, workshops and other training exercises in the following areas:

- Identifying, assessing and minimising risks, such as the different types of harm that may occur (e.g. physical, emotional, sexual, psychological abuse and neglect and guidance in relation to the signs which may indicate that harm may be occurring or where this information can be sourced from).
- The VQ Child Safety Policy.
- Compulsory training as required by industry standards or legislation, and
- Handling a disclosure or suspicion of harm, including reporting guidelines.

## **12. Policy Promotion**

This Policy will be made available to all members via registration and on the VQ website. This Policy will be communicated to all staff, Board, and Committee members via Board and staff meetings. References to this Policy will be included in documentation provided to all team officials that represent VQ.

### **13. Support for employees and volunteers**

VQ always seeks to attract and retain the best employees and volunteers for all roles and positions. VQ provides support, training and supervision to ensure that people feel valued, respected and fairly treated. Our employees and volunteers who have regular contact or direct relationships with children are regularly provided with support and training to continually improve the security of the environment for children's safety and promote child safe practices.

### **14. Review Process**

VQ encourage all staff, children and parents/guardians to be involved in a review of the policy. Furthermore, these documents must be reviewed in their entirety and accurate, complete records must be made of the review, including the date, location of review, who participated in the review and any discussions.

The review is to consider any issues VQ has identified with the policy, such as:

- Whether policies and procedures were followed.
- Whether any incidents relating to children and risk management issues occurred.
- Issues with the actual process used to manage any incidents.
- The effectiveness of VQ's policies and procedures in preventing or minimising harm to children, and
- Issues with the content and frequency of training in relation to the policy.

In addition to the regular review of the Policy, recommendations for changes to the Policy may be submitted to the Board for consideration at any time. If changes are accepted, VQ staff, children or parents/guardians will be advised of any changes to policies and procedures via the VQ webpage, email and other appropriate communication channels and training will be provided to VQ staff if necessary.





If you would like to provide VQ with any feedback or suggestions to improve this policy, please contact:

VQ's Club Services Coordinator (07) 3367 1991 or email [clubs@vq.org.au](mailto:clubs@vq.org.au).

## 15. Reference Documents

This Policy must be read in conjunction with:

- Criminal Code Act 1899 (Qld)
- Child Protection Act 1999 (Qld)
- Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000 (Qld)
- Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian Act 2000 (Qld)

The following policies and procedures are related to this Child Safety Policy and should also be read and considered in correlation to this policy:

- VQ Constitution
- VA Member Protection Policy
- VQ Code of Conduct
- VQ Social Media Policy
- VQ Complaint Handling Procedure
- VQ Risk Level Matrix and Risk Management Plan

The following practices are also related to this Child Safety Policy and should be read and considered in correlation to this policy. These practices will be reviewed by the VQ board on as required basis.

- VQ Development Camps Practices
- VQ State Teams Practices

The following links are also related to this Child Safety Policy and should be read and considered in correlation to this policy. These links will be reviewed by the VQ board on as required basis.

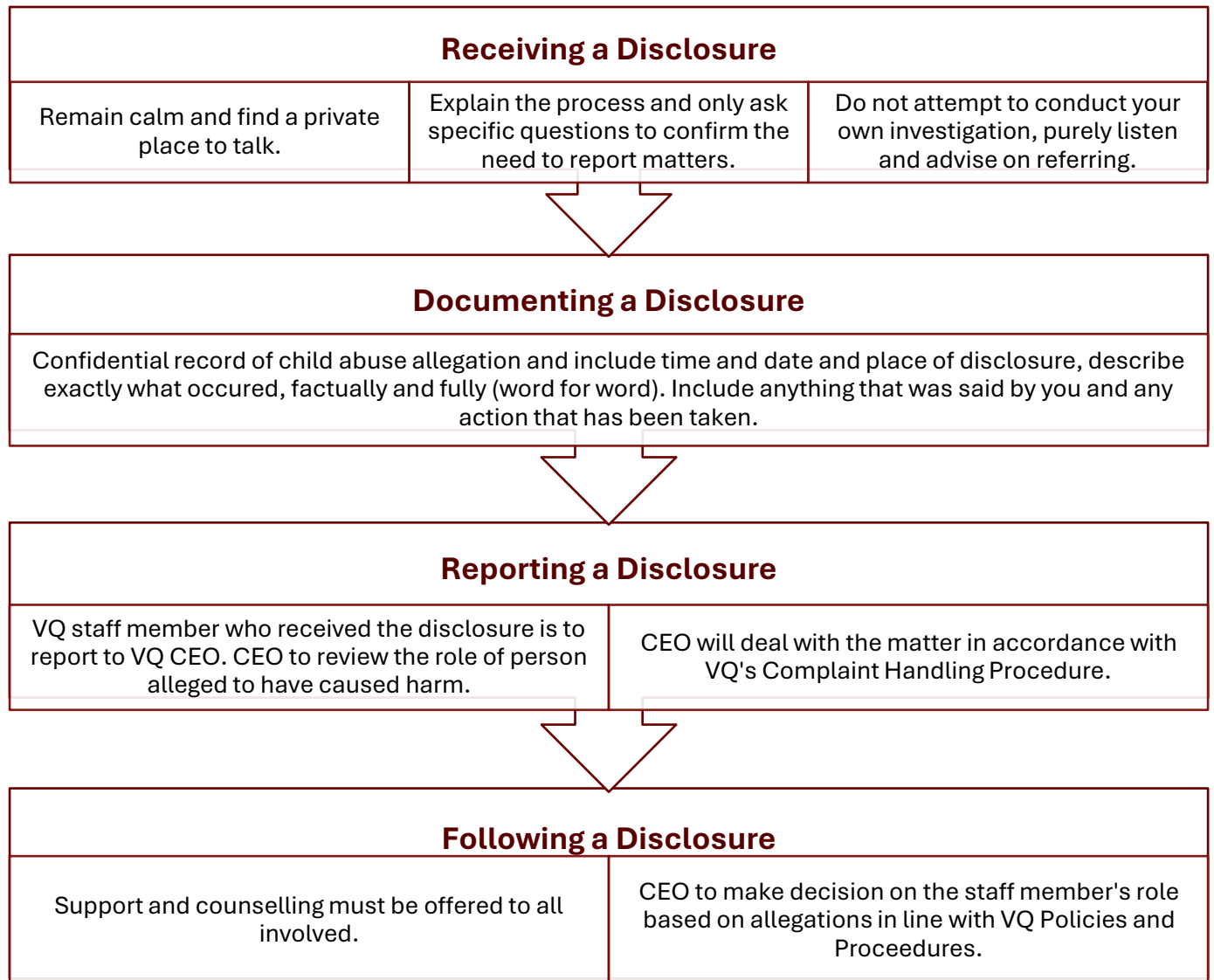
- <https://secure.communities.qld.gov.au/cpguide/engine.aspx> Queensland Child Protection Guide – Queensland Government



- <https://learning.ausport.gov.au/auth/login/?returnUrl=%2Fmylearning%2Fdashboard%2Findex>
- Sport AUS (AIS) – Learning Portal (Play By The Rules, Child Protection)
- <https://www.bluecard.qld.gov.au/pdf/rmst/RMS-SelfAssessmentChecklist.pdf>
- Child and Youth Risk Management Strategy – Self Assessment Checklist



## Appendix B – Process for Responding to a Disclosure of Harm to a Child



## Appendix C – Confidential Record of Child Abuse Allegation

|                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Complainant's name:</b> (if other than the child)                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| <b>Role/status in sport:</b>                                                           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| <b>Child's name:</b>                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| <b>Child's address:</b>                                                                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| <b>Person's reason for suspecting abuse:</b><br>(e.g. observation, injury, disclosure) |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| <b>Name of person complained about:</b>                                                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| <b>Role/status in sport:</b>                                                           | <input type="checkbox"/> Administrator<br><input type="checkbox"/> Athlete/player/participant<br><input type="checkbox"/> Coach/Assistant Coach<br><input type="checkbox"/> Employee (paid)<br><input type="checkbox"/> Volunteer | <input type="checkbox"/> Member<br><input type="checkbox"/> Official<br><input type="checkbox"/> Parent/Guardian/Carer<br><input type="checkbox"/> Spectator<br><input type="checkbox"/> Support Personnel<br><input type="checkbox"/> Other |
| <b>Witnesses:</b><br>(if more than three witnesses attach details to this form)        | <b>Name (1):</b><br><b>Contact details:</b><br><br><b>Name (2):</b><br><b>Contact details:</b><br><br><b>Name (3):</b><br><b>Contact details:</b>                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| <b>Interim action taken:</b><br>(if any)                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| <b>VQ CEO advised:</b>                                                                 | <b>Date and Time:</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| <b>Police contacted:</b>                                                               | <b>Name:</b><br><b>When:</b><br><b>Where:</b><br><b>Advice provided:</b>                                                                                                                                                          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| <b>Child protection agency contacted:</b>                                              | <b>Who:</b><br><b>When:</b><br><b>Advice provided:</b>                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| <b>Police investigation:</b><br>(if any)                                               | <b>Finding:</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| <b>Child protection agency investigation:</b> (if any)                                 | <b>Finding:</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| <b>Internal investigation:</b> (if any)                                                | <b>Finding:</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| <b>External investigation:</b> (if any)                                                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| <b>Action taken:</b><br>including dated referred to SIA and date VA advised:           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| <b>Completed by:</b>                                                                   | <b>Name:</b><br><b>Position:</b><br><b>Signature:</b>                                                                                                                                                                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| <b>Signed by:</b>                                                                      | <b>Complainant</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |

