



Safe Sport Framework

FAQs

1. Why has the Safe Sport Framework been updated?

Over the past 18 months Swimming Australia has been working on improving the Safe Sport Framework (which was drafted in 2016) to ensure that it meets current best practice standards in the protection of children and young people as well as all members in our sport. Swimming Australia has consulted widely with our member organisations and more broadly with experts in child safety. The drafting of the new safe sport framework has been done by leading sports law firm Lander & Rogers who act for many sports in this area.

Importantly, the new Framework not only safeguards children and young people but everyone involved in our sport, for example, staff, volunteers, coaches, officials, parents and families as well as our organisation and our brand. The Framework makes clear what is expected of everyone and provides the tools and support needed to do so.

2. When does the new SSF come into effect?

The board of Swimming Australia has unanimously approved the new version of the SSF and it will be implemented from 3 August 2020. Like the previous version, this document is binding on all Member Organisations and their members.

3. Why are there two documents?

The SSF now consists of two documents:

1. **Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy** (SCYPP) (which deals with matters where the victim(s) of a complaint are children or young people) and
2. **Member Protection Policy** (MPP) (which covers discrimination, harassment, bullying, victimisation and abuse).

Sport Australia has recommended that we separate the child safe policy and the member protection policy. Having two documents makes it easier to separate matters specifically relating to children & young people and those which relate to adults.

4. What changes have been made in the new documents?

The basic principles have remained the same. However, the documents have been improved with the main changes being:

- There is a complaint procedure at the end of each document for ease of reference. All flow charts showing the complaint procedure are simplified
- The resources referred to in the documents will be on our website

- Every paragraph is numbered for ease of reference
- There is a new disciplinary sanction which provides that a Disciplining Body may direct a Respondent to undertake appropriate training or education courses
- Provides for an incident categorisation hierarchy (similar to the case 1, 2 & 3 type disputes referred to in the previous SSF)
- Inclusion of wording which encourages Member Associations and Clubs to specifically adopt the MPP.
- Removed 'Provisional Action' in MPP as a specific step in the Complaint Procedure and drafted a new clause as an overarching ability for provisional action to be taken (as opposed to a certain point in time). This is similar to the SCYPP.
- Providing the complainant with a further opportunity to make submissions on the sanction before the sanction is imposed by Swimming Australia
- Made clear that where a child is interviewed as part of an investigation process their parent or guardian should be present during the investigation process
- The time to appeal a decision of Swimming Australia has been extended from two days to seven days

5. Does the new SSF apply to my Club?

Yes, just like the previous version it is binding on all of Swimming Australia's Member Organisations and their members. Swimming Australia encourages all clubs and members throughout Australia to familiarise themselves with the new documents.

If you need further assistance with understanding or implementing the SSF, contact your local Development Officer (found on your State or Territories home website)

6. Is the Safe Sport Framework adding more to our responsibilities?

No. This work is already an integral part of work for Swimming Australia. The new Framework has been developed to align with best practice in safeguarding children and young people and all our members today, and aims to ensure that the ways in which we do things are more effective.

7. Who is it applicable to?

Everyone. Safeguarding and member protection is everyone's responsibility and the Framework has been developed to support any individual involved in Swimming Australia's services,

programs, events and activities, setting the expectations as to behavioural guidelines and avenues to raise a complaint. This includes but is not exhaustive to staff, volunteers, Board / committee members, coaches, clubs, officials, parents, guardians, carers, families, participants, contractors, consultants and associates.

8. Will I be expected to investigate an allegation?

In relation to child protection, no. All matters relating to child safety are managed by Swimming Australia. You should refer any matters to Swimming Australia's Head of Integrity & Risk by emailing Lydia.dowse@swimming.org.au or integrity@swimming.org.au

You are not expected to become a child protection expert. You are expected to have an awareness of the issues of child abuse and exploitation, understand what is expected of you with regards to your own behaviour and to understand your responsibility to report any concerns.

Your club or your state association or Swimming Australia may investigate a complaint under the Member Protection Policy, depending on how serious the complaint is.

9. What if we lose volunteers because it is too much for them to do?

The Framework is not adding more responsibility to workload, rather it is strengthening policies and systems to safeguard people in our sport. Volunteers have the same responsibility to safeguard children and young people as paid staff, and any other person involved in Swimming Australia activities, programs, events or services.

10. How do I raise awareness with parents?

Emphasise Swimming Australia's/the club's commitment to protecting all your club members and safeguarding children and young people. Keep the focus on the facts – the Framework reflects best practice policy and procedures – a positive for all in our sport.

11. Are there any resources available?

Yes, please go to the Safe Sport section on the Swimming Australia website.

<https://www.swimming.org.au/integrity-policies-rules/safe-sport-framework>

You will see a range of useful documents and links there. You can also print off some posters which you can display at your club.

12. What types of conduct is described in the [Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy](#)?

There is a specific **Code of Conduct for Dealing with Children and Young People** in the Safeguarding Children & Young People Policy which sets out the standard of conduct required in a range of situations such as:

- Use of language and tone of voice
- Sending electronic communications
- Physical contact
- Sexual misconduct
- Positive guidance
- Adhering to boundaries
- Uniform and identity cards
- Supervision
- Giving gifts
- Visual media
- Overnight stays
- Change room arrangements
- Alcohol and drugs
- Transportation

13. What types of conduct is described in the Member Protection Policy?

There is a specific **General Code of Conduct** in the Member Protection Policy which sets out a required standard of conduct including:

- Refrain from any form of abuse, harassment, discrimination, victimisation and bullying towards others
- Be a positive role model
- Provide a safe, welcoming and inclusive environment
- Show concern, empathy and caution towards others
- Conduct yourself appropriately while using social media
- Do not engage in or advocate banned performance enhancing or illicit drugs

14. How should you initially approach someone in a position of power in a Club who you feel may be operating outside the Safe Sport Framework?

The key is to reaffirm the policies and standards contained in the Codes of Conduct and check that they understand them. It may be that in this situation you require the support of someone outside of the immediate club, for example, your District or Regional Association or Officer. Be clear about

the nature of your concerns and be specific about the way someone may be in breach of the Safe Sport Framework. Make a record of your concern and discussions.

15. If I have any other questions about the SSF, who can I contact?

You can contact your state, local district or regional association or Swimming Australia's Head of Integrity & Risk by emailing Lydia.dowse@swimming.org.au or integrity@swimming.org.au
