



Fencing SA Inc.
PO Box 6224
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www.fencingsa.org.au
ABN: 58 171 561 951

Child Safe Environment Policy

Summary

Fencing SA is committed to the safety and well-being of all children and young people who participate in our sport or access our services. We support the rights of the child and will act at all times to ensure that a child-safe environment is maintained. We acknowledge the valuable contribution made by our staff, members and volunteers and we encourage their active participation in providing a safe, fair and inclusive environment for all participants.

Fencing SA will support and its member clubs to develop and implement policies and practices to ensure compliance with the Children's Protection Act 1993.

This Child Protection Policy must be read in conjunction with the AFF Member Protection Policy

Publication Date	April 2016
Review Date	April 2017
Related Legislation	Children's Protection Act 1993
Related Policies, Procedures, Guidelines, Standards, Frameworks	AFF Member Protection Policy FSA Risk Management Policy FSA Codes of Behaviour
Policy Officer	President Fencing South Australia
Applies to	Staff and volunteers
Approved by	Fencing South Australia Board
Approval Date	3 rd May 2016
Version	1



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Fencing SA will take the following measures to protect the safety and welfare of children participating in our sport.

Identify and Analyse Risk of Harm

Fencing SA has developed, documented and implemented a Risk Management Strategy to ensure our organisation is child-safe and to identify additional steps to minimise and prevent the risk of harm to children because of the actions of an employee, volunteer or another person. *See the FSA Risk Management Policy*

Follow Codes of Conduct for Adults and Children

Fencing SA has developed the FSA Codes of Behaviour that include standards of care by adults when dealing and interacting with children involved in Fencing, especially those in our care. These codes of conduct set out professional boundaries, ethical behaviour and unacceptable behaviour. The Code of Behaviour also promotes appropriate behaviour between children. *See the FSA Codes of Behaviour*

Choose Suitable Employees and Volunteers

Fencing SA will take all reasonable steps to ensure that it engages suitable and appropriate people to work with children, especially those in positions that involve regular unsupervised contact with children. This will include using a range of screening measures. We will ensure that Working with Children Checks are conducted for all employees and volunteers who work with children. If a criminal history report is obtained as part of their screening process, we will handle this information confidentially and in accordance with the relevant legal requirements. *See Attachment A*

Support, Train, Supervise and Enhance Performance

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

Empower and Promote the Participation of Children In Decision-Making And Service Development

Fencing SA will encourage children and young people to be involved in developing and maintaining child-safe environments in Fencing.

Report and Respond Appropriately to Suspected Abuse and Neglect

Fencing SA will ensure that volunteers and employees are able to identify and respond appropriately to children at risk of harm and that they are aware of their responsibilities under state laws to make a report if they suspect on reasonable grounds that a child has been, or is being, abused or neglected. Further, if any person believes that another person or organisation bound by this policy is acting inappropriately towards a child, or is in breach of this policy, he or she may make an internal complaint. *See Attachment B*



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Provide Supervision

Children under the age of 10 must be supervised at all times by a responsible adult. Fencing SA will provide a level of supervision adequate and relative to the child's age, maturity, capabilities, level of experience, nature of activity and nature of venue. If volunteers or employees find a child under the age of 10 is unsupervised, they should assume responsibility for the child's safety until the parent/guardian or supervisor can be found. Parents must turn up on time to collect their child for reasons of courtesy and safety. If it appears a volunteer and employee will be left alone with just one child, they will ask another volunteer or employee to stay until the child is collected.

Provide Transportation

Parents/guardians are responsible for transporting their children to and from Fencing SA activities. Where Fencing SA makes arrangements for the transportation of children, we will conduct a risk assessment that includes ensuring vehicles are adequately insured, the driver has a current and appropriate licence for the vehicle being used and appropriate safety measures are available (e.g. fitted working seatbelts).

Manage the Production and Dissemination of Images of Children

Images of children can be used inappropriately or illegally. Fencing SA requires that individuals and clubs, wherever possible, obtain permission from a child's parent/guardian before taking an image of a child that is not their own and ensure that the parent knows the way the image will be used. To respect people's privacy we do not allow camera phones, videos and cameras to be used inside changing areas, showers and toilets. When using an image of a child, Fencing SA will avoid naming or identifying the child or publishing personal information such as residential address, email address or telephone numbers without gaining consent from the parent/guardian. We will not provide information about a child's hobbies, interests, school or the like as this information can be used by paedophiles or other persons to 'groom' children. We will only use images of children that are relevant to our sport and ensure that they are suitably clothed in a manner that promotes participation in our sport. We will seek permission from the parents/guardians of the children before using these images.

Oppose Anti Harassment, Discrimination and Bullying

Fencing SA opposes all forms of harassment, discrimination and bullying. This includes treating or proposing to treat someone less favourably because of a particular characteristic; imposing or intending to impose an unreasonable requirement, condition or practice which has an unequal or disproportionate effect on people with a particular characteristic; or any behaviour that is offensive, abusive, belittling, intimidating or threatening – whether this is face-to-face, indirectly or via communication technologies such as mobile phone and computers. Some forms of harassment, discrimination and bullying are against the law and are based on particular characteristics such as age, disability, gender, sexual orientation, pregnancy, political or religious beliefs, race, and marital status.



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Provide Inclusive Practices

Our club is welcoming and we will seek to include members from all areas of our community.

- **People with a disability** Where possible we will include people with a disability in our competitions and activities. We will make reasonable adaptations (e.g. modifications to equipment and rules) to enable participation.
- **People from diverse cultures:** We will support and respect people from diverse cultures and religions to participate in our sport and where possible will accommodate requests for flexibility (e.g. modifications to uniforms).
- **Sexual & Gender Identity:** All people, regardless of their sexuality, are welcome to participate in fencing. We strive to provide a safe environment for participation and will take action over any homophobic behaviour.

Respond to Complaints and Concerns: Fencing SA takes all complaints seriously. We will handle complaints based on the principles of procedural fairness (natural justice), that is: all complaints will be taken seriously; both the person making the complaint (complainant) and the person the complaint is against (respondent) will be given full details of what is being said against them and have the opportunity to respond (give their side of the story); irrelevant matters will not be taken into account; decisions will be unbiased and fair; and any penalties imposed will be fair and reasonable. More serious complaints may be escalated to the State Sport Dispute Centre (SSDC). If the complaint relates to suspected child abuse, sexual assault or other criminal activity, then Fencing SA will need to report the behaviour to the police and/or relevant government authorities.

Complaint Handling Process: When a complaint is received by Fencing SA, the person receiving the complaint (e.g. President, Member Protection Information Officer) will: listen carefully and ask questions to understand the nature and extent of the problem; ask what the complainant would like to happen; explain the different options available to help resolve the problem; take notes; and maintain confidentiality but not necessarily anonymity.

Once the complainant decides on their preferred option for resolution, we will assist, where appropriate and necessary, with the resolution process. This may involve: supporting the person complaining to talk to the person being complained about bringing all the people involved in the complaint together to talk objectively through the problem (this could include external mediation); gathering more information (e.g. from other people that may have seen the behaviour); seeking advice from our national body or from an external agencies (e.g. State Department of Sport or anti-discrimination agency); referring the complaint to the State Sport Dispute Centre (SSDC), police or anti-discrimination agency. In situations where a complaint is referred to the State Sport Dispute Centre (SSDC) and an investigation is conducted, the Fencing SA will: co-operate fully; ensure the complainant and respondent are not victimised; where applicable, ensure the complainant is not placed in an unsupervised situation with the respondent(s); and act on the State Sport Dispute Centre (SSDC) recommendations. At any stage of the process, a person can seek advice from or lodge a complaint with an anti discrimination commission or other external agency.



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Invoke Disciplinary Measures

Fencing SA will take disciplinary action against anyone found to have breached our policies or made false and malicious allegations. Any disciplinary measure imposed under our policy must: Be applied consistent with any contractual and employment rules and requirements; Be fair and reasonable; Be based on the evidence and information presented and the seriousness of the breach; Be determined by our Constitution, By Laws and the rules of Fencing. Possible measures that may be taken include: verbal and/or written apology; counselling to address behaviour; withdrawal of any awards, placings, records, achievements bestowed in any tournaments, activities or events held or sanctioned by our organisation; suspension or termination of membership, participation or engagement in a role or activity; de-registration of accreditation for a period of time or permanently; a fine; or any other form of discipline that Fencing SA considers reasonable and appropriate.

Provide Opportunity for Appeals

The complainant or respondent can lodge one appeal against decisions of or disciplinary measures imposed by our club to the State Sport Dispute Centre (SSDC). Appeals must be based on either a denial of natural justice, because of unjust or unreasonable disciplinary measure(s) being imposed, or on the grounds that the decision was not supported by the information/evidence presented and available to the decision maker/club.



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Attachment A

Choosing Suitable Employees and Volunteers

Fencing SA will follow the procedures below when recruiting employees and volunteers for particular roles.

Recruitment

Develop Position Descriptions - Having clear position descriptions allows Fencing SA to detail the skills and experience needed for employees and volunteers to perform their duties and contribute to an environment which is safe and supportive for children and young people.

Specify Selection criteria - Documenting selection criteria helps to assess commitment, understandings, attributes, attitudes and values required of the position, particularly as they relate to children.

Selection

The selection stage allows Fencing SA to choose the most suitable candidate for the position. It provides an opportunity to select people who will promote and protect the rights, interests and wellbeing of children and young people.

The selection process will include completing an application form, a personal interview, referee checks and qualification checks.

Screening

Under section 8B of the *Children's Protection Act 1993*, government and non-government organisations providing services to children are required to undertake a criminal history assessment:

- ⌚ for all people in their organisation who work or volunteer in *prescribed positions*; and
- ⌚ before a person is appointed to, or engaged to act in, a prescribed position in the organisation.

Under section 8C of the *Children's Protection Act 1993* Fencing SA is required to establish and maintain a child safe environment. This includes choosing suitable employees and volunteers.

Therefore it is expected that in addition to a criminal history check all employees and volunteers will also undergo referee and qualification checks.

Probationary period

A probation period allows time to assess the performance of a new employee or volunteer and their suitability before permanently confirming their appointment.

Training

New employees and volunteers need support and information when they begin their new role. All employees and volunteers must undertake the 'Play by the Rules' training to ensure they understand how to contribute to an environment which is safe and supportive for children and young people



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Attachment B

Report and Respond Appropriately to Suspected Abuse and Neglect

Fencing SA ensures that volunteers and employees are able to identify and respond to children at risk of harm by:

- Training volunteers and employees to be able to identify abuse and neglect.
- Making volunteers and employees aware of their responsibilities under the Children's Protection Act 1993 if they have suspicion on reasonable grounds that a child has been or is being abused or neglected.
- Training volunteers and employees to have the appropriate skills and knowledge to make a report to the 24 hour Child Abuse Report Line (CARL) Phone: 131 478