



Blind Sports Australia
MEMBER PROTECTION* POLICY

VERSION 8, 2014



Australian Government
Australian Sports Commission

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PREFACE

Blind Sports Australia (BSA) is committed to providing an environment free of harassment. BSA believes that anyone who works for BSA and/or represents BSA, and everyone with whom BSA deals, has the right to be treated with respect and dignity.

This policy is an essential part of BSA's proactive and preventative approach to tackling inappropriate behaviour.

BSA will not tolerate harassment in, or associated with the operation of BSA. BSA will take all complaints of harassment seriously, and will ensure they are dealt with promptly, seriously, sensitively and confidentially. Disciplinary action may be taken against a person who is found in breach of this policy

It is an expectation that each of the BSA Board, BSA Members and BSA staff/volunteers as part of their association with BSA are committed to ensuring that everyone associated with the organisation complies with the policy.

Stephen Barnes

CEO

October, 2014

BLIND SPORTS AUSTRALIA

PART A

1. Blind Sports Australia Core Values

Blind Sports Australia (“BSA”) is established to facilitate the access of blind and vision impaired people to the best sporting opportunities available in Australia.

2. Purpose of this policy

This BSA Member Protection Policy (“policy”) will work towards maintaining ethical and informed decision-making and responsible behaviours within our sport. It outlines our commitment to a person’s right to be treated with respect and dignity and to be safe and protected from abuse. This policy informs everyone involved in BSA of his or her legal and ethical rights and responsibilities and the standards of behaviour that are required.

The policy attachments outline the procedures that support our commitment to eliminating discrimination, harassment, child abuse and other forms of inappropriate behaviour from our organisation. As part of this commitment, Blind Sports Australia will take disciplinary action against any person or organisation bound by this policy if they breach it.

This policy has been endorsed by the BSA Board and has been and incorporated into our By-Laws. The policy starts on 14th January 2014 and will operate until replaced. Copies of the current policy and its attachments can be obtained from Blind Sports Australia website at www.blindsportsaustralia.com.au

For information on the rights, responsibilities and requirements for people involved in our sport at the state and club level, please refer to the member protection policies of the relevant state association or club.

This Blind Sports Australia Member Protection Policy (“policy”) aims to assist Blind Sports Australia to uphold its core values and create a safe, fair and inclusive environment for everyone associated with our sport. It sets out our commitment to ensure that every person involved in our sport is treated with respect and dignity and protected from discrimination, harassment and abuse. It also ensures that everyone involved in our sport is aware of their legal and ethical rights and responsibilities, as well as the standards of behaviour expected of them.

The policy attachments describe the practical steps we will take to eliminate discrimination, harassment, child abuse and other forms of inappropriate behaviour from our sport. As part of this commitment, Blind Sports Australia will take disciplinary action against any person or organisation bound by this policy if they breach it.

This policy has been endorsed by Blind Sports Australia Board and has been incorporated into our Rules. The policy starts on 14th January 2014 and will operate until replaced.

The current policy and its attachments can be obtained from our website at:

www.blindsportsaustralia.com.au

3. Who is bound by this policy

This BSA policy applies to the following people whether they are in a paid or unpaid/voluntary capacity:

- 3.1 Persons appointed or elected to BSA boards, committees and sub-committees;
- 3.2 Employees of Blind Sports Australia;
- 3.3 Members of Blind Sports Australia Executive;
- 3.4 Support personnel appointed or elected to BSA teams and squads (e.g. managers, physiotherapists, psychologists, masseurs, sport trainers);
- 3.5 BSA coaches and assistant coaches;
- 3.6 BSA athletes;
- 3.7 BSA referees, umpires and other officials involved in the regulation of the sport;

- 3.8 Members, including life members of Blind Sports Australia
- 3.9 Athletes, coaches, officials and other personnel participating in events and activities, including camps and training sessions, held or sanctioned by Blind Sports Australia;
- 3.10 Any other person including spectators, parents/guardians and sponsors, who or which agrees in writing (whether on a ticket, entry form or otherwise) to be bound by this policy;

This policy also applies to the following associations:

- 3.11 Member associations:
 - VISACT (Vision Impaired Sport ACT)
 - BSV (Blind Sports Victoria)
 - BSANSW (Blind Sporting Associations of New South Wales)
 - Sporting Wheelies and Disabled Association of Queensland
 - BSASA Blind Sporting Associations of South Australia
 - BSFWA Blind Sports Federation of Western Australia
 - ABBA Australian Blind Bowlers Association
 - BCA Blind Cricket Australia
 - BGA Blind Golf Australia
 - BVIT Blind and Vision Impaired Ten Pin Bowling
 - Goalball Australia

This policy will continue to apply to a person, even after they have stopped their association or employment with Blind Sports Australia, if disciplinary action against that person has commenced.

4. Responsibilities of the Organisation

Blind Sports Australia as the national body have approved this policy and will encourage its member associations to make appropriate changes to make effective this policy within their organisation:

- 4.1 Adopt, implement and comply with this policy;
- 4.2 Ensure that the Constitution, Rules or Policies necessary for this policy to be enforceable;
- 4.3 Publish, distribute and promote this policy and the consequences of breaches;
- 4.4 Promote and model appropriate standards of behaviour at all times;
- 4.5 Promptly deal with any breaches or complaints made under this policy in a sensitive, fair, timely and confidential manner;
- 4.6 Apply this policy consistently;
- 4.7 Recognise and enforce any penalty imposed under this policy;
- 4.8 Ensure that a copy of this policy is available or accessible to the persons and associations to whom this policy applies;
- 4.9 Use appropriately trained people to receive and manage complaints and allegations [e.g. Member Protection Information Officers (MPIOs)];
- 4.10 Monitor and review this policy at least annually.

5. Individual Responsibilities

Individuals bound by this policy are responsible for:

- 5.1 Making themselves aware of the policy and complying with its standards of behaviour;
- 5.2 Consenting to our screening requirements and any state/territory Working with Children Checks if the person holds or applies for a role that involves regular unsupervised contact with a child or young person under the age of 18;
- 5.3 Placing the safety and welfare of children above other considerations;
- 5.4 Being accountable for their behaviour;
- 5.5 Following the steps outlined in this policy for making a complaint or reporting possible child abuse; and
- 5.6 Complying with any decisions and/or disciplinary measures imposed under this policy.

6. Position Statements

6.1 Child Protection

Blind Sports Australia 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.

6.1.1: Identify and Analyse Risk of Harm

Blind Sports Australia will develop and implement a risk management strategy, which includes a review of existing child protection practices, to determine how child-safe and child-friendly the organisation is and to determine what additional strategies are required to minimise and prevent risk of harm to children because of the action of an employee, volunteer or another child.

6.1.2: Develop Codes of Conduct for Adults and Children

Blind Sports Australia will ensure that the organisation has codes of conduct that specify standards of conduct and care when dealing and interacting with children, particularly those in the organisation's care. The organisation will also implement a code of conduct to address appropriate behaviour between children.

The code of conduct will set out professional boundaries, ethical behaviour and unacceptable behaviour. (See Part B)

6.1.3: Choose Suitable Employees and Volunteers

Blind Sports Australia will ensure that the organisation takes all reasonable steps to ensure that it engages the most suitable and appropriate people to work with children (in prescribed positions).

We will take all reasonable steps to ensure that our organisation 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, where an assessment is required by law. 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. (Refer to the attachments in Part C of this policy.)

6.1.4: Support, Train, Supervise and Enhance Performance

Blind Sports Australia 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.

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

Blind Sports Australia will promote the involvement and participation of children and young people in developing and maintaining child-safe environments.

6.1.6: Report and Respond Appropriately To Suspected Abuse and Neglect

We will ensure that all our employees and volunteers 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. (Refer to the attachments in Part E of this policy.)

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. (Refer to the attachments in Part D of this policy.)

6.2 Taking Images of Children

Images of children can be used inappropriately or illegally. Blind Sports Australia requires that individuals and associations, 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. We also require the privacy of others to be respected and disallow the use of camera phones, videos and cameras inside changing areas, showers and toilets.

If Blind Sports Australia uses an image of a child it will avoid naming or identifying the child or it will, wherever possible, avoid using both the first name and surname. We will not display personal information such as residential address, email address or telephone numbers without gaining consent from the parent/guardian. We will not display information about hobbies, likes/dislikes, school, etc as this information can be used as grooming tools by paedophiles or other persons. We will only use appropriate images of a child, relevant to our sport and ensure that the child is suitably clothed in a manner that promotes the sport, displays its successes, etc. Where possible we will seek permission to use these images.

We require our members, member associations and clubs to do likewise.

6.3 Anti-Discrimination and Harassment

Blind Sports Australia 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, based on personal characteristics such as those listed in the Dictionary at clause 10, are against the law.

If any person feels they are being harassed or discriminated against by another person or organisation bound by this policy, please refer to our complaints procedure outlined in attachment [D1] of this policy. This will explain what to do about the behaviour and how Blind Sports Australia will deal with the problem.

6.4 Sexual Relationships

Blind Sports Australia takes the view that intimate relationships (whether or not of a sexual nature) between coaches and athletes, while not necessarily constituting harassment, can have harmful effects on the athlete, on other athletes and on the sport's public image. Such relationships may be perceived to be exploitative because there is usually a disparity between coaches and athletes in terms of authority, maturity, status, influence and dependence. Given there is always a risk that the relative power of the coach has been a factor in the development of such relationships, they should be avoided by coaches at all levels. In the event that an athlete attempts to initiate an intimate relationship, the coach must take personal responsibility for discouraging such approaches, explaining the ethical basis for such actions.

The coach or athlete may wish to approach Blind Sports Australia's MPIO if they feel harassed. Our complaints procedure is outlined in Attachment [D1] of this policy.

6.5 Pregnancy

Pregnant women should be treated with respect and any unreasonable barriers to their full participation in our sport should be removed. We will not tolerate any discrimination or harassment against pregnant women.

Blind Sports Australia will take reasonable care to ensure the safety, health and well-being of pregnant women and their unborn children. We will advise pregnant women that there may be risks involved and encourage them to obtain medical advice about those risks. Pregnant women should be aware that their own health and well-being, and that of their unborn children, are of utmost importance in their decision-making about the extent they choose to participate in our sport.

We encourage all pregnant women to talk with their medical advisers, make themselves aware of the facts about pregnancy in sport and ensure that they make informed decisions about their participation in our sport. We will only require pregnant women to sign a disclaimer if all other participants are required to sign one in similar circumstances. We will not require women to undertake a pregnancy test.

If a pregnant woman feels she has been harassed or discriminated against by another person or organisation bound by this Policy, she may make a complaint. (Refer to the attachments in Part D of this policy.)

6.6 Gender Identity

Blind Sports Australia is committed to providing a safe, fair and inclusive sporting environment where people of all backgrounds can contribute and participate. People who identify as transgender or transsexual should be treated fairly and with dignity and respect at all times. This includes acting with sensitivity when a person is undergoing gender transition.

We will not tolerate any unlawful discrimination or harassment of a person who identifies as transgender or transsexual or who is thought to be transgender or transsexual. If a transgender or transsexual person feels he or she has been harassed or discriminated against by another person or organisation bound by this policy, he or she may make a complaint. (Refer to the attachments in Part D of this policy.)

Blind Sports Australia recognises that excluding transgender and transsexual people from participating in sporting events and activities has significant implications for their health, well-being and involvement in community life. In general, we will support their participation in our sport on the basis of the gender with which they identify.

We also recognise that there is debate over whether a male-to-female transgender person obtains any physical advantage over other female participants. This debate is reflected in the divergent discrimination laws across the country. If issues of performance advantage arise, we will seek advice on the application of those laws in the particular circumstances.

Blind Sports Australia is aware that the International Olympic Committee (IOC) has established criteria for selection and participation in the Olympic Games. Where a transgender person intends to compete at an elite level, we will encourage them to obtain advice about the IOC's criteria, which may differ from the position we have taken.

Drug testing procedures and prohibitions also apply to people who identify as transgender. A person receiving treatment involving a Prohibited Substance or Method, as described on the World Anti-Doping Agency's Prohibited List, should apply for a standard Therapeutic Use Exemption.

6.7 Responsible service and consumption of alcohol

Blind Sports Australia is committed to conducting sporting and social events in a manner that promotes the responsible service and consumption of alcohol. We also recommend that state associations and member clubs follow strict guidelines regarding the service and consumption of alcohol.

In general, our policy is that:

- alcohol should not be available or consumed at sporting events involving children and young people under the age of 18
- alcohol-free social events will be provided for young people and families
- food and low-alcohol and non-alcoholic drinks will be available at events we hold or endorse where alcohol is served
- a committee member will be present at events we hold or endorse where alcohol is served to ensure appropriate practices are followed
- safe transport options will be promoted as part of any event we hold or endorse where alcohol is served.

6.8 Smoke-free environment

The following policies should be applied to sporting and social events:

- No smoking shall occur at or near any sporting event or competition involving persons under the age of 18. This policy shall apply to coaches, players, trainers, officials and volunteers;
- Social functions shall be smoke free, with smoking permitted at designated outdoor smoking areas;
- Coaches, officials, trainers, volunteers and players will refrain from smoking and remain smoke free while involved in an official capacity for any of Blind Sports Australia, SSO, Club or representative team, on and off the field.

6.9 Cyber Bullying/Safety

Blind Sports Australia regards bullying and harassment in all forms as unacceptable in our sport. Bullying has the potential to cause great anxiety and distress to the person targeted by hurtful or derogatory comments or statements.

New technologies and communication tools, such as smart phones and social networking websites, have greatly increased the potential for people to be bullied through unwanted and inappropriate comments.

Blind Sports Australia will not tolerate abusive, discriminatory, intimidating or offensive statements being made online. In some cases, bullying is a criminal offence punishable.

Frustration at a referee, teammate, coach or sporting body should never be communicated on social networking websites. These issues should instead be addressed – in a written or verbal statement or a complaint – to the relevant controlling club, league or peak sporting body.

6.10 Social Networking Websites Policy

Blind Sports Australia acknowledges the enormous value of social networking websites, such as Facebook and Twitter, to promote our sport and celebrate the achievements and success of the people involved in our sport.

We expect all people bound by this policy to conduct themselves appropriately when using social networking sites to share information related to our sport.

Social media postings, blogs, status updates and tweets:

- must not use offensive, provocative or hateful language
- must not be misleading, false or injure the reputation of another person
- should respect and maintain the privacy of others
- should promote the sport in a positive way.

7. Complaints Procedures

7.1 Complaints

Blind Sports Australia aims to provide a simple procedure for complaints based on the principles of procedural fairness (natural justice). Any person (a complainant) may report a complaint about a person/s or organisation bound by this policy (respondent). Such complaints should be reported to a Member Protection Officer or CEO Blind Sports Australia. Contact details for MPIOs can be obtained by contacting the BSA office on 03 8378 1137 or email: admin@blindsportaustralia.com.au

The lowest level at which a matter can be dealt with shall always be preferred. Therefore, if a complaint relates to behaviour or an incident that occurred at the:

- state level or involves people operating at the state level, then the complaint should be reported to and handled by the relevant state association in the first instance; or
- club level or involves people operating at the club level, then the complaint should be reported to and handled by the relevant club in the first instance.

Only matters that relate to or occur at the national level and the most serious cases from club and state level should be referred to the national body.

A complaint may be dealt with informally or formally. The complainant usually decides this unless the Member Protection Officer considers that the complaint falls outside this policy and would be better dealt with another way and/or the law requires the complaint/allegation to be reported to an appropriate authority.

All complaints will be dealt with promptly, seriously, sensitively and confidentially. Our complaint procedures are outlined in attachment D1.

Individuals and organisations may also pursue their complaint externally under anti-discrimination, child protection, criminal or other relevant legislation.

7.2 Improper Complaints & Victimisation

Blind Sports Australia aims for our complaints procedure to have integrity and be free of unfair repercussions or victimisation against the person making the complaint. If at any point in the complaints process the Member Protection Officer considers that a complainant has **knowingly** made an untrue complaint or the complaint is malicious or intended to cause distress to the person complained of, the matter may be referred to the BSA Board for appropriate action which may include disciplinary action against the complainant.

Blind Sports Australia will take all necessary steps to make sure that people involved in a complaint are not victimised. Disciplinary measures can be imposed on anyone who harasses or victimises another person for making a complaint.

7.3 Mediation

Blind Sports Australia aims to resolve complaints quickly and fairly. Complaints may be resolved by agreement between the people involved with no need for disciplinary action. Mediation allows those involved to be heard and to come up with mutually agreed solutions.

Mediation may occur before or after the investigation of a complaint. If a complainant wishes to resolve the complaint with the help of a mediator, the Member Protection Officer will, in consultation with the complainant, arrange for a neutral third party mediator where possible. Lawyers are to negotiate on behalf of the complainant and/or the respondent. More information on the mediation process is outlined in attachment [D2].

7.4 Tribunals

A Tribunal may be convened to hear a formal complaint:

- referred to it by CEO or Member Protection Officer
- referred to it or escalated by a state association because of the serious nature of the complaint, or unable to be resolved at the state level, or the state policy directs it to be; and/or
- for an alleged breach of this policy.

Our Tribunal procedure is outlined in attachment D4.

A respondent may lodge an appeal only to the Appeal Tribunal in respect of a Tribunal decision. The decision of the Appeal Tribunal is final and binding on the people involved. Our appeals process is outlined in attachment D4 .

Every organisation bound by this policy will recognise and enforce any decision of a Tribunal or Appeal Tribunal under this policy.

8. What is a Breach of this policy

It is a breach of this policy for any person or organisation to which this policy applies, to do anything contrary to this policy, including but not limited to:

- 8.1 Breaching the Codes of Behaviour (attachment B to this policy);
- 8.2 Bringing BSA into disrepute
- 8.3 Failing to follow Blind Sports Australia policies (including this policy) and procedures for the protection, safety and welfare of children;
- 8.4 Discriminating against, harassing or bullying (including cyber bullying) any person;
- 8.5 Victimising another person for reporting a complaint;
- 8.6 Engaging in a sexually inappropriate relationship with a person that they supervise, or have influence, authority or power over;
- 8.7 Verbally or physically assaulting another person, intimidating another person or creating a hostile environment within the sport;
- 8.8 Disclosing to any unauthorised person or organisation any Blind Sports Australia information that is of a private, confidential or privileged nature;
- 8.9 Making a complaint they **knew** to be untrue, vexatious, malicious or improper;
- 8.10 Failing to comply with a penalty imposed after a finding that the individual or organisation has breached this policy; or
- 8.11 Failing to comply with a direction given to the individual or organisation during the discipline process.

9. Disciplinary Measures

If an individual or organisation to which this policy applies breaches this policy, one or more forms of discipline may be imposed. Any disciplinary measure imposed under this 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; and
- Be determined in accordance with our Constitution, By Laws, this policy and/or Rules of the sport.

9.1 Individual

Subject to contractual and employment requirements, if a finding is made by a Tribunal that an individual has breached this policy, one or more of the following forms of discipline may be imposed:

- 9.1.1 A direction that the individual make a verbal and/or written apology;
- 9.1.2 A written warning;
- 9.1.3 A direction that the individual attend counselling to address their behaviour;
- 9.1.4 A withdrawal of any awards, scholarships, placings, records, achievements bestowed in any tournaments, activities or events held or sanctioned by Blind Sports Australia
- 9.1.5 A demotion or transfer of the individual to another location, role or activity;

- 9.1.6 A suspension of the individual's membership or participation or engagement in a role or activity;
- 9.1.7 Termination of the individual's membership, appointment or engagement;
- 9.1.8 A recommendation that Blind Sports Australia terminate the individual's membership, appointment or engagement;
- 9.1.9 In the case of a coach or official, a direction that the relevant organisation de-register the accreditation of the coach or official for a period of time or permanently;
- 9.1.10 A fine;
- 9.1.11 Any other form of discipline that the BSA Board considers appropriate.

9.2 Organisation

If a finding is made that Blind Sports Australia member or affiliated organisation has breached its own or this national Member Protection Policy, one or more of the following forms of discipline may be imposed by the BSA Board.

- 9.2.1 A written warning;
- 9.2.2 A fine;
- 9.2.3 A direction that any rights, privileges and benefits provided to that organisation by the national body or other peak association be suspended for a specified period;
- 9.2.4 A direction that any funding granted or given to it by Blind Sports Australia cease from a specified date;
- 9.2.5 A direction that the national body and peak association cease to sanction events held by or under the auspices of that organisation;
- 9.2.6 A recommendation to the national body and peak association that its membership of the national body and peak association be suspended or terminated in accordance with the relevant constitution or rules; and/or
- 9.2.7 Any other form of discipline that the national body or peak organisation considers to be reasonable and appropriate.

9.3 Factors to consider

The form of discipline to be imposed on an individual or organisation will depend on factors such as:

- Nature and seriousness of the breach;
- If the person knew or should have known that the behaviour was a breach;
- Level of contrition;
- The effect of the proposed disciplinary measures on the person including any personal, professional or financial consequences;
- If there have been relevant prior warnings or disciplinary action;
- Ability to enforce discipline if the person is a parent or spectator (even if they are bound by the policy); and/or
- Any other mitigating circumstances.

10. Dictionary

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. State/Territory specific definitions and more detail on some of the words in this dictionary can be sourced from the relevant State/Territory child protection commissions or equal opportunity and anti-discrimination commissions.

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 affiliated members of Blind Sports Australia

Child means a person who is under the age of 18 years

Child abuse involves conduct which puts children at risk of harm (usually by adults, sometimes by other children) and often by those they know and trust. It can take many forms, including 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; 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 under clause 7 of this policy

Complainant means a person making a complaint.

Complaint Handler/Manager means a person appointed under this policy to investigate a Complaint

Discrimination occurs when someone is treated unfairly or less favourably than another person in the same or similar circumstances because of a particular personal characteristic. This is known as direct discrimination. Indirect discrimination occurs when a rule, policy or practice disadvantages one group of people in comparison with others, even though it appears to treat all people the same.

In Australia, it is against the law to discriminate against someone because of their:

- Age
- Disability
- family/carer responsibilities
- gender identity/transgender status
- homosexuality and sexual orientation
- irrelevant medical record
- irrelevant criminal record
- political belief/activity
- pregnancy and breastfeeding
- race
- religious belief/activity
- sex or gender
- social origin;
- trade union membership/activity.

Some states and territories include additional protected characteristics, such as physical features or association with a person with one or more of the characteristics listed above.

Examples of Discrimination

- **Age:** A club refuses to allow an older person to coach a team simply because of age.
- **Breastfeeding:** A member of the club who is breastfeeding a baby in the club rooms is asked to leave.
- **Disability:** A player is overlooked for team selection because of mild epilepsy.
- **Family responsibilities:** A club decides not to promote an employee because he has a child with a disability even though the employee is the best person for the job.
- **Gender Identity:** A transgender player is harassed when other players refuse to call her by her female name.
- **Homosexuality:** An athlete is ostracised from her team after it becomes known that she is a lesbian.
- **Marital Status:** A player is deliberately excluded from team activities and social functions because she is single
- **Pregnancy:** A woman is dropped from a squad when she becomes pregnant.
- **Race:** An Italian referee is not permitted to referee games with a high proportion of Italian players on one team because of his race.

- **Sex:** Specialist coaching is only offered to male players in a mixed team.

Some exceptions to state and federal anti-discrimination law apply, such as:

- holding a competitive sporting activity for boys and girls only who are under the age of 12, or of any age where strength, stamina or physique is relevant
- not selecting a participant if the person's disability means he or she is not reasonably capable of performing the actions reasonably required for that particular activity.

Harassment is any type of behaviour that the other person does not want and is likely to make the person feel intimidated, insulted or humiliated. Unlawful harassment can target a person because of their race, sex, pregnancy, marital status, sexual orientation or some other personal characteristic protected by law (see the list under "Discrimination").

Public acts of racial hatred which are reasonably likely to offend, insult, humiliate or intimidate are also prohibited. This applies to spectators, participants or any other person who engages in such an act in public. Some states and territories also prohibit public acts that vilify people on other grounds such as homosexuality, gender identity, HIV/AIDS, religion and disability (see also "Vilification").

Mediator means an impartial person appointed to help those people involved in a complaint to talk through the issues and resolve the matter on mutually agreeable terms.

Member means a member of Blind sports Australia

Member Protection Information Officer (MPIO) means a person trained to be the first point of contact for a person reporting a complaint under, or a breach of, this Policy. The MPIO provides impartial and confidential support to the person making the complaint.

Natural justice (also referred to as procedural fairness) incorporates the following principles:

- both the Complainant and the Respondent must know the full details of what is being said against them and have the opportunity to respond;
- all relevant submissions must be considered;
- no person may judge their own case;
- the decision maker/s must be unbiased, fair and just;
- the penalties imposed must be fair.

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

Policy, policy and this policy means this Member Protection Policy.

Respondent means the person who is subject of the complaint.

Role-specific codes of conduct (or behaviour) means standards of conduct required of certain roles (e.g. coaches).

Sexual harassment means unwanted, unwelcome or uninvited behaviour of a sexual nature which could reasonably be anticipated to make a person feel humiliated, intimidated or offended. 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 child under the age of 16
- Sexual relationship with 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.

Transgender is a general term applied to individuals and behaviours that differ from the gender role commonly, but not always, assigned at birth. It does not imply any specific form of sexual orientation.

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

Vilification involves a person or an organisation doing public acts to incite hatred towards, serious contempt for, or severe ridicule of a person or group of people having any of the characteristics listed under the definition of “Discrimination”.

PART B: CODES OF BEHAVIOUR

We seek to provide a safe, fair and inclusive environment for everyone involved in our organisation and in our sport.

To achieve this, we require certain standards of behavior of players/athletes, coaches, officials, administrators, parents/guardians (of child participants) and spectators.

Our codes of behaviour are underpinned by the following core values.

- To act within the rules and spirit of our sport.
- To display respect and courtesy towards everyone involved in our sport and prevent discrimination and harassment.
- To prioritise the safety and well-being of children and young people involved in our sport.
- To encourage and support opportunities for participation in all aspects of our sport.

PART C: SCREENING / WORKING WITH CHILDREN CHECK REQUIREMENTS

We are committed to providing a child-safe environment. As part of this, we will recruit staff and volunteers who do not pose a risk to children.

Employment screening and Working with Children Checks can involve criminal history checks, signed declarations, referee checks and other appropriate checks that assess a person's suitability to work with children and young people.

Working with Children Check laws are currently in place in New South Wales, Queensland, Western Australia, Victoria, the Northern Territory and South Australia.

Blind Sports Australia], including our member organisations, will meet the requirements of the relevant state or territory Working with Children Check laws.

Employment screening requirements will also be followed in the Australian Capital Territory and Tasmania.

Individuals travelling with children and young people to another state or territory in a work-related capacity must comply with the screening requirements of that particular state or territory.

ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment C1: Screening requirements (for the Australian Capital Territory and Tasmania)
- Attachment C2: Member Protection Declaration
- Attachment C3: Working with Children Check requirements

ATTACHMENT C1: SCREENING REQUIREMENTS

[for states/territories without Working With Children Checks such as ACT and Tasmania]

This attachment explains the process we will use to screen the people associated with our organisation who work, coach or have regular unsupervised contact with children and young people under the age of 18. We require our state associations and clubs to do the same. Attached below is the links to the information regarding the ACT and Tasmanian requirements

ACT

http://www.ors.act.gov.au/resources/attachments/When_do_I_need_to_register_-_Fact_Sheet.pdf

Tasmania

http://www.justice.tas.gov.au/working_with_children

ATTACHMENT C2: MEMBER PROTECTION DECLARATION

Blind Sports Australia has a duty of care to all those associated with our organisation and our sport. It is a requirement of our national Member Protection Policy that we check the background of each person who works, coaches or has regular unsupervised contact with children and young people under the age of 18.

I (name) of
..... (address) born/...../.....

sincerely declare:

1. I do not have any criminal charge pending before the courts.
2. I do not have any criminal convictions or findings of guilt for sexual offences, offences related to children or acts of violence
3. I have not had any disciplinary proceedings brought against me by an employer, sporting organisation or similar body involving child abuse, sexual misconduct or harassment, other forms of harassment or acts of violence
4. I am not currently serving a sanction for an anti-doping rule violation under an ASADA approved anti-doping policy applicable to me.
5. I will not participate in, facilitate or encourage any practice prohibited by the World Anti-Doping Agency Code or any other ASADA approved anti-doping policy applicable to me.
6. To my knowledge there is no other matter that Blind Sports Australia may consider to constitute a risk to its members, employees, volunteers, athletes or reputation by engaging me.
7. I will notify the Member Protection Officer of the organisation(s) engaging me immediately upon becoming aware that any of the matters set out in clauses 1 to 6 above has changed.

Declared in the State/Territory of
on/...../.....(date) Signature

Parent/Guardian Consent (in respect of a person under the age of 18 years)

I have read and understood the declaration provided by my child. I confirm and warrant that the contents of the declaration provided by my child are true and correct in every particular.

Name:.....

Signature:.....

Date:

ATTACHMENT C3: WORKING WITH CHILDREN CHECK REQUIREMENTS

Working with Children Checks aim to create a child-safe environment and to protect children and youngpeople involved in our sport from physical and sexual harm.

They assess the suitability of people to work with children and young people and can involve:

- criminal history checks
- signed declarations
- referee checks, and
- other relevant background checks to assess a person’s suitability to work with children and young people.

Working with Children Check requirements vary across Australia. Fact Sheets for each state and territory are available on the Play by the Rules website: www.playbytherules.net.

Detailed information, including the forms required to complete a Working with Children Check, are available from the relevant agencies in each state and territory.

New South Wales

Contact the Commission for Children and Young People

Website: www.kids.nsw.gov.au

Phone: 02 9286 7276

Northern Territory

Contact the Northern Territory Screening Authority

Website: www.workingwithchildren.nt.gov.au

Phone: 1800 SAFE NT (1800 723 368)

Queensland

Contact the Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian about the “Blue Card” system.

Website: www.ccypcq.qld.gov.au

Phone: 1800 113 611

South Australia

Contact the Department for Education and Child Development

Website: www.dcsi.sa.gov.au/pub/Default.aspx?tabid=281

Phone: 1800 003 305

Note: In South Australia, the requirement to conduct criminal history assessments for people working with children is being phased-in over three years. For recreation and sporting organisations, this requirement commenced on 1 January 2012 and will be completed by 31 December 2013.

Victoria

Contact the Department of Justice

Website: www.justice.vic.gov.au/workingwithchildren

Phone: 1300 652 879

Western Australia

Contact the Department for Child Protection

Website: www.checkwwwc.wa.gov.au

Phone: 1800 883 979

PART D: COMPLAINT HANDLING PROCEDURES

ATTACHMENT D1: COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

All complaints will be kept confidential and will not be disclosed to another person without the complainant's consent except if law requires disclosure or if disclosure is necessary to effectively deal with the complaint.

Individuals and organisations may also pursue their complaint externally under anti-discrimination, child protection or other relevant legislation.

If you wish to remain anonymous, Blind Sports Australia may have difficulty assisting you to resolve your complaint. Procedural fairness (natural justice) means that Blind Sports Australia is required to provide the person/people you have complained about with full details of the complaint so they have a fair chance to respond.

INFORMAL APPROACHES

Step 1: Talk with the other person (where this is reasonable, safe and appropriate)

In the first instance, you (the Complainant) should try to sort out the problem with the person or people involved (respondent) if you feel able to do so.

Step 2: Contact a Member Protection Information Officer

Talk with one of our Member Protection Information Officers (MPIOs) or if:

- the first step is not possible/reasonable;
- you are not sure how to handle the problem by yourself;
- you want to talk confidentially about the problem with someone and obtain more information about what you can do; or
- the problem continues after you tried to approach the person or people involved.

The MPIO will:

- take confidential notes about your complaint;
- try to find out the facts of the problem;
- ask what outcome/how you want the problem resolved and if you need support;
- provide possible options for you to resolve the problem;
- act as a support person if you so wish;
- refer you to an appropriate person (e.g. Mediator) to help you resolve the problem, if necessary;
- inform the relevant government authorities and/or police if required by law to do so;
- maintain confidentiality.

Step 3: Outcomes from initial contact

After talking with the MPIO, you may decide:

- there is no problem;
- the problem is minor and you do not wish to take the matter forward;
- to try and work out your own resolution (with or without a support person such as an MPIO); or
- to seek a mediated resolution with the help of a third person (such as a mediator); or
- to seek a formal approach.

FORMAL APPROACHES

Step 4: Making a Formal complaint

If your complaint is not resolved or informal approaches are not appropriate or possible, you may:

- make a formal complaint in writing to the MPIO officer
- approach a relevant external agency such as an anti-discrimination commission, for advice.

On receiving a formal complaint and based on the material you have provided, the Complaints Manager/Officer will decide whether:

- they are the most appropriate person to receive and handle the complaint;
- the nature and seriousness of the complaint warrants a formal resolution procedure;
- to refer the complaint to mediation;
- to appoint a person to **investigate** (gather more information on) the complaint;
- to refer the complaint to a hearings tribunal;
- to refer the matter to the police or other appropriate authority; and/or
- to implement any interim arrangements that will apply until the complaint process set out in these Procedures is completed.

In making the decision(s) outlined above, Complaints Manager/Officer will take into account:

- whether they have had any personal involvement in the circumstances which means that someone else should handle the complaint;
- your wishes, and the wishes of the respondent, regarding the manner in which the complaint should be handled;
- the relationship between you and the respondent (for example an actual or perceived power imbalance between you and the respondent);
- whether the facts of the complaint are in dispute; and
- the urgency of the complaint, including the possibility that you will be subject to further unacceptable behaviour while the complaint process is underway.

If a Complaints Manager is the appropriate person to handle the complaint they will, to the extent that these steps are necessary:

- put the information they've received from you to the person/people you're complaining about and ask them to provide their side of the story;
- decide if they have enough information to determine whether the matter alleged in your complaint did or didn't happen; and/or
- determine what, if any, further action to take. This action may include disciplinary action in accordance with this policy.

Step 5: Investigation of the complaint

- A person appointed under Step 3 will conduct an investigation and provide a written report to the Board who will determine what further action to take;
- If the complaint is referred to mediation, it will be conducted in accordance with Attachment C2 or as otherwise agreed by you and the respondent and the mediation provider;
- If the complaint is referred to a hearings tribunal, the hearing will be conducted in accordance with Attachment C5 or refer to where your hearings tribunal processes can be found;
- If the complaint is referred to the police or other appropriate authority, Blind Sports Australia will use its best endeavours to provide all reasonable assistance required by the police or other authority.
- It must be made clear to all parties that the investigator is not seeking to resolve the matter, nor to decide whether any breach of this Policy has occurred, nor to impose any penalty. Any decision about Policy breach must be referred to an independent tribunal, and wherever possible, mediations should be conducted by an independent mediator.

Step 6: Reconsideration of initial outcome/investigation or appeal

If, under the formal complaint process, mediation is unsuccessful, you may request that the insert Complaints Manager reconsider the complaint in accordance with **Step 3**.

You or the respondent(s) may be entitled to appeal. The grounds and process for appeals under this Policy are set out in Attachment C5.

Step 7: Documenting the resolution

The Member Protection Officer will document the complaint, the process and the outcome. This document will be stored in a confidential and secure place. If the complaint was dealt with at a state/district level, the information will be stored in the state association office. If the matter is of a serious nature, or if the matter was escalated to and/or dealt with at the national level, the original document will be stored at the national office with a copy stored at the state office.

EXTERNAL APPROACHES

There are a range of other options available depending on the nature of your complaint. If you feel that you have been harassed or discriminated against, you can seek advice from your State or Territory anti-discrimination commission without being obliged to make a formal complaint. If the commission advises you that the problem appears to be harassment within its jurisdiction, you may lodge a formal complaint with the commission.

Once a complaint is received by an anti-discrimination commission, it will investigate. If it appears that unlawful harassment or discrimination has occurred, the commission will conciliate the complaint confidentially. If this fails, or is inappropriate, the complaint may go to a formal hearing where a finding will be made. The tribunal will decide upon what action, if any, will be taken. This could include financial compensation for such things as distress, lost earnings or medical and counselling expenses incurred.

If you do lodge a complaint under anti-discrimination law, you may use an appropriate person (e.g. an MPIO) as a support person throughout the process. It is also common to have a legal representative, particularly at the hearing stage of a complaint.

You could also approach another external agency such as the police.

ATTACHMENT D2: MEDIATION

Mediation is a process that allows the people involved in a complaint to talk through the issues with an impartial person – the mediator – and work out a mutually agreeable solution.

The mediator does not decide who is right or wrong and does not tell either side what they must do. Instead, he or she helps those involved to talk through the issues and makes sure that the process is as fair as possible for all concerned.

Our approach to mediation follows the steps set out below.

1. The Member Protection Officer will appoint a mediator to help resolve the complaint. This will be done under the direction of Blind Sports Australia and in consultation with the complainant and the respondent(s).
2. The mediator will talk with the complainant and respondent(s) about how the mediation will take place and who will participate. At a minimum, the mediator will prepare an agenda of issues to be discussed.
3. All issues raised during mediation will be treated confidentially. We also respect the rights of the complainant and the respondent(s) to pursue an alternative process if the complaint is not resolved.
4. If the complaint is resolved by mediation, the mediator will prepare a document that sets out the agreement that has been reached. This agreement will be signed by the complainant and the respondent(s). We expect the parties involved to respect the terms of the agreement.
5. If the complaint is not resolved by mediation, the complainant may:
 - write to Member Protection Officer to request that the Member Protection Officer reconsider the complaint in accordance with Step 3
 - approach an external agency, such as an anti-discrimination or equal opportunity commission, to resolve the matter.

We recognise that there are some situations where mediation will not be appropriate, including:

- when the people involved have completely different versions of the incident
- when one or both parties are unwilling to attempt mediation
- when the issues raised are sensitive in nature
- when there is a real or perceived power imbalance between the people involved
- matters that involve serious, proven allegations.

ATTACHMENT D3: INVESTIGATION PROCESS

There will be times when a complaint will need to be investigated and evidence gathered.

An investigation helps determine the facts relating to the incident, as well as possible findings and recommendations.

Any investigation that we conduct will be fair to all people involved.

If we decide that a complaint should be investigated, we will follow the steps outlined below.

1. We will provide a written brief to the investigator that sets out the terms of engagement and his or her roles and responsibilities. The investigator will:
 - interview the complainant and record the interview in writing
 - provide full details of the complaint to the respondent(s) so that they can respond
 - interview the respondent(s) to allow them to answer the complaint and record the interview in writing
 - obtain statements from witnesses and collect other relevant evidence, if there is a dispute over the facts
 - make a finding as to whether the complaint is:
 - substantiated (there is sufficient evidence to support the complaint)
 - inconclusive (there is insufficient evidence either way)
 - unsubstantiated (there is sufficient evidence to show that the complaint is unfounded)
 - mischievous, vexatious or knowingly untrue.
 - provide a report to [insert relevant person/tribunal] documenting the complaint, the investigation process, the evidence, the finding(s) and, if requested, any recommendations.
2. We will provide a report to the complainant and the respondent(s) documenting the complaint, the investigation process and summarising key points that are substantiated, inconclusive, unsubstantiated and/or mischievous.
3. The complainant and the respondent(s) will be entitled to support throughout this process from their chosen support person or adviser (e.g. BSA MPIO).
4. The complainant and the respondent(s) may have the right to appeal any decision based on the investigation. Information on our appeals process is in Attachment D5.

ATTACHMENT D4: TRIBUNAL PROCEDURES

We will follow the steps set out below to hear formal complaints made under our Member Protection Policy

Preparing for a Tribunal hearing

1. A Tribunal panel will be established, according to the rules set out in our Constitution, to hear a complaint that has been referred to it by a Director, CEO, or MIPO. The number of Tribunal panel members required to be present throughout the hearing will be three persons.
2. The Tribunal panel members will be provided with a copy of all the relevant correspondence, reports or information received and sent by a Director, CEO, or MIPO relating to the complaint/allegations.
3. The Tribunal hearing will be held as soon as practicable. However, adequate time must be provided for the respondent(s) to prepare for the hearing.
4. The Tribunal panel will not include any person who has any actual or perceived conflict of interest or bias regarding the complaint/allegations.
5. A Director, CEO, or MIPO will inform the respondent(s) in writing that a Tribunal hearing will take place. The notice will outline:
 - that the person has a right to appear at the Tribunal hearing to defend the complaint/allegations
 - the details of the complaint and of all allegations, as well as the clause of any policy or rule that has allegedly been breached
 - the date, time and venue of the Tribunal hearing
 - that either verbal or written submissions can be presented at the Tribunal hearing
 - that witnesses may attend the Tribunal hearing to support the position of the respondent/s (statutory declarations of witnesses not available to attend and from character witnesses may also be provided to the Tribunal hearing)
 - an outline of any possible penalties that may be imposed if the complaint is found to be true
 - that legal representation will not be allowed. If the respondent is a minor, he or she should have a parent or guardian present.

A copy of any information/documents that have been given to the Tribunal panel (e.g. investigation report findings) will be provided to the respondent(s).

The respondent(s) will be allowed to participate in all Blind Sports Australia activities and events, pending the decision of the Tribunal, including any available appeal process, unless the Board believes it is necessary to exclude the respondent/s from all or some activities and events because of the nature of the complaint.

6. The Director, CEO, or MIPO will notify the complainant in writing that a Tribunal hearing will take place. The notice will outline:
 - that the person has a right to appear at the Tribunal hearing to support their complaint
 - the details of the complaint, including any relevant rules or regulations the respondent is accused of breaching
 - the date, time and venue of the Tribunal hearing
 - that either verbal or written submissions can be presented at the Tribunal hearing
 - that witnesses may attend the Tribunal hearing to support the complainant's position (statutory declarations of witnesses not available to attend may also be provided to the Tribunal Hearing)
 - that legal representation will not be allowed. If the respondent is a minor, he or she should have a parent or guardian present.

A copy of any information / documents given to the Tribunal (e.g. investigation report findings) will be provided to the complainant.

7. If the complainant believes the details of the complaint are incorrect or insufficient, he or she should inform the Director, CEO, or MIPO as soon as possible so that the respondent(s) and members of the Tribunal panel can be properly informed of the complaint.
8. If possible, the Tribunal panel should include at least one person with knowledge or experience of the relevant laws/rules (e.g. anti-discrimination).

Tribunal hearing procedure

9. The following people will be allowed to attend the Tribunal hearing:
 - Tribunal panel members
 - the respondent(s)
 - the complainant
 - any witnesses called by the respondent(s)
 - any witnesses called by the complainant
 - any parent/guardian or support person required to support the respondent or the complainant.
10. If the respondent(s) is not present at the set hearing time and the Tribunal chairperson considers that no valid reason has been presented for this absence, the Tribunal hearing will continue subject to the chairperson being satisfied that all Tribunal notification requirements have been met.
11. If the Tribunal chairperson considers that there is a valid reason for the non-attendance of the respondent(s), or the chairperson does not believe the Tribunal notification requirements have been met, then the Tribunal hearing will be rescheduled to a later date.
12. The Tribunal chairperson will inform Director, CEO, or MIPO of the need to reschedule the hearing and the Director, CEO, or MIPO will arrange for the Tribunal to be reconvened.
13. The Tribunal chairperson will read out the complaint, ask each respondent if he or she understands the complaint and if he or she agrees or disagrees with the complaint.
14. If the respondent agrees with the complaint, he or she will be asked to provide any evidence or witnesses that should be considered by the Tribunal when determining any disciplinary measures or penalties.
15. If the respondent disagrees with the complaint, the complainant will be asked to describe the circumstances that lead to the complaint being made.
 - Reference may be made to brief notes.
 - The complainant may call witnesses.
 - The respondent may question the complainant and any witnesses.
16. The respondent will then be asked to respond to the complaint.
 - Reference may be made to brief notes.
 - The respondent may call witnesses.
 - The complainant may ask questions of the respondent and any witnesses.
17. The complainant and respondent(s) may be present when evidence is presented to the Tribunal hearing. Witnesses may be asked to wait outside the hearing until they are required.
18. The Tribunal may:
 - consider any evidence, and in any form, that it deems relevant
 - question any person giving evidence
 - limit the number of witnesses presented to those who provide new evidence
 - require (to the extent it has power to do so) the attendance of any witness it deems relevant
 - act in an inquisitorial manner in order to establish the truth of the issue/complaint before it.

19. Video evidence, if available, may be presented. Arrangements must be made entirely by the person(s) wishing to offer this type of evidence.
20. If the Tribunal panel considers that at any time during the hearing there is any unreasonable or intimidatory behaviour from anyone, the Tribunal chairperson may deny further involvement of that person in the hearing.
21. After all the evidence has been presented, the Tribunal will make its decision in private. It must decide whether the complaint has, on the balance of probabilities, been substantiated. As the seriousness of the allegation increases, so too must the level of satisfaction of the Tribunal that the complaint has been substantiated. The respondent(s) have the opportunity to address the Tribunal on disciplinary measures which may be imposed. Any disciplinary measures imposed must be reasonable in the circumstances.
22. All Tribunal decisions will be by majority vote.
23. The Tribunal chairperson will announce the decision in the presence of all those involved in the hearing and will declare the hearing closed. Alternatively, he or she may advise those present that the decision is reserved and will be handed down in written form at a later time.
24. Within 48 hours, the Tribunal chairperson will:
 - forward a notice of the Tribunal's decision to the Director, CEO, or MIPO, including any disciplinary measures imposed.
 - forward a letter reconfirming the Tribunal's decision to the respondent(s), including any disciplinary measures imposed. The letter should also outline the process and grounds for an appeal, if allowed. If matter is especially complex or important, the Tribunal chairperson may inform the parties in writing within 48 hours that the decision will be delayed for a further 48 hours.
25. The Tribunal does not need to provide written reasons for its decision.

Appeals procedure

26. If a complainant or a respondent(s) is not satisfied with the outcome of a mediation process or a Tribunal decision, he or she can lodge an appeal to Blind Sports Australia on one or more of the following grounds:
 - 26.1 that a denial of natural justice has occurred
 - 26.2 that the disciplinary measure/s imposed is unjust and/or unreasonable
 - 26.3 that the decision was not supported by the information/evidence provided at the mediation or to the Tribunal Hearing
27. A person wanting to appeal must lodge a letter setting out the basis for their appeal with the Board Chair within five days of the decision being made.
28. If the letter of appeal is not received by the Board within this time, the right of appeal will lapse.
29. The letter of appeal and the notice of the Tribunal's decision (clause 24) will be forwarded to the Board to review and to decide whether there are sufficient grounds for the appeal to proceed. The Board may invite any witnesses to the meeting that he or she believes are required to make an informed decision.
30. If the appellant has not shown sufficient grounds for an appeal in accordance with clause 26, then the appeal will be rejected. The appellant will be notified in writing, including the reasons for the decision.
31. If the appeal is accepted, an Appeal Tribunal with new panel members will be convened to rehear the complaint.
32. The Tribunal hearing procedure shall be followed for the Appeal Tribunal.

33. The decision of the Appeal Tribunal will be final.

ATTACHMENT E1: CONFIDENTIAL RECORD OF INFORMAL COMPLAINT

Name of person receiving complaint		Date: / /
Complainant's Name	<input type="checkbox"/> Over 18 <input type="checkbox"/> Under 18	
Role/status	<input type="checkbox"/> Administrator (volunteer) <input type="checkbox"/> Parent <input type="checkbox"/> Athlete/player <input type="checkbox"/> Spectator <input type="checkbox"/> Coach/Assistant Coach <input type="checkbox"/> Support Personnel <input type="checkbox"/> Employee (paid) <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/> Official 	
When/where did the incident take place?		
What are the facts relating to the incident, as stated by complainant?		
What is the nature of the complaint? (category/basis/grounds) Tick more than one box if necessary	<input type="checkbox"/> Harassment or <input type="checkbox"/> Discrimination <input type="checkbox"/> Sexual/sexist <input type="checkbox"/> Selection dispute <input type="checkbox"/> Coaching methods <input type="checkbox"/> Sexuality <input type="checkbox"/> Personality clash <input type="checkbox"/> Verbal abuse <input type="checkbox"/> Race <input type="checkbox"/> Bullying <input type="checkbox"/> Physical abuse <input type="checkbox"/> Religion <input type="checkbox"/> Disability <input type="checkbox"/> Victimisation <input type="checkbox"/> Pregnancy <input type="checkbox"/> Child Abuse <input type="checkbox"/> Unfair decision <input type="checkbox"/> Other	
What does the complainant want to happen to resolve the issue?		

What other information has the complainant provided?	
What is the complainant going to do now?	

ATTACHMENT E2: CONFIDENTIAL RECORD OF FORMAL COMPLAINT

Complainant's Name	<input type="checkbox"/> Over 18 <input type="checkbox"/> Under 18	Date Formal Complaint Received: / /
Complainant's contact details	Phone: Email:	
Complainant's role/position	<input type="checkbox"/> Administrator (volunteer) <input type="checkbox"/> Parent <input type="checkbox"/> Athlete/player <input type="checkbox"/> Spectator <input type="checkbox"/> Coach/Assistant Coach <input type="checkbox"/> Support Personnel <input type="checkbox"/> Employee (paid) <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/> Official	
Name of person complained about (respondent)	<input type="checkbox"/> Over 18 <input type="checkbox"/> Under 18	
Respondent's role/position	<input type="checkbox"/> Administrator (volunteer) <input type="checkbox"/> Parent <input type="checkbox"/> Athlete/player <input type="checkbox"/> Spectator <input type="checkbox"/> Coach/Assistant Coach <input type="checkbox"/> Support Personnel <input type="checkbox"/> Employee (paid) <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/> Official	
Location/event of alleged incident		
Description of alleged incident		
Nature of complaint (category/basis/grounds) Tick more than one box if necessary	<input type="checkbox"/> Harassment or <input type="checkbox"/> Discrimination <input type="checkbox"/> Sexual/sexist <input type="checkbox"/> Selection dispute <input type="checkbox"/> Coaching methods <input type="checkbox"/> Sexuality <input type="checkbox"/> Personality clash <input type="checkbox"/> Verbal abuse <input type="checkbox"/> Race <input type="checkbox"/> Bullying <input type="checkbox"/> Physical abuse <input type="checkbox"/> Religion <input type="checkbox"/> Disability <input type="checkbox"/> Victimisation <input type="checkbox"/> Pregnancy <input type="checkbox"/> Child Abuse <input type="checkbox"/> Unfair decision <input type="checkbox"/> Other	
Methods (if any) of attempted informal resolution		

Formal resolution procedures followed (outline)	
If investigated:	Finding
If heard by Tribunal:	Decision Action recommended
If mediated:	Date of mediation: Both/all parties present Agreement Any other action taken

If decision was appealed	Decision Action recommended
Resolution	<input type="checkbox"/> Less than 3 months to resolve <input type="checkbox"/> Between 3 – 8 months to resolve <input type="checkbox"/> More than 8 months to resolve
Completed by	Name: Position: Signature: _____ Date / /
Signed by:	Complainant: Respondent:

This record and any notes must be kept in a confidential and safe place. If the complaint is of a serious nature, or if it is taken to and/or dealt with at the national level, the original record must be provided to Blind Sports Australia and a copy kept with the organisation where the complaint was first made.

ATTACHMENT E3: PROCEDURE FOR HANDLING ALLEGATIONS OF CHILD ABUSE

If you believe a child is in immediate danger or a life-threatening situation, contact the Police immediately on 000.

Fact sheets on reporting allegations of child abuse in different states and territories are available at www.playbytherules.net.au.

We will treat any allegation of child abuse or neglect promptly, seriously and with a high degree of sensitivity.

All people working with Blind Sports Australia in a paid or unpaid capacity have a duty to report any concerns to the appropriate authorities, following the steps outlined below.

Step 1: Receive the allegation

If a child or young person raises with you an allegation of child abuse or neglect that relates to them or to another child, it is important that you listen, stay calm and be supportive.

Do	Don't
Make sure you are clear about what the child has told you	Do not challenge or undermine the child
Reassure the child that what has occurred is not his or her fault	Do not seek detailed information, ask leading questions or offer an opinion.
Explain that other people may need to be told in order to stop what is happening.	Do not discuss the details with any person other than those detailed in these procedures.
Promptly and accurately record the discussion in writing.	Do not contact the alleged offender.

Step 2: Report the allegation

Immediately report any allegation of child abuse or neglect, or any situation involving a child at risk of harm, to the police and/or the relevant child protection agency. You may need to make a report to both.

Contact the relevant child protection agency or police for advice if there is **any** doubt about whether the allegation should be reported.

If the allegation involves a person to whom this policy applies, then also report the allegation to the Member Protection Officer of Blind Sports Australia so that he or she can manage the situation.

Step 3: Protect the child and manage the situation

- The Member Protection Officer will assess the immediate risks to the child and take interim steps to ensure the child's safety and the safety of any other children. This may include redeploying the alleged offender to a position where there is no unsupervised contact with children, supervising the alleged offender or removing/suspending him or her until any investigations have been

concluded. Legal advice should be sought before any interim steps are made if the person is in paid employment with Blind Sports Australia.

- The Member Protection Officer will consider what services may be most appropriate to support the child and his or her parent/s.
- The Member Protection Officer will consider what support services may be appropriate for the alleged offender.
- The Member Protection Officer will put in place measures to protect the child and the alleged offender from possible victimisation and gossip.

Step 4: Take internal action

- Up to three different investigations could be undertaken to examine allegations that are made against a person to whom this policy applies, including:
 - a criminal investigation (conducted by the police)
 - a child protection investigation (conducted by the relevant child protection agency)
 - a disciplinary or misconduct inquiry/investigation (conducted by Blind Sports Australia).

Regardless of the findings of the police and/or child protection agency investigations, Blind Sports Australia will assess the allegations to decide whether the alleged offender should return to his or her position, be dismissed, be banned or face any other disciplinary action.

The Member Protection Officer of Blind Sports Australia will consider all information relevant to the matter – including any findings made by the police, the child protection authority and/or court – and then set out a finding, recommend actions and the rationale for those actions.

If disciplinary action is recommended, we will follow the procedures set out in Clause 9 of our Member Protection Policy.

We will provide the relevant government agency with a report of any disciplinary action we take, where this is required.

Contact details for advice or to report an allegation of child abuse

Australian Capital Territory	
<p>ACT Police</p> <p>Non-urgent police assistance Ph: 131 444 www.afp.gov.au</p>	<p>Office for Children, Youth and Family Services www.dhcs.act.gov.au/ocyfs/services/care_and_protection Ph: 1300 556 729</p>
New South Wales	
<p>New South Wales Police</p> <p>Non-urgent police assistance Ph: 131 444 www.police.nsw.gov.au</p>	<p>Department of Community Services www.community.nsw.gov.au Ph: 132 111</p>
Northern Territory	
<p>Northern Territory Police</p> <p>Non-urgent police assistance Ph: 131 444 www.pfes.nt.gov.au</p>	<p>Department of Children and Families www.childrenandfamilies.nt.gov.au Ph: 1800 700 250</p>
Queensland	
<p>Queensland Police</p> <p>Non-urgent police assistance Ph: 131 444 www.police.qld.gov.au</p>	<p>Department of Communities www.communities.qld.gov.au/childsafety Ph: 1800 811 810</p>
South Australia	
<p>South Australia Police</p> <p>Non-urgent police assistance Ph: 131 444 www.sapolice.sa.gov.au</p>	<p>Department for Communities and Social Inclusion www.dcsi.sa.gov.au Ph: 131 478</p>

Tasmania	
Tasmania Police Non-urgent police assistance Ph: 131 444 www.police.tas.gov.au	Department of Health and Human Services www.dhhs.tas.gov.au/children Ph: 1300 737 639
Victoria	
Victoria Police Non-urgent police assistance Ph: (03) 9247 6666 www.police.vic.gov.au	Department of Human Services www.dhs.vic.gov.au Ph: 131 278
Western Australia	
Western Australia Police Non-urgent police assistance Ph: 131 444 www.police.wa.gov.au	Department for Child Protection www.dcp.wa.gov.au Ph: (08) 9222 2555 or 1800 622 258

Attachment E4:
CONFIDENTIAL RECORD OF CHILD ABUSE ALLEGATION

Before completing this form, please ensure that the steps outlined in Attachment D4 have been followed and advice has been sought from the police and/or the relevant child protection agency.

Complainant's name (if other than the child)		Date formal complaint received: / /
Role/status in sport		
Child's name		Age:
Child's address		
Person's reason for suspecting abuse (e.g. observation, injury, disclosure)		
Name of person complained about		
Role/status in sport	<input type="checkbox"/> Administrator (volunteer) <input type="checkbox"/> Parent <input type="checkbox"/> Athlete/player <input type="checkbox"/> Spectator <input type="checkbox"/> Coach/Assistant Coach <input type="checkbox"/> Support Personnel <input type="checkbox"/> Employee (paid) <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/> Official	
Witnesses (if more than three witnesses, attach details to this form)	Name (1): Contact details: Name (2): Contact details: Name (3): Contact details:	
Interim action taken (if any)		
Police contacted	Who: When: Advice provided:	

Child protection agency contacted	Who: When: Advice provided:
MIPO contacted	Who: When:
Police investigation (if any)	Finding:
Child protection agency investigation (if any)	Finding:
Internal investigation (if any)	Finding:
Action taken	
Completed by	Name: Position: Signature: / /
Signed by	Complainant (if not a child)

This record and any notes must be kept in a confidential and safe place. If required, they should be provided to the police and/or the relevant child protection agency.