

AFL Victoria Child Safe Standards

Priority Steps for all Affiliates – December 2016

The Child Safe Standards (CSS) are an important addition to Victorian legislation to ensure children feel safe and are protected from harm in all organisations. It is everyone's responsibility to ensure this is the case. The CSS include the introduction of compulsory, minimum standards for all organisations in the State that work with children. More information can be found at the Commission for Children & Young People (CCYP) website.

The following are recommended initial steps from AFL Victoria for its Affiliates and Programs to assist in adopting the Child Safe Standards.

The AFL & AFL Victoria will be providing all Affiliates with further documents and templates to ensure these Standards are adopted across all areas of Football in Victoria. These will be developed in the early part of 2017, and will be distributed to all once complete.

The following are initial steps which can be put in place by Affiliates in the interim:

1. Working with Children Checks (WWCC)

AFL Victoria WWCC guidelines state that all who are working unsupervised with children under 18 years of age should have a current WWCC. These guidelines remain current and should be the guide for all who are working with children in any AFL Victoria Affiliate. Any person who is going to be involved in overnight camps with children (i.e. pre-season camps) must also have a current WWCC. All who are working with children in any AFL Victoria Affiliate should ensure that they list their Club or NAB Auskick Centre as an employer on the WWCC website. This can be simply done by logging into the below website and including the Club/Centre details: <https://online.justice.vic.gov.au/wwccu/login.doj?next=vtecheck>

It is the responsibility of all Centres/Clubs/Leagues to establish a register of each WWCC for all who will be working with children within your programs.

2. Child Safety Officer

Each AFL Victoria Affiliate is required to nominate a Child Safety Officer who would be the initial point of contact for any report. The position of Child Safety Officer needs to be communicated to all members of the Affiliate, with a particular emphasis on children being made aware of what the person is there for i.e. someone to speak to if a child is feeling unsafe.

3. Reporting Procedure

It is the responsibility of the Centre/Club/League to communicate the reporting procedure to all members of the Affiliate with any reports to be dealt with as below:

- a. Any reports of child abuse are to be made to the Child Safety Officer (CSO). CSO to report to Police if there is any report of sexual or physical abuse of a child. Child Safety Officer to stay in contact with reporter and alleged victim to provide support.
- b. Child Safety Officer to communicate to Affiliate Manager. Detailed written report must be recorded and stored, including Who, What, When, Where & Why the incident is of concern.
- c. Affiliate Manager to report to higher level AFL Victoria Management if necessary i.e. if report was communicated to the Police or is of significance to higher level management.
- d. Alleged perpetrator (if a member of staff or volunteer) to be reassigned to other duties until investigations completed.
- e. If alleged perpetrator is a member of staff or volunteer, local or AFL Victoria independent investigation to take place. Approval of investigation process from higher level AFL Victoria Management required.

4. Social Media Use

Affiliates need to adopt the AFL Victoria Social Media Guidelines for all communication with children within the Organisation. These guidelines would be in addition to any Cyber Safety Policies which Leagues and Affiliates have in place currently and not replace local Cyber Safety Policies.



- a. No adult in a role working with children in an AFL Victoria Affiliate should engage in individual social friendships with children from the Club/Program/NAB Auskick Centre on personal social media sites.
- b. Multiple adults, including Club President, Senior Manager or Centre Coordinator, should be part of the contact list and included in any social media communication with children from, or on behalf of the Centre/Club, or regarding Centre/Club details.
- c. When setting up a social media platform connected with any club or individual team within the club, an administrator should be appointed as someone who will check on the status of posts and comments.
- d. Confidentiality is important, permission must be obtained from parents for any use of a child's name or photo to be used in any postings, this is particularly important in case of any custody issues or privacy required.

5. Recruitment Processes

Child Safe Standards are integral in any appointment to an AFL Victoria Affiliate which is providing football for players under 18 years of age. CSS should be addressed for appointments to positions where the person will be working directly with children, and the processes used for appointments need to include clear steps that are addressing the requirements of the Child Safe Standards.

The following steps are provided by AFL Victoria as the minimum which the Affiliate must undertake to appoint people. Each Centre/Club/League will have current position selection criteria relevant to the role to be filled, and the statement that AFL Victoria and the relevant Centre/Club/League is a Child Safe Organisation needs to be included in this. A detailed position description, including reference to the commitment of the club to Child Safe Standards (AFL National Child Safety Policy) should be made available to all potential applicants for the identified roles.

All positions which are going to have people working with children within Centres/Clubs/Leagues should include a formal application process which requires a written application including the following details:

- Contact details for two referees relevant to the role which is being applied for.
- Proof of a current or evidence of application for a Working With Children Check.
- WWCC number (if currently held) and alignment of the card to the Centre/Club/League

A formal interview process should be undertaken for roles identified as directly involving work with children, including within this, interview questions identifying:

- Why the person wishes to work with children?
- The candidate's history of working with children and why they left previous positions?
- Create scenarios that might occur specific to the role where the person will need to interact with children, and question the applicant on how they would deal with the situation e.g.
 - How will they deal with a young participant whose behaviour was disruptive?
 - A team has played poorly, how will they address the team?
 - How will they use social media platforms in the role they are taking on?

Ensure that the applicant is aware that the referees will be contacted, and follow the process through to speak directly to the listed referees. If unable to be contacted, discuss alternates with the applicant.

A probation period during the initial stages of appointment may be part of these appointments. Such a probation period provides the NAB AFL Auskick Centre or Club with a mechanism to address any concerns that might arise after an appointment is made, and enables for the appointment to be terminated under the terms of the appointment. Probation review should be undertaken in accordance with what has been provided in the initial role description.