



# Whorouly Football Netball Club

## Equal Opportunities Policy

Policy Reference	Wellbeing Policy 002
Date of adoption	October 2019
Date of review	October 2020
Policy owner	Committee

### Statement of Policy

Whorouly Football Netball Club (WFNC) aims to achieve an inclusive and respectful environment and recognises the right of all people who participate in and interact with the club to be treated with dignity and respect.

The purpose of this policy is to encourage a positive and inclusive club culture and to prevent unacceptable conduct. This policy sets out processes and options available to all volunteers and members who encounter unacceptable conduct.

WFNC will:

- promote appropriate standards of conduct in accordance with the Code of Conduct at all times
- take appropriate action against any club member who breaches this policy
- implement strategies to ensure that all members and volunteers know their rights and responsibilities are protected in relation to those rights.

### Scope

This policy applies to:

- board/committee members
- all club members and volunteers, including
  - how WFNC interacts with other members of the public, other clubs and the media
  - all aspects of recruitment and selection; club promotion, task allocation, training, game day, club functions and transport
  - whenever members are wearing the WFNC apparel in public

### Policy aims

WFNC has the following club goals in its Strategic Plan.

- To provide a safe and supportive environment for players, members and volunteers to participate, improve skills and interact socially
- We will operate transparently, fairly and consistently, respecting club and league rules

WFNC is committed to providing a safe, inclusive and respectful environment for members and volunteers free from all forms of discrimination, bullying, sexual harassment and racial and religious vilification.

All WFNC members and volunteers are required to treat others with dignity, courtesy and respect.

### Unacceptable club conduct

The following behaviours are unacceptable in WFNC and may be against the law. Volunteers and members (including committee members and leaders) found to have engaged in such conduct might be warned, disciplined or dismissed. Sever or repeated breaches can lead to formal discipline, including dismissal.

Discrimination, bullying, sexual harassment and racial and religious vilification are unacceptable at WFNC and are covered by federal and state legislation:

- *Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic)*
- *Racial and Religious Tolerance Act 2001 (Vic)*
- *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 (Vic)*
- *Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth)*
- *Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Cth)*
- *Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)*
- *Age Discrimination Act 2004 (Cth)*
- *Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986 (Cth)*

### 1. Discrimination

Discrimination is treating, or proposing to treat, someone unfavourable because of a personal characteristic protected by the law, such as gender, age, race or disability.

Discrimination can occur:

*Directly*, when a person or group is treated unfavourably because of a personal characteristic protected by law (see list below),

*For example, a player is harassed and humiliated because of their race.*

*Indirectly*, when an unreasonable requirement, condition or practice is imposed that has, or is likely to have, the effect of disadvantaging people with a personal characteristic protected by law (see list below).

*For example, player excluded from club activities as it clashes with their cultural practices.*

#### Protected personal characteristics in Victoria include:

- A disability, disease or injury, including work-related injury
- Parental status or status as a carer, for example because they are responsible for caring for children or other family members
- Race, colour, descent, nationality, ancestry or ethnic background
- Age, whether young or old, or because of age in general
- Gender
- Physical features, such as height, weight, size, hair or birthmarks
- Religious belief or taking part in religious activity, or not holding a religious belief
- Pregnancy and breastfeeding
- Lawful sexual activity
- Sexual orientation or gender identity, including gay, lesbian, bisexual, transsexual, transgender, queer and heterosexual
- Marital status, whether married, divorced unmarried or in a de facto relationship

- Political belief or political activity
- An association with someone who has, or is assumed to have, one of these characteristics, such as being the parent of a child with a disability.

## 2. Bullying

Bullying can take many forms, including jokes, teasing, nicknames, emails, pictures, text messages, social isolation or ignoring people or unfair practices.

Under the *Equal Opportunity Act 2010*, this behaviour does not have to be repeated to be discrimination – it may be a one-off event.

Behaviours that may constitute bullying include:

- sarcasm and other forms of demeaning language
- threats, abuse or shouting
- coercion
- isolation
- inappropriate blaming
- ganging up
- constant unconstructive criticism
- deliberately withholding information or equipment that a person needs to do their role or access their entitlements
- unreasonable refusal of requests for leave, training or other club activities.

## 3. Racial and religious vilification

Vilification is behaviour that encourages other to hate, disrespect or abuse a person or group of people because of their race or religion.

This includes spoken, written or physical behaviour towards a particular race or religious group that encourages others to ridicule the, be hateful or violent towards them, damage their property or make false claims against them.

It is also against the law to give permission or help someone to vilify others, for example by publishing or distributing information about them.

## 4. Gossip

Gossip about issues or complaints is unacceptable in Whorouly Football Netball Club

It is not appropriate for members or volunteers to talk with other members or volunteers about a complaint, whether it is theirs or anyone else's.

Gossip is likely to reinforce a problem, create new problems (for example, victimisation) and make it harder to solve the original issue.

## Rights and responsibilities

All members and volunteers are entitled to:

- recruitment and selection decisions based on merit and not affected by irrelevant personal characteristics
- club participation free from discrimination, bullying, sexual harassment and racial and religious vilification

- the right to raise issues or to make an enquiry or complaint in a reasonable and respectful manner without being victimised
- reasonable flexibility in club commitments, especially where needed to accommodate their family and carer responsibilities, disability, religion and culture.

All members must:

- follow the code of conduct
- take bystander action to challenge discrimination, sexual harassment or vilification and offer support to people who experience this behaviour
- avoid gossip and respect the confidentiality of complaint resolution procedures
- treat everyone with dignity, courtesy and respect.

Club leaders and coaches must also:

- model appropriate standards of behaviour
- take steps to educate and make players/members aware of their obligations under this policy and the law
- intervene quickly and appropriately when they become aware of inappropriate behaviour
- act fairly to resolve issues and enforce club behavioural standards, making sure relevant parties are heard
- help players/members resolve complaints informally
- refer formal complaints about breaches of this policy to the appropriate club complaint handling office for investigation or referral to appropriate services such as Victoria Police
- ensure players/members who raise an issue or make a complaint are not victimised
- ensure that team selection and recruitment decisions are based on merit and that no discriminatory requests for information are made.

### Resolving issues

WFNC strongly encourages any member or volunteer who believes they have been discriminated against, bullied or harassed, sexually harassed, vilified or victimised to take appropriate action (see Grievance and Complaint Resolution Procedure). Please do not suffer in silence.

Members and volunteers who do not feel safe or confident to take such action may seek assistance from the contacts below, or other club leaders for advice and support or action on their behalf.

- Committee members
- Coaches
- Team managers

All complaints will be taken seriously, treated confidentially, fairly and consistently and resolved as speedily as possible. Refer to Club Grievance and Complaints Resolution Policy for further details.

### References

Women's Health Goulburn North East - Sporting Clubs Handbook 2016

WFNC Grievance and Complaints Resolution Policy

AFL Respect & Responsibility Policy