



Child Safe Policy

Purpose

This policy provides a framework aimed at creating an appropriate environment for the delivery of VBSA programs that maximises child safety, through appropriate background screening, awareness and management practices for both members and 'external providers' who may be engaged to provide services for, or on behalf of, the VBSA.

Principles

- Children have a fundamental right to be safe from any form of abuse or neglect which applies to their involvement in sport or activities of the VBSA. Protecting children involves legal as well as universal moral obligations.
- Child protection is the responsibility of all VBSA members and external providers, particularly if the function of their job includes, or is likely to include, providing services directed towards children or the conduct of activities involving children.
- The VBSA is committed to the provision of appropriate training and support to assist members in providing and maintaining a safe environment for children.

Policy Statement

- All members and external providers whose position involves or is likely to involve *working with children*, are required to obtain and keep current an appropriate WWCC clearance or similar.
- Members and external providers engaged to *work with children* are not permitted to have unsupervised involvement with children under any circumstances, until the clearance has been obtained and a copy provided to the VBSA Secretary. Managers must provide alternative duties, or duties must be conducted in the presence of an authorised supervisor until a clearance is obtained.
- Members recruited from overseas must provide evidence of an overseas penal clearance as part of their Australian work visa application. Where possible, a copy of this clearance is to be provided to the VBSA Secretary.
- The cost of clearing VBSA members shall be borne by the VBSA. However unless otherwise agreed in writing by the VBSA, external providers shall cover the cost of obtaining clearance.
- All VBSA members whose position involves or is likely to involve *working with children* are expected to commit to providing protection to children and this requires:
 - awareness of the legislative and policy requirements for dealing with children, including the Victorian [Child Safe Standards](#);
 - a commitment to practices that minimise the risks to children;
- Where child abuse is alleged or suspected:
 - the matter must be reported to the VBSA Tournament Director, President and Secretary;
 - immediate steps must be taken to remove the real or potential threat to the child/children;
 - investigation proceedings will be initiated with appropriate confidentiality being maintained;
 - the matter may be reported to the police or relevant authority.
- In addition VBSA members are bound by the [VBSA Code of Conduct](#) which states members will:
 - take all reasonable steps to protect children from abuse

- treat everyone with respect, including listening to and valuing their ideas and opinions
- welcome all children and their families and carers and being inclusive
- respect cultural, religious and political differences and acting in a culturally sensitive way
- model appropriate adult behaviour
- listen to children and responding to them appropriately
- report and act on any breaches of this Code of Conduct, complaints or concerns
- work with children in an open and transparent way
- respect the privacy of children and their families, and only disclosing information to people who have a need to know.

Definitions

ABSC – Is the Australian Billiards & Snooker Council, the peak Australian body.

Authorised supervisor - A person nominated by the VBSA (who may be a member or engaged as an external provider), who holds all mandatory clearances required for their position.

Child – Any person under the age of 18

Child Abuse and Child Neglect –commonly involves the misuse of power or authority, or a breach of trust that results in physical, psychological or sexual abuse or neglect.

Examples of behaviours that could constitute abuse or neglect include inappropriate touching when demonstrating techniques, inappropriate training methods requiring children to take on extra physical loads as ‘punishment’, physical aggression when disciplining a child, through to sexual assault and sexual intercourse with a minor.

Child Protection – involves keeping children safe from abuse and neglect including protecting them from people who are deemed unsuitable to work with children.

Contact – Refers to any form of physical contact, oral communication (whether face to face, by telephone or otherwise) and any form of electronic communication

External Provider – Broad term used to describe a person or persons engaged to provide services to the VBSA who may or may not be paid by the VBSA. External providers may be engaged under contractual arrangements between the VBSA, their employer and where applicable other parties. ‘External providers’ covers a broad range of roles e.g. from coaches and other sports professionals who provide coaching and sport services to the VBSA, to the cleaning, catering and maintenance contractors who are engaged by the VBSA to service a tournament.

Overseas penal clearance – Criminal history check from a country other than Australia that is required by the Department of Immigration and Citizenship when assessing the character of applicants for an Australian work visa.

Recognised reporting authority – The VBSA recognises several screening authorities across Australia. These include the Australian Federal Police (AFP); Office of Regulatory Services (ACT); CrimTrac; Commission for Children and Young People (NSW and Qld); Department of Child Protection (WA); Department of Justice (Vic)

Tournament Director – Refers to a person appointed by the VBSA to conduct a tournament or event in Victoria under the auspices of the VBSA or ABSC, including player invitation/entry, engaging officials, accommodation, etc.

Unsupervised involvement – Refers to close, personal contact with children without the presence of an authorised supervisor.

VBSA – Is the Victorian Billiards & Snooker Association, the peak Victorian body and affiliated with the ABSC.

Validation of clearance – Where clearance has been provided by an authority for a period longer than two years and the screening authority maintains a ‘live’ database of criminal activity (ACT, NSW, Vic, WA & Qld), the cardholder’s clearance can be

'validated' with the screening authority to confirm that no activities have been lodged that would cause clearance to be withdrawn.

Working with children - A role includes, or is likely to include:

- Providing services directed towards children, or;
- Conducting activities that involve contact with children