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MEMBER PROTECTION POLICY

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1. Introduction

The Geelong Cross Country Club aims to provide an opportunity for anyone of or over the age of 16 years to participate in club activities, regardless of their gender, sexuality, age, level of ability or racial and cultural background.

2. Purpose of our policy

The main objective of our member protection policy (policy) is to maintain responsible behaviour and ethical and informed decision-making by participants in this club. This policy outlines our commitment to a person's right to be treated with respect and dignity, and to be safe and protected from abuse. Our policy informs everyone involved in our club of his or her legal and ethical rights and responsibilities and the standards of behaviour that are required. It also covers the care and protection of children participating in our club's activities.

3. Who our policy applies to

Our policy applies to everyone involved in the club including committee members, administrators, officials (marshals and volunteers), competitors, and spectators.

4. Extent of our policy

Our policy covers unfair decisions (e.g. handicap determination), breaches of our code of conduct and inappropriate behaviour that occurs at meetings, at race meetings, at social events organised or sanctioned by the club, on away and overnight trips and any behaviour that brings or is likely to bring our club or sport into disrepute. It also covers behaviour where there is suspicion of harm towards a child or young person.

5. Club responsibilities

We will:

- make any necessary amendments to our Constitution, rules or other policies to enable this policy to be enforceable;
- implement and comply with our policy;
- promote our policy to everyone involved in our club;
- promote and model appropriate standards of behaviour at all times;
- respond to breaches or complaints made under our policy promptly, fairly, and confidentially;
- review this policy every 12 months; and
- seek advice from, and if necessary or appropriate, refer serious issues to our parent body, Athletics Victoria.

Serious issues include unlawful behaviour that involves or could lead to significant harm and includes criminal behaviour (e.g. physical assault, sexual assault, child abuse) and any other issues that our state or national body request to be referred to them (e.g. conflict of interest).

6. Individual responsibilities

Everyone associated with our club must:

- comply with the standards of behaviour outlined in our policy;



- treat others with respect;
- always place the safety and welfare of children above other considerations;
- be responsible and accountable for their behaviour;
- follow the guidelines outlined in this policy if they wish to make a complaint or report a concern about possible child abuse, discrimination, harassment or other inappropriate behaviour.

7. Anti-harassment, discrimination and bullying

Our club 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 phones and computers. Some forms of harassment, discrimination and bullying are against the law and are based on particular characteristics such as age, disability, gender, sexual orientation, pregnancy, political or religious beliefs, race, and marital status.

Our club takes all claims of harassment, discrimination, bullying and cyber bullying seriously. We encourage anyone who believes they have been harassed, discriminated against or bullied to raise the issue with the club (see Responding to Complaints).

8. Inclusive practices

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

8.1 People with a disability

Where possible we will include people with a disability in our club. We will make reasonable adaptations (e.g. modifications to rules) to enable participation.

8.2 People from diverse cultures

We will support and respect people from diverse cultures and religions to participate in our club and where possible will accommodate requests for flexibility (e.g. modifications to club uniforms).

8.3 Sexuality and gender identity

All people, regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity, are welcome at our club. We strive to provide a safe, welcoming and inclusive environment for participation and will take prompt action if there is an allegation of homophobic behaviour or discrimination or harassment based on gender identity.

8.4 Pregnancy

Pregnant women should be aware that their own health and wellbeing, and that of their unborn children, should be of utmost importance in their decision making about the way they participate in our sport. We recommend pregnant women consult with their medical advisers, make themselves aware of the facts about pregnancy in sport, and ensure that they make informed decisions about participation.



9. Responding to complaints

9.1 Complaints

Our club takes all complaints about on and off “field” behaviour seriously. Our club will handle complaints based on the principles of procedural fairness (natural justice), that is:

- all complaints will be taken seriously;
- both the person making the complaint (complainant) and the person the complaint is against (respondent) will be given full details of what is being said against them and have the opportunity to respond (give their side of the story);
- irrelevant matters will not be taken into account;
- decisions will be unbiased and fair; and
- any penalties imposed will be fair and reasonable.

More serious complaints may be referred to our parent body Athletics Victoria.

If the complaint relates to suspected child abuse, sexual assault or other criminal activity, then our club will report the behaviour to the police and/or relevant government authority and our national body.

9.2 Complaint Handling Process

When a complaint is received by our club, the person receiving the complaint (e.g. President, Member Protection Information Officer, Secretary, Committee Member) will:

- listen carefully and ask questions to understand the nature and extent of the problem;
- ask what the complainant would like to happen;
- explain the different options available to help resolve the problem;
- take notes; and
- maintain confidentiality but not necessarily anonymity.

Once the complainant decides on their preferred option for resolution, the club will assist, where appropriate and necessary, with the resolution process. This may involve:

- supporting the person complaining to talk to the person being complained about
- bringing all the people involved in the complaint together to talk objectively through the problem (this could include external mediation);
- gathering more information (e.g. from other people that may have seen the behaviour);
- seeking advice from our district, regional, state and/or national body or from an external agency (e.g. State Department of Sport or anti-discrimination agency);
- referring the complaint to our state or national body; and/or
- referring the complainant to an external agency such as a community mediation centre, police or anti-discrimination agency.

In situations where a complaint is referred to our state or national body and an inquiry is conducted, the club will:

- co-operate fully;
- ensure the complainant and respondent are not victimised;
- where applicable, ensure the complainant is not placed in an unsupervised situation with the respondent(s); and
- act on our state or national body’s recommendations.



At any stage of the process, a person can seek advice from or lodge a complaint with an anti-discrimination commission or other external agency.

9.3 Disciplinary measures

Our club will take disciplinary action against anyone found to have breached our policy or made false and malicious allegations. Any disciplinary measure imposed under our policy must be:

- applied consistent with any contractual and employment rules and requirements;
- fair and reasonable;
- based on the evidence and information presented and the seriousness of the breach;
- determined by our Constitution, By Laws and the rules of the sport.

Possible measures that may be taken include:

- verbal and/or written apology;
- counselling to address behaviour;
- withdrawal of any awards, placings, records, achievements bestowed in any activities or events held or sanctioned by our club;
- suspension or termination of membership, participation or engagement in a role or activity;
- de-registration of accreditation for a period of time or permanently; or
- any other form of discipline that our club considers reasonable and appropriate.

9.4 Appeals

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



GEELONG CROSS COUNTRY CLUB INC.

No. 0007148P



Attachment 1: Code of Conduct

CODE OF CONDUCT

The **Geelong Cross Country Club Incorporated** (the Club) aims to provide a positive sporting environment for the benefit of all members.

The Club aims to provide for the health, welfare and well-being of its members and supporters at all times.

All athletes, officials, supporters and committee members have a responsibility at all times when representing the Club to conduct themselves in a manner consistent with this Code of Conduct.

Club members will at all times:

- respect the rights, dignity and worth of every other member regardless of their gender, ability, cultural background or religion
- be fair, considerate and honest in dealings with others
- never condone rule violations, unsporting conduct or the use of prohibited substances
- display consistently high standards of positive behaviour and appearance
- consider the safety and well-being of participants in events conducted by the Club and members of the community who may be affected by the Club's activities
- promote fair play and encourage participation and not a "win at all costs" approach
- respect Club official's decision and support them to carry out their role
- follow all guidelines as published by the Club from time to time
- demonstrate a high degree of individual responsibility towards all Club members and members of the wider community, especially when dealing with persons under 18 years of age
- abide by the smoke free policy of the Club



Attachment 2: Member Protection Declaration

Our club has a duty of care to all those associated with our club. As a requirement of our Member Protection Policy, we must enquire into the background of those who undertake any regular unsupervised contact with people under the age of 18 years.

I _____ [name] of _____

_____ [address] (date of birth
____ / ____ / ____),

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. To my knowledge there is no other matter that the club may consider to constitute a risk to its members, volunteers, athletes or reputation by engaging me.
5. I will notify the President of the club immediately upon becoming aware that any of the matters set out in clauses 1 to 4 above has changed.

Declared in the State of Victoria _____

on ____ / ____ / ____ 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: ____ / ____ / ____



GEELONG CROSS COUNTRY CLUB INC.

No. 0007148P



Attachment 3: Working with Children Check Requirements

The Working with Children (WWC) Check creates a mandatory minimum checking standard across Victoria. The Working with Children Act 2005 requires that some people who work or volunteer in child-related work require a WWC Check. The check involves a national police records check and a review of relevant findings from prescribed professional disciplinary bodies (currently only the Victorian Institute of Teaching). There is an exemption for volunteers whose own children are involved in the particular activity; however they should still be required to complete the screening process.

A person who has no criminal or professional disciplinary history will be granted an assessment notice. This notice will entitle the person to undertake child-related work in Victoria and is valid for five years (unless revoked). A person deemed unsuitable to work or volunteer with children will be given a negative notice and cannot work in child-related work in Victoria.

For more information, go to www.justice.vic.gov.au/workingwithchildren or call 1300 652 879



Attachment 4: Reporting Forms

Record of complaint

Name of person receiving complaint		Date: ___/___/___
Complainant's name		<input type="checkbox"/> Over 18 <input type="checkbox"/> Under 18
Complainant's contact details	Phone: Email:	
Complainant's role/status in club	<input type="checkbox"/> Administrator (volunteer) <input type="checkbox"/> Parent <input type="checkbox"/> Athlete/competitor <input type="checkbox"/> Spectator	<input type="checkbox"/> Coach/Assistant Coach <input type="checkbox"/> Support personnel <input type="checkbox"/> Employee (paid) <input type="checkbox"/> Other official: _____ _____
Name of person complained about	<input type="checkbox"/> Over 18 <input type="checkbox"/> Under 18	
Person complained about role/status in club	<input type="checkbox"/> Administrator (volunteer) <input type="checkbox"/> Parent <input type="checkbox"/> Athlete/competitor <input type="checkbox"/> Spectator	<input type="checkbox"/> Coach/Assistant Coach <input type="checkbox"/> Support personnel <input type="checkbox"/> Employee (paid) <input type="checkbox"/> Other official: _____ _____
Location/event of alleged issue		
Description of alleged issue		



Nature of complaint (category/basis/grounds) (you can tick more than one box)	<input type="checkbox"/> Harassment	<input type="checkbox"/> Personality clash	<input type="checkbox"/> Disability
	<input type="checkbox"/> Discrimination	<input type="checkbox"/> Verbal abuse	<input type="checkbox"/> Victimization
	<input type="checkbox"/> Sexual/sexist	<input type="checkbox"/> Race	<input type="checkbox"/> Pregnancy
	<input type="checkbox"/> Selection dispute	<input type="checkbox"/> Bullying	<input type="checkbox"/> Child abuse
	<input type="checkbox"/> Coaching methods	<input type="checkbox"/> Physical abuse	<input type="checkbox"/> Unfair decision
	<input type="checkbox"/> Sexuality	<input type="checkbox"/> Religion	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ _____		
What they want to happen to fix issue			
Information provided to them			
Resolution and/or action taken			
Follow-up action			