

SMJFL Safeguarding Children and Young People

Reporting Procedure

1. PURPOSE

This Safeguarding Children and Young People Complaints and Reporting Procedure (Complaints and Reporting Procedure) sets out the procedure that all SMJFL People must follow to meet their responsibilities in relation to identifying, reporting, and responding to any concerns about, or incidents of, Child Abuse or other inappropriate behaviour towards Children or Young People in our sport. The Complaints and Reporting Procedure is to be read in connection with the SMJFL Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy.

2. DEFINITIONS

For the purpose of this Procedure and unless the context otherwise requires the following definitions apply:

Term	Definition
SMJFL People	<p>The following persons associated with the SMJFL and/or SMJFL Entities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All employees (including casual); and • All directly engaged volunteers and contractors / consultants who are engaged to provide services to the SMJFL or an SMJFL Entity that involve an interaction with Children or Young People.
SMJFL Entities	<p>The entities covered by the SMJFL being:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interleague Coaches, staff, volunteers and contractors • Umpires • Affiliated Clubs
Children and Young People	<p>A person under the age of eighteen years. Child or Young Person shall mean a single person falling within the definition of Children and Young People.</p>
Child Abuse	<p>Child abuse includes all forms of Physical Abuse, Emotional or Psychological Abuse, Sexual Abuse, Sexual Exploitation, Neglect or negligent treatment, Grooming, commercial (e.g. for financial gain) exploitation, harassing behaviour, such as Bullying or other exploitation of a Child or Young Person and includes any actions that results in actual or potential Harm to a Child or Young Person. Child abuse can be a single incident, but usually takes place over time.</p>

Department Head	Department Head means a member of staff responsible for the management of a department or a function. The role will typically have 'General Manger of' in the title and report directly to the SMJFL Chief Executive Officer.
Safeguarding Children and Young People Code of Conduct	The <i>Safeguarding Children and Young People Code of Conduct</i> outlines what is, and what is not, acceptable behaviour or practice when working with or engaging with Children and Young People as further detailed in this Policy.
SMJFL CSO	The SMJFL CSO will be a role held by the General Manager – Clubs and Community

3. IMMEDIATE RESPONSE

Overriding any practical requirements outlined through this procedure, if a Child or Young Person is at imminent risk of harm or in immediate danger, all SMJFL People are required to report the situation directly to the Police - CALL '000' (within Australia).

4. WHAT IS TO BE REPORTED

The following types of behaviours, including observed or suspected abuse, in relation to any Child or Young Person involved in SMJFL activities, programs or services must be reported in the manner described in this Complaints and Reporting Procedure:

- Child Abuse, Harm, Neglect or any other form of inappropriate behaviour such as Grooming or Bullying to a Child or Young Person (Emotional or Phycological, Physical or Sexual); and
- any breaches of the Policy or Code of Conduct.

5. MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS WHEN RESPONDING TO DISCLOSURES OF CHILD ABUSE

The following points are to be considered and utilised when a reporting person is receiving a disclosure of Child Abuse from a Child or Young Person.

LISTEN	REASSURE	RESPECT
DO	DO NOT	
✓ Actively listen to the Child or Young Person	Ask leading questions	
✓ Reassure the Child or Young Person that they have done the correct thing by reporting	Make your own judgement or assessment	
✓ Respect the Child or Young Person may only reveal some details	Press for detail, a minimal account will suffice	
✓ Let the Child or Young Person use their own words in their own time - be patient	Make promises you cannot keep	
✓ Ask open ended questions	Make your own enquiries/investigations in relation to the allegations made	
✓ Explain to the Child or Young Person that other people may need to be told	Share information with others <i>*Excl. Police, Child Protection, AFL ISD, Manager</i>	

6. HOW TO MAKE A REPORT & OBLIGATIONS

6.1 Overview

SMJFL People **must** report Child Abuse or other inappropriate behaviour in relation to a Child or Young Person that they are informed of, observe or suspect.

A summary of the Incident Reporting Process that all SMJFL People must follow is set out at **Appendix 1** to this Reporting Procedure.

Immediate action will be taken in relation to any matter reported to the SMJFL. The SMJFL will act with integrity, provide strong leadership and make decisions that are child centred, legal, ethical, accountable and transparent whilst meeting national legislative requirements.

6.2 Reporting Person's Obligations

- **Step 1:** If the Child or Young Person is in imminent risk of harm or immediate danger, the reporting person is required to report the situation directly to the police - CALL '000'.
- **Step 2:** Regardless of whether the matter is reported to the police, it is imperative that the reporting person immediately contacts their SMJFL or club Child Safety Officer (CSO)
- **Step 3:** When practical, the reporting person or CSO must make a report on the AFL's online reporting platform. In some circumstances, the SMJFL's Child Safety Officer may take a statement and formally record the statement on the online reporting platform. The online reporting platform can be accessed via this link:

<https://e afl.austfoot.com.au/afl-makeareport/#/landing>

Further information in relation to the SMJFL's on-line reporting platform is set out in paragraph 9 of this Reporting Procedure. All SMJFL People retain the right to report directly to relevant authorities, such as police or child protection, any concerns they may have in relation to the safety and welfare of a Child or Young Person, regardless of whether they have also reported that matter internally.

- **Step 4:** An incident report for the SMJFL be completed as well as the AFL inline report, please find this on the website www.smjfl.com.au/childsafety

6.3 Child Safety Officer's Reporting Obligations

When the SMJFL CSO is notified by a reporting person (subject to Step 2 of section 6.2) of an incident, they are to;

1. ensure the reporting person makes an online report as per Step 3 of section 6.2;
2. provide advice and guidance as per the step-by-step process detailed in section 6.2;
3. provide general advice and guidance on 'what' to report and the Policy's purpose.
4. notify the SMJFL CEO by email of the notification as soon as possible
5. not provide investigative advice to the reporting person unless consent is provided from the AFL Head of the Integrity & Security Department or nominated delegate.

In taking a report or disclosure of an incident from others, the reporting person or SMJFL CSO is not to assess the validity of such allegations or concerns, but to report all allegations as described in the step-by-step process outlined in section 6.2.

7. REPORTING TIMEFRAMES

Reports and notifications must be made as soon as practicable and no later than before ending that person's shift or session of work.

8. WHAT HAPPENS TO A REPORT

8.1 AFL Integrity & Security Department's Obligations

The AFL Integrity & Security Department (ISD) will:

- receive the online report through its secure Incident Management System (IMS);
- contact the reporting person
- assess the disclosed information
- ensure adequate support services are provided to all relevant persons; and
- notify the relevant Law Enforcement agencies if criminality has been identified, pursuant to mandatory reporting compliance.

8.2 Mandatory Reporting Provisions

In Australia, each state and territory have child safety laws that set out responsibilities for both organisations and individuals who work or have contact with Children and Young People.

The following link will direct you to the responsibilities associated with each state and territory;
<https://www.playbytherules.net.au/got-an-issue/child-safe-sport/child-safeguarding-laws-explained>

9. WHO INVESTIGATES THE REPORT

Complying with legislative and policy requirements, the AFL ISD are bound to ensure that one (1) or more of the following entities will investigate the report or disclosure;

- State or Federal Law Enforcement Agency (i.e., Police) **Where Required*
- Child Protections Services or State equivalent **Where Required*
- AFL Integrity & Security Department
- Where the report or disclosure **does not** relate to the AFL or AFL People this will occur through Independent League Administrations through the engagement of independent investigative and welfare services.

NOTE: *At no stage will the AFL ISD or the SMJFL investigate in parallel to a State or Federal Law Enforcement Agency (i.e., Police) investigation. The AFL ISD will only investigate once they have received confirmation and permission in writing from the relevant Law Enforcement Agency (i.e., Police) that their investigation is completed.*

10. REPORTING PLATFORMS

As part of the SMJFL's procedures for responding to reports or allegations of Child Abuse and other inappropriate behaviour, the AFL has developed an online reporting platform for reports in relation to Children and Young People safeguarding matters. This platform is able to be used by all AFL People, **any league, club or member of the public** to document and report any allegation, disclosure, incident or concern regarding Child Abuse or other inappropriate behaviour in relation to a Child or Young Person within football activities, including any to prevent access by unauthorised persons to any documents or reports, the AFL ISD will oversee the creation of a secure case entry on the IMS that will contain.

- the completed online report and its particulars; and
- any other documentation (physical or electronic) relating to the allegation.

**Note you can report anonymously if you would like to*

The AFL ISD will be responsible for maintaining and regularly monitoring the relevant records using the IMS (Case Management) processes to ensure that they are responded to effectively in accordance with this procedure and that requirements for reporting to external authorities are complied with.

11. CONFIDENTIALITY & PRIVACY

The ISD and the SMJFL maintains the confidentiality and privacy of all concerned (including the alleged perpetrator), except if doing so would compromise the welfare of the Child or Young Person and/or investigation of the allegation.

The AFL Head of Integrity & Security will be responsible for the authorisation of the disclosure and sharing of any information relating to any incident reported pursuant to this procedure.

12. MONITORING



All reports recorded on the IMS will be reviewed by the AFL Head of Integrity & Security.

The SMJFL CSO or CEO will be in communication with the ISD throughout the process to ensure all obligations, including any education required are being met.

APPENDIX 1 – INCIDENT REPORTING PROCESS

SMJFL Safeguarding Children and Young People – Incident Reporting

WHAT to report

- Observed abuse, harm or neglect – (Emotional, Physical, Sexual)
- Potential abuse, harm or neglect – (Emotional, Physical, Sexual)
- Any suspicion of abuse, harm or neglect – (Emotional, Physical, Sexual)
- Breaches of the SMJFL Safeguarding Children and Young people Policy and/or Code of Conduct



HOW to make a report

STEP 1 – If a Child or a Young Person is in any imminent risk of harm or in immediate danger – call “000”

STEP 2 – Immediately consult your League and / or Club Child Safety Officer

STEP 3 – An SMJFL report form is to be completed and sent to General Manager Clubs & Community gmclubs@asmjfl.com.au this is found on our website. When practicable, make a report on the AFL’s online reporting platform – ASAP

<https://eafl.austfoot.com.au/afl-makeareport/#/landing>



WHAT HAPPENS to the report

AFL Integrity and Security Department

- Conduct an assessment of the report for investigation allocation (Police, AFL Integrity Team, League or Community Club)
- Provide welfare and support service referrals
- Consider mandatory reporting requirements (Police, DHS, other)
**where required*

If a child or young person is in any imminent risk of harm or immediate danger – call 000