

Policy & Procedures for Safeguarding Participants in Bowls

(From Abuse and/or Harassment)



We acknowledge SA Gymnastics Federation and SA Rugby Union for the use of their documents as the basis for Bowls SA to create their safeguarding policy.

**Approved: 1 October 2023
Version 1**

INDEX

| | Page No |
|--|-----------|
| Executive Summary | 2 |
| Preamble | 3 |
| Introduction | 3 |
| Purpose | 4 |
| Definitions | 4 |
| Scope | 5 |
| What is Abuse and/or Harassment? | 6 |
| Roles and Responsibilities | 7 |
| Applicable Law / Relevant Authorities | 11 |
| Confidentiality | 11 |
| Reporting Procedure | 11 |
| Disciplinary Procedure | 14 |
| Non-Recent Incidents | 14 |
| Criminal Conviction and Findings of Fact | 15 |
| Retention of Records | 15 |
| Safe Recruitment and Vetting of Staff and Volunteers | 16 |
| Bowls SA: Safeguarding Reporting Form | 18 |
| Bowls SA: Provincial/District Bowls Association, Associate Member and Club Acknowledgement Form | 21 |
| Bowls SA: Employees & Volunteers Declaration of Good Standing | 22 |

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. Bowls SA recognises that the welfare, safety and well-being of all who participate in bowls, regardless of their role, is important. To mitigate such risks, this policy has been developed in order for Bowls SA to respond accordingly, in line with the relevant legislations such as [The Children's Act 38 of 2005](#) and The Criminal Law (sexual offences and related matters) [Amendment Act 32 of 2007](#).
2. Abuse and/or harassment can be expressed, but not limited to, six forms which may occur in combination or in isolation. Abuse and/or harassment can be based on any grounds including race, religion, colour, creed, ethnic origin, physical attributes, gender, sexual orientation, age disability, socio-economic status and athletic ability.
3. Bowls SA, Provincial/District Bowls Associations, Clubs and the various Designated Safeguarding Officers all have roles/responsibilities to ensure that this policy is fully implemented.
4. The Designated Safeguarding Officers undertake to respect the confidentiality of all the information received at any phase of the procedure.
5. Bowls SA strongly encourages the reporting of all incidents of suspected abuse and/or harassment, regardless of who the offender may be in order to foster well-being in the sport of bowls.
6. Anyone can report any incident or concerns to the various/relevant Designated Safeguarding Officers. Bowls SA strongly recommends the "reporter" completes the report form provided or utilises The Guardian's Anonymous Reporting App.
7. When the National Designated Safeguarding Officers receive a complaint a decision will be made wrt the appropriate steps to be taken.
8. In the event of abuse and/or harassment but which is not deemed to be a criminal offence in accordance with the applicable law, the matter shall be dealt with in accordance with the Bowls SA Disciplinary Policy.
9. Any information relating to complaints of abuse and/or harassment will be stored securely and be compliant with the requirements of the Protection of Personal Information Act.
10. The minimum standards for the vetting of applicants for roles in the sport must be undertaken during the recruitment process for new applicants and retrospectively for required existing employees and volunteers in order to prevent unsuitable individuals from working with Vulnerable Persons. In line with best practice, Bowls SA recommends that the minimum standards for the vetting of employees and volunteers working with Vulnerable Persons is repeated every 2 years.

PREAMBLE

1. Bowls SA recognises the risks of offensive, harmful or abusive behaviour posed towards vulnerable persons who participate in bowls. To mitigate such risks, this policy has been developed in order for Bowls SA to respond accordingly, in line with the relevant legislations such as [The Children's Act 38 of 2005](#) and The Criminal Law (sexual offences and related matters) [Amendment Act 32 of 2007](#).
2. Anyone who is involved in Bowls SA teams, competitions or tournaments will be governed by this policy.
3. Reference to one gender in this Policy will include the other.
4. This policy replaces all previous Bowls SA policies pertaining to safeguarding and/or sexual harassment.

INTRODUCTION

5. Bowls SA is the custodian of bowls in South Africa, and it is important that Bowls SA creates an atmosphere in which everybody who participates in bowls can have a safe, rewarding and positive experience irrespective of their race, gender, sex, pregnancy, marital status, ethnic or social origin, colour, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, conscience, belief, culture, language and birth or athletic ability.
6. Abuse and/or harassment can occur in sport and can damage the reputation of Sports Organisations. Bowls SA strongly contributes to the protection of everyone involved in sport and believes that all players, coaches, officials, staff and volunteers who wish to participate in bowls, have a right to participate in a safe and inclusive environment, free from all forms of harm, discrimination, abuse, violence and neglect. Bowls SA is therefore committed to safeguarding and protecting all who participate in bowls from abuse and/or harassment and ensuring that all participants are treated with respect and dignity.
7. Bowls SA recognises that the welfare, safety and well-being of all who participate in bowls, regardless of their role, is important. Bowls SA recognises that whilst any participant can be subjected to abuse and/or harassment the following groups ("Vulnerable Persons") may be more vulnerable than others:
 - 7.1. Children
 - 7.2. People with a Mental and/or a Physical Disability
 - 7.3. Competitive Players
 - 7.4. Women
 - 7.5. Elderly Persons, and
 - 7.6. Other Vulnerable Adults

8. This policy is to be read in conjunction with the SA Sport Confederation and Olympic and Paralympic Committee (SASCOC) Safeguarding Policy Against Harassment and Abuse in all Sport (<https://www.teamsa.co.za/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/SAFEGUARDING-POLICY-SOUTH-AFRICAN-SPORTS-CONFEDERATION-AND-OLYMPIC-COMMITTEE-Final.pdf>)

PURPOSE

9. The purpose of the Bowls SA Safeguarding Policy is to ensure that all persons, but especially vulnerable persons, can participate in bowls activities without fear of abuse and/or harassment. The key objectives of the policy are to:

- 9.1. Ensure everyone involved in bowls understands that all forms of abuse and/or harassment are unacceptable and will not be tolerated.
- 9.2. Enable anyone who has witnessed or experienced abuse and/or harassment within bowls to report the incident without fear of victimisation or retaliation.
- 9.3. Ensure an appropriate and co-ordinated response to any incidents of abuse and/or harassment within or connected to participation in sport, irrespective of whether they arise at local, national or international level.
- 9.4. Implement effective measures that minimise the likelihood of incidents of abuse and/or harassment use arising.
- 9.5. Ensure all reasonable steps are taken during the recruitment of staff and volunteers to prevent unsuitable individuals from working in bowls.

DEFINITIONS

10. Abuse means any incident involving non-accidental harm, discrimination, bullying, abuse, violence and neglect.

11. Adult means Players 18 years and older, male and female including Players with impairments.

12. Bullying or cyberbullying means unwanted, repeated and intentional, aggressive behaviour usually among peers, and can involve a real or perceived power imbalance experienced through physical, verbal or electronic medium. Bullying can include actions such as making threats, spreading rumours or falsehoods, attacking someone physically or verbally and deliberately excluding someone.

13. Child means every person below the age of 18 years unless, under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier.

14. Ethical Committee is the relevant body of Bowls SA to, where applicable, adjudicate in case of violation of this Policy.

15. Hazing means an organised, usually team-based, form of bullying in sport, involving degrading and hazardous initiation of new team members by team members.
16. Members for the purposes of this Policy shall mean "Members" as defined in clause 10 of the Bowls SA Constitution.
17. Non-accidental harm means any unwelcome sexual harassment and/or abuse, financial abuse, bullying and emotional abuse, hazing, neglect, physical abuse, and child exploitation.
18. Players means all Bowls Players of all ages.
19. Players with impairments means those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual, or sensory, including visual, impairments that, on interaction with certain barriers, may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.
20. Policy means this Bowls SA Safeguarding Policy concerning the protection against abuse and/or harassment.
21. Volunteers means people working or assisting Bowls SA during team preparation and delivery at bowls events/tournaments/matches and/or contributing to Committees, Steering Committees and/or Standing Committees (albeit at National, Provincial, District, Associate and/or Club level).
22. Whistle-blower means a person who in good faith exposes secretive information or activity, covered by the Protected Disclosure Act 26 of 2000 as amended, that is deemed illegal, unethical, or not correct within a private or public organization.

SCOPE

23. Without any distinction of age, gender, race, religion, creed, ethnical origin, physical attributes, sexual orientation, athletic ability, socio economic status or other kind of unfair discrimination the Policy applies to:
 - 23.1. Any Person who participates in bowls events/activities as an employee, volunteer, or player.
 - 23.2. Any individual or organisation that is providing a service to Bowls SA, a Provincial Bowls Association, a District Bowls Association, an Associate Member, and/or a Club.
24. The Policy therefore is applicable to all levels of bowls and provides a framework for those involved in bowls to meet their duty of care towards all who participate in bowls regardless of whether they are players, employees, volunteers, spectators or service providers.

WHAT IS ABUSE AND/OR HARASSMENT?

25. Abuse and/or harassment can be expressed, but not limited to, six forms which may occur in combination or in isolation. These include:

- 25.1. **Psychological abuse** - which means a pattern of deliberate, prolonged, repeated non-constructive behaviours within a power differentiated relationship. This form of abuse is at the core of all other forms. Some definitions refer to emotional or psychological abuse interchangeably. In this document, we refer to psychological abuse in recognition that the psyche consists of more than emotions. It also consists of cognitions, values and beliefs about oneself, and the world. The behaviours that constitute psychological abuse target a person's inner life in all its profound scope.
- 25.2. **Physical abuse** - which means non-accidental trauma or physical injury caused by punching, beating, kicking, biting, burning or otherwise harming a Player. This could include forced or mandated inappropriate physical activity (e.g., age-inappropriate or physique-inappropriate training loads; when injured or in pain); forced alcohol consumption; or systematic doping practices.
- 25.3. **Sexual harassment** - which means any unwanted and unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature, whether verbal, non-verbal or physical.
- 25.4. **Sexual abuse** - which means any conduct of a sexual nature, whether non-contact, contact or penetrative, where consent is coerced/ manipulated or is not or cannot be given.
- 25.5. **Neglect** - which means the failure of parents or care givers to meet a child's physical and emotional needs or failure to protect a child from exposure to danger. This definition equally applies to coaches and Player entourages.
- 25.6. **Bullying or cyberbullying** - which means unwanted, repeated and intentional, aggressive behaviour usually among peers and can involve a real or perceived power imbalance experienced through physical, verbal or electronic medium. Bullying can include actions such as making threats, spreading rumours or falsehoods, attacking someone physically or verbally and deliberately excluding someone.

26. Abuse and/or harassment can be based on any grounds including race, religion, colour, creed, ethnic origin, physical attributes, gender, sexual orientation, age disability, socio-economic status and athletic ability. It can include a once-off incident or a series of incidents. It may be in person or online. Harassment may be deliberate, unsolicited and coercive.

27. Abuse and/or harassment often result from an abuse of authority, meaning the improper use of a position of influence, power or authority by an individual against another person.

28. All participants are susceptible to be a target of the various forms of abuse and/or harassment.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

29. Bowls SA. Bowls SA shall:

29.1. Communicate their Safeguarding Policy and measures to their affiliates and act to prevent any form of abuse and/or harassment within their jurisdiction.

29.2. Establish the National Standing Committee: Safeguarding Officers (NSCSO). The NSCSO shall be convened by the National Safeguarding Officer(s) and shall consist of the appointed Provincial Bowls Associations' Safeguarding Officers.

29.3. Appoint two National Designated Safeguarding Officers (1 @ Male, 1 @ Female).

29.4. Appoint an Events Designated Safeguarding Officer for the various Bowls SA Events.

29.5. Provide, or arrange for, training on safeguarding to their employees and/or volunteers (see clause 62) who have regular contact with vulnerable persons and to all appointed Designated Safeguarding Officers.

29.6. Abide by the minimum vetting and recruitment measures, as per this policy.

30. Provincial and District Bowls Associations. All Provincial and/or District Bowls Associations shall:

30.1. Abide by the policy, including but not limited to the minimum vetting and recruiting measures.

30.2. Adopt this policy mutatis mutandis. (Complete Bowls SA: Provincial/District Bowls Association, Associate Member and Club Acknowledgement Form)

30.3. Establish a Provincial and/or District Standing Committee: Safeguarding Officers (PSCSO/DSCSO).

30.3.1. PSCSO's will consist of the appointed District Designated Safeguarding Officer, of Districts within their jurisdiction. Should

a Provincial Bowls Association consist of only one District Bowls Association the PSCSO will consist of the appointed Club Designated Safeguarding Officers, of Clubs under their jurisdiction.

30.3.2. DSCSO's will consist of the appointed Club Designated Safeguarding Officers, of Clubs under their jurisdiction.

30.4. Appoint a Provincial/District Designated Safeguarding Officer.

30.5. Provide, or arrange for, training on safeguarding to their employees and/or volunteers who have regular contact with vulnerable persons (see clause 62) and to appointed, including Club, Designated Safeguarding Officers, of Clubs under their jurisdiction.

31. Associate Members (This includes the Visually Impaired Bowlers South Africa (VIBSA) and the Physically Disabled Bowlers of South Africa (PDBSA). The Bowls SA Associate Members shall:

31.1. Abide by the policy, including but not limited to the minimum vetting and recruiting measures.

31.2. Adopt this policy mutatis mutandis. (Complete Bowls SA: Provincial/District Bowls Association, Associate Member and Club Acknowledgement Form)

31.3. Appoint a Designated Safeguarding Officer.

31.4. Provide, or arrange for, training on safeguarding to their employees and/or volunteers (see clause 62) who have regular contact with vulnerable persons and to the appointed safeguarding officer.

32. Bowls Clubs. All Bowls Clubs shall:

32.1. Abide by the policy, including but not limited to the minimum vetting and recruiting measures.

32.2. Adopt this policy mutatis mutandis. (Complete Bowls SA: Provincial/District Bowls Association, Associate Member and Club Acknowledgement Form)

32.3. Appoint a Club Designated Safeguarding Officer.

32.4. Arrange for training on safeguarding to their employees and/or volunteers (see clause 62) who have regular contact with vulnerable persons and their appointed safeguarding officer.

33. National Designated Safeguarding Officers

33.1. The National Safeguarding Officers should be suitably qualified persons and have the following role and duties:

33.1.1. Jointly Convene the National Standing Committee: Safeguarding.

33.1.2. Be the main point of contact for Bowls SA Event, Provincial, District and/or Associate Member Designated Safeguarding Officers to submit any reports of suspected abuse and/or harassment. The National Designated Safeguarding Officers should also be available for anyone to report suspected cases of abuse and/or harassment should they contact him directly.

33.1.3. Be the main point of contact for any request/enquiries concerning the Bowls SA Safeguarding Policy or safeguarding matters;

33.1.4. Manage the reporting and investigation procedure, in conjunction with The Guardian, as set out in clause 46 of this Policy.

33.1.5. To inform the Chairperson of the Ethics Committee in case of a disciplinary or ethical procedure.

33.1.6. Provide, or arrange for, requested, support to anyone who reports a case of possible abuse and/or harassment to anyone who has been the subject of abuse and/or harassment.

33.1.7. To agree on safeguarding plans with the Bowls SA Events Safeguarding Officer.

33.1.8. Ensure that if a criminal offence, wrt safeguarding, has not been reported to the local authorities in accordance with the applicable law, is reported.

33.2. Bowls SA Event Designated Safeguarding Officer

33.2.1. Be the main point of contact for anyone to report suspected cases of abuse and/or harassment during the relevant Bowls SA Event.

33.2.2. To inform the National Designated Safeguarding Officers of all reported abuse and/or harassment cases.

33.2.3. Provide, or arrange for, requested, support to anyone who reports a case of possible abuse and/or harassment to anyone who has been the subject of abuse and/or harassment.

34. Provincial and District Designated Safeguarding Officer

34.1. The Provincial and/or District Designated Safeguarding Officer should be a suitably qualified person and has the following role and duties:

34.1.1. Convene the Provincial/District Standing Committee: Safeguarding.

34.1.2. Be the main point of contact for District/Club Designated Safeguarding Officers to submit any reports of suspected abuse and/or harassment. The Provincial/District Designated Safeguarding Officers should also be available for anyone to report suspected cases of abuse and/or harassment should they contact them directly.

34.1.3. To inform the National Designated Safeguarding Officers of all reported abuse and/or harassment cases.

34.1.4. Provide, or arrange for, requested, support to anyone who reports a case of possible abuse and/or harassment to anyone who has been the subject of abuse and/or harassment.

35. Associate Member Designated Safeguarding Officer

35.1. The Associate Member Designated Safeguarding Officer should be a suitably qualified person and has the following role and duties:

35.1.1. Be the main point of contact for anyone to report suspected cases of abuse and/or harassment.

35.1.2. To inform the National Designated Safeguarding Officer of all reported abuse and/or harassment cases.

35.1.3. Provide, or arrange for, requested, support to anyone who reports a case of possible abuse and/or harassment to anyone who has been the subject of abuse and/or harassment.

36. Club Designated Safeguarding Officer

36.1. The Club Safeguarding Officer should be a suitably qualified persons and has the following role and duties:

36.1.1. Be the main point of contact for anyone to report suspected cases of abuse and/or harassment.

36.1.2. To inform the Provincial/District Designated Safeguarding Officer of all reported abuse and/or harassment cases.

- 36.1.3. Provide, or arrange for, requested, support to anyone who reports a case of possible abuse and/or harassment to anyone who has been the subject of abuse and/or harassment.

APPLICABLE LAW / RELEVANT AUTHORITIES

37. In a case where the incident occurs abroad and the victim is a person under the jurisdiction of Bowls SA, the matter will be pursued in South Africa and this Policy would apply.

38. In case of any report to the relevant local authority the applicable law will be the national law of the country where the incident happened.

39. When a criminal offence is suspected the Bowls SA Safeguarding Officer, on instruction from the Bowls SA Ethics Committee must refer such cases to the relevant local authorities.

CONFIDENTIALITY

40. The National Designated Safeguarding Officers undertake to respect the confidentiality of all the information received at any phase of the procedure.

41. All the information provided by the whistle blower shall be kept by the National Designated Safeguarding Officers and are considered as confidential at any time.

42. In the event the incident could be a criminal offence, the National Designated Safeguarding Officers must share the collected information with the relevant national authorities in accordance with the applicable law.

REPORTING PROCEDURE

43. Bowls SA strongly encourages the reporting of all incidents of suspected abuse and/or harassment, regardless of who the offender may be in order to foster well-being in the sport of bowls:

43.1. Whistle blowing

43.1.1. Bowls SA strongly supports whistle blowers by providing a confidential reporting system and believes it is important for anyone who has concerns to speak out early in order to prevent and stop any damages inflicted on anyone.

43.1.2. The whistle blower can be anybody who is aware or has concerns about any form of abuse and/or harassment.

43.1.3. In a case where it seems that the victim of abuse and/or harassment needs urgent medical or police attention, the whistle blower must immediately contact the appropriate services. If

not, the incident shall be reported by following the reporting procedure, as set in clause 46 of this Policy.

43.1.4. The report must be presented to the National Designated Safeguarding Officers, as set out in clause 46 of this Policy.

43.1.5. The whistle blower has a right to keep his/her anonymity and all the information s/he gives to the National Designated Safeguarding Officers is strictly confidential, as set out in this Policy.

43.1.6. Bowls SA has partnered with The Guardian and an anonymous reporting App will be made available.

44. Reporting Procedure

44.1. Anyone can report any incident or concerns to the various/relevant Designated Safeguarding Officers.

44.2. The report can be freely made by any communication means which includes but not limited to, email, telephonic, written submission, and verbal report. However, Bowls SA strongly recommends the “reporter” completes the report form provided (see attached Bowls SA: Safeguarding Reporting Form).

44.3. In case of non-use of the report form, it is very important that the “reporter” provides the following information, if possible:

44.3.1. Name, age, nationality, and email address of the victim.

44.3.2. The nature of the violation.

44.3.3. A summary of the incident with as much details as possible.

44.4. To take the report into consideration, the information is the minimum requirement to engage in the investigation procedure or in case of a criminal offence, to alert the relevant local authorities if they have not already been aware of the incident.

44.5. All the information, provided by the “reporter”, shall be kept by the National Designated Safeguarding Officers, and is considered confidential. In the event the abuse and/or harassment is a criminal offence, the National Designated Safeguarding Officers must share the information collected with the relevant local authorities in accordance with the applicable law.

45. Case Management

45.1. Club Level

45.1.1. The Club Designated Safeguarding Officer will be responsible for the management of all safeguarding cases between Club Members. When a Club Designated Safeguarding Officer receives a complaint, they will decide to:

45.1.1.1. Refer the matter to The Guardian for further investigation; and/or

45.1.1.2. Not pursue the matter further; or

45.1.1.3. Refer the matter to the relevant local authority; and/or

45.1.1.4. Refer the matter to a Club Disciplinary Committee, or an Independent Disciplinary Committee, to conduct a hearing.

45.1.2. The complainant and/or the accused have the right to appeal the decision of the Club Safeguarding Officer and/or Club Disciplinary hearing. If either are not satisfied with the outcome of the Club Appeal Hearing they may appeal to the District Safeguarding Officer to manage the case as per par 45.2.1.

45.1.3. The Club Designate Safeguarding Officer is to submit a complete Case File (i.e. a copy of the completed complaint form and a record of all decisions, including the outcome of any disciplinary hearing) to the relevant District Designated Safeguarding Officer and the National Safeguarding Officer.

45.2. District Level

45.2.1. The District Designated Safeguarding Officer will be responsible for the management of all safeguarding cases between members of different Clubs affiliated to the relevant District and/or if the incident took place during a District Competition/Event. When a District Designated Safeguarding Officer receives a complaint, they will decide to:

45.2.1.1. Refer the matter to The Guardian for further investigation; and/or

45.2.1.2. Not pursue the matter further; or

45.2.1.3. Refer the matter to the relevant local authority; and/or

45.2.1.4. Refer the matter to a District Disciplinary Committee, or an Independent Disciplinary Committee, to conduct a hearing.

45.2.2. The complainant and/or the accused have the right to appeal the decision of the District Safeguarding Officer and/or District Disciplinary hearing. If either are not satisfied with the outcome of the District Appeal Hearing they may appeal to the Provincial Safeguarding Officer to manage the case as per par 45.3.1.

45.2.3. The District Designate Safeguarding Officer is to submit a complete Case File (i.e. a copy of the completed complaint form and a record of all decisions, including the outcome of any disciplinary hearing) to the relevant Provincial Designated Safeguarding Officer and the National Safeguarding Officer.

45.3. Provincial Level

45.3.1. The Provincial Designated Safeguarding Officer will be responsible for the management of all safeguarding cases between members of different Districts affiliated to the relevant Province and/or if the incident took place during a Provincial Competition/Event. When a Provincial Designated Safeguarding Officer receives a complaint, they will decide to:

45.3.1.1. Refer the matter to The Guardian for further investigation; and/or

45.3.1.2. Not pursue the matter further; or

45.3.1.3. Refer the matter to the relevant local authority; and/or

45.3.1.4. Refer the matter to a Provincial Disciplinary Committee, or an Independent Disciplinary Committee, to conduct a hearing.

45.3.2. The complainant and/or the accused have the right to appeal the decision of the Provincial Safeguarding Officer and/or Provincial Disciplinary hearing. If either are not satisfied with the outcome of the Provincial Appeal Hearing they may appeal to the National Safeguarding Officer to manage the case as per par 45.5.1.

45.3.3. The Provincial Designate Safeguarding Officer is to submit a complete Case File (i.e. a copy of the completed complaint form and a record of all decisions, including the outcome of any disciplinary hearing) to the National Safeguarding Officer.

45.4. Associate Member Level

45.4.1. The Associate Member Designated Safeguarding Officer will be responsible for the management of all safeguarding cases between their members if the incident took place during an Associate Member's Competition/Event. When an Associate Member Designated Safeguarding Officer receives a complaint, they will decide to:

45.4.1.1. Refer the matter to The Guardian for further investigation; and/or

45.4.1.2. Not pursue the matter further; or

45.4.1.3. Refer the matter to the relevant local authority; and/or

45.4.1.4. Refer the matter to an Associate Member Disciplinary Committee, or an Independent Disciplinary Committee, to conduct a hearing.

45.4.2. The complainant and/or the accused have the right to appeal the decision of the Associate Safeguarding Officer and/or Associate Member Disciplinary hearing. If either are not satisfied with the outcome of the Associate Member Appeal Hearing they may appeal to the National Safeguarding Officer to manage the case as per par 45.5.1.

45.4.3. The Associate Member Designate Safeguarding Officer is to submit a complete Case File (i.e. a copy of the completed complaint form and a record of all decisions, including the outcome of any disciplinary hearing) to the National Safeguarding Officer.

45.5. National Level

45.5.1. The National Designated Safeguarding Officer will be responsible for the management of all safeguarding cases between members of different Provinces and/or if the incident took place during a National and/or International (involving SA players) Competition/Event. When the National Designated Safeguarding Officers receive a complaint, the National Safeguarding Officers will, in collaboration with the Bowls SA Ethics Committee, decide to:

45.5.1.1. Refer the matter to The Guardian for further investigation; and/or

45.5.1.2. Not pursue the matter further; or

45.5.1.3. Refer the matter to the relevant local authorities;
and/or

45.5.1.4. Refer the matter to a Bowls SA Disciplinary Committee, or an Independent Disciplinary Committee, to conduct a hearing.

45.5.2. The complainant and/or the accused have the right to appeal the decision of the Bowls SA Safeguarding Officer and/or Bowls SA Disciplinary hearing. If either are not satisfied with the outcome of the Bowls SA Appeal Hearing they may appeal to SASCO to manage the case as per their Safeguarding Policy.

45.5.3. The National Designated Safeguarding Officer is to keep copies (electronically) of all safeguarding cases.

46. Case Management Principles

46.1. Any issue arises in relation to the protection, safeguarding or welfare of Vulnerable Persons shall be the paramount consideration.

46.2. Any investigation or inquiry is to proceed upon the basis that the primary consideration will be a determination of the risk posed to Vulnerable Persons.

46.3. Individuals about whom there are concerns should be treated fairly and honestly and should be provided with support throughout the process.

46.4. Any investigation must be sensitive to the welfare of the children and vulnerable adults during its processes and hold central the need to keep the interests of Vulnerable Persons as paramount.

46.5. Unless the determination finds no, or an insignificant risk, effective steps must be taken to manage or reduce the risk. Where issues other than risk to Vulnerable Persons are under consideration in any investigation such issues must remain subordinate to the requirement to determine the risk posed to Vulnerable Persons.

46.6. The assessment of risk involves consideration of the actual or potential harm that an individual may pose to Vulnerable Persons.

46.7. The assessment of risk does not involve making a finding based upon either the criminal or civil standards of proof (i.e. certainty or “the balance of probabilities”). The assessment requires a defensible decision that a risk does or does not exist and, where it does, a determination of the extent of such risk.

46.8. Save in exceptional cases, the assessment will not require the production of a formal risk assessment report.

- 46.9. The steps taken to address any perceived risk to Vulnerable Persons must have regard to the nature and extent of the risk as well as to any particular and relevant aspects of the sport and, in the light of this, must seek to ensure that such steps will be effective.
- 46.10. In cases where the perceived risk is low, and no criminal or disciplinary charge could be made out, it may be nonetheless necessary to impose stringent restrictions on an individual or remove his/her ability to participate in the sport.
- 46.11. In case of suspicion of a criminal offence the matter shall be referred to the relevant local authorities, in accordance with the applicable law.
- 46.12. During the investigation procedure the Bowls SA Investigating Team and persons involved with the investigation must respect the confidentiality of the information, as set out in clauses 40 -42 of this Policy.
- 46.13. Where Bowls SA's rules and this Policy have been breached, the National Designated Safeguarding Officers shall inform the Ethics Committee in order to engage in the disciplinary or ethical procedure.

DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURE

47. In the event of abuse and/or harassment but which is not deemed to be a criminal offence in accordance with the applicable law, the matter shall be dealt with in accordance with the Bowls SA Disciplinary Policy.
48. Where a matter has been referred to the relevant local authorities, the National Safeguarding Officers, in collaboration with the Bowls SA Ethics Committee and the Safeguarding Investigation Unit, may at any stage for whatever reason refer the matter to a Bowls SA Disciplinary Committee or Independent Disciplinary Committee.
49. Should the abuser, who is found guilty, appeal against the decision of the Disciplinary Committee, the sanction remains applicable and shall be enforced pending the outcome of the appeal, unless otherwise determined by the Disciplinary Committee.
50. Safeguarding decisions applied by the Bowls SA Disciplinary Committee, an Independent Disciplinary Committee and/or the relevant local authority will be kept on record at the Bowls SA Office.

NON-RECENT INCIDENTS

51. Serious allegations of sexual abuse may be made some time after the event. Where a non-recent allegation is made, the National Designated Safeguarding Officers will manage the process as set out in this Policy.

52. This policy does not apply any specific limitations periods for sexual abuse and any serious allegation of non-recent sexual abuse will be treated in accordance with these procedures.

CRIMINAL CONVICTIONS & FINDINGS OF FACT

53. Bowls SA shall establish that an incident of abuse and/or harassment has occurred where:

- 53.1. A Bowls SA participant is convicted of a criminal offence; or
- 53.2. Another recognized regulatory body has determined that an allegation(s) of abuse and/or harassment against a Bowls SA participant is/are proven; and
- 53.3. The Bowls SA Disciplinary Committee having considered any representations made by the participant and any other affected parties may determine that it is appropriate to impose a sanction relating to Bowls SA activities.

54. The Bowls SA Disciplinary Committee may apply the sanction to some or all Bowls SA activities or determine its own sanction(s). Any sanction imposed by Bowls SA shall be subject to a right of appeal in accordance with the Bowls SA Disciplinary Policy.

RETENTION OF RECORDS

55. Any information relating to complaints of abuse and/or harassment will be stored securely and be compliant with the requirements of the Protection of Personal Information Act.

- 55.1. Any information about poor practice or complaints about abuse and/or harassment that may indicate that a participant in a position of trust is unsuitable to work or volunteer in the sport will be retained for as long as the participant remains active in the sport or for 10 years, whichever is longer, even if it were not possible at the time that the information was first reported to instigate any formal proceeding.
- 55.2. Any other records relating to other complaints will be retained for a period of 3 years unless a similar complaint arises within that period.

56. Any records relating to disciplinary action taken by Bowls SA should be retained in accordance with the retention periods set out in Bowls SA Disciplinary Policy.

SAFE RECRUITMENT AND VETTING OF EMPLOYEES & VOLUNTEERS

57. The minimum standards for the vetting of applicants for roles in the sport to be undertaken during the recruitment process for new applicants and retrospectively for required existing employees and volunteers in order to prevent unsuitable individuals from working with Vulnerable Persons are:

57.1. Required potential and existing employees and volunteers (see clause 62) are to undergo the process of obtaining (The Guardian can assist in this process):

57.1.1. A Police Clearance Certificate.

57.1.2. A Child Protection Register Clearance Certificate.

57.1.3. A National Register for Sexual Offender Clearance Certificate.

57.2. Required potential and existing employees and volunteers are further to:

57.2.1. Complete the Declaration of Good Standing (see attached).

57.2.2. Sign a Code of Ethics.

57.2.3. Complete the Safeguarding Awareness Certificate.

58. In addition, required potential and existing employees and volunteers may be requested to provide the names of two referees who must provide a reference using Bowls SA's employee reference form.

59. Bowls SA, Provincial/District Bowls Associations, and their affiliated Clubs, as well as Bowls SA Associate Members must implement the minimum standards to check the suitability of required employees and volunteers to work with Vulnerable Persons. Any concerns raised as to the suitability of an individual to work with Vulnerable Persons during the vetting process must be investigated before a decision is made to appoint a new employee or volunteer.

60. If a concern has arisen during the vetting of the required existing employees or volunteers regarding their suitability to work with Vulnerable Persons, Bowls SA, any of its Members and their affiliated Clubs may suspend the employee and volunteer from all or some of their duties whilst an investigation is conducted.

61. The following are deemed to be employees and volunteers that are required to minimum standards for the vetting of employees and volunteers (Bowls SA has the right to amend the following list as and when required):

61.1. All Executive Committee Members.

61.2. All Employees that have regular, more than 3 times per month, contact with persons deemed to be a Vulnerable Person.

- 61.3. All members of the National/Provincial/District/Associate Member Standing Committee for Coaches.
 - 61.4. All members of a National/Provincial/District/Associate Member Academy (not the players).
 - 61.5. All members of the National/Provincial/District/Associate Member Standing Committee for the Youth.
 - 61.6. All members of any “Schools Bowls Associations” Committee(s), albeit on a National/Provincial/District level.
 - 61.7. All National/Provincial/District/Associate Member/Club Coaches (thus all active Coaches).
 - 61.8. All Directors for Visually Impaired Bowlers.
 - 61.9. All Assistants for Physically Disabled Bowlers.
 - 61.10. All Team Managers.
 - 61.11. All appointed Designated Safeguarding Officers.
62. Once-Off Volunteers and Service Providers. All once-off volunteers, and Service Providers, who work with Vulnerable Persons will be required to complete a Declaration of Good Standing (see attached proforma).
63. In line with best practice, Bowls SA recommends that the minimum standards for the vetting of employees and volunteers working with Vulnerable Persons is repeated every 2 years.

Bowls SA: Safeguarding Reporting Form

This form should be used to record safeguarding concerns relating to Children and/or Vulnerable Persons.

In an emergency please do not delay in informing the police or social services. All the information must be treated as confidential and reported to the Designated Safeguarding Officer within one working day or the next working day if it's a weekend.

The form should be completed at the time or immediately following disclosure, but after all necessary emergency actions have been taken. Please complete the form as fully as possible

| | |
|--------------|---|
| 1 | Your details (The person completing this form) |
| Name | |
| Position | |
| Telephone No | |
| Email | |

| | |
|--------------|-----------------------------------|
| 2 | Details of person affected |
| Name | |
| Position | |
| Telephone No | |
| Email | |

| | |
|--------------|--|
| 3 | Other present or possible witness |
| Name | |
| Position | |
| Telephone No | |
| Email | |

5

Details of the incident (please describe in detail using only the facts)

| | |
|----------|--|
| 5 | Additional relevant information |
| | |

I have completed this form and provided information that is factual and does not contain my own views or opinions on the matter.

Signature

Date

| |
|--|
| Bowls SA: Provincial/District Bowls Association, Associate Member and Club Acknowledgement Form |
|--|

| | |
|----------|--|
| 1 | Provincial/District Bowls Association, Associate Member and/or Club Details |
| Name | |

| | |
|--------------|-----------------------------|
| 2 | Details of President |
| Name | |
| Telephone No | |
| Email | |

| | |
|--------------|-----------------------------|
| 3 | Details of Secretary |
| Name | |
| Telephone No | |
| Email | |

We hereby confirm that we have read the Bowls SA Policy & Procedures for Safeguarding Participants in Bowls and that the Provincial/District Bowls Association, Associate Member and/or Club have adopted and implemented the stipulations of this policy.

Signed on (date) _____ in (town) _____

President

Secretary

(Note: Once signed please return by email to the National Safeguarding Officer)

Bowls SA: Employees & Volunteers Declaration of Good Standing

| | |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| 1 | Details of Employee/Volunteer |
| Full Names | |
| ID No | |
| Telephone No | |
| Email | |
| Entity (Club/District, etc) | |
| Appointment (Coach, Development Officer, etc) | |

I hereby declare that I have not been involved in any activity contrary to The Children's Act 38 of 2005 and The Criminal Law (sexual offences and related matters) Amendment Act 32 of 2007, whether officially charged, or not, in a Court of Law (Civil or Criminal) or an internal (Sport Association or Workplace) disciplinary hearing.

Signed on (date) _____ in (town) _____

Signature: _____

Witness:

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Full Names: _____