



CHILD SAFETY – REPORTING CHILD ABUSE, HARM AND CHILD SAFETY CONCERNS

Le Page Park Cricket Club is committed to providing a safe, welcoming and inclusive environment for all children and young people.

All concerns, disclosures, allegations or suspicions relating to the safety or wellbeing of a child or young person must be taken seriously and acted upon promptly.

This procedure should be read together with the current **Australian Cricket Policy for Safeguarding Children and Young People, Looking After Our Kids Code of Behaviour, Cricket Victoria Member Protection Policy, Cricket Victoria Complaints and Resolution Policy**, and the Club's Child Safety and Wellbeing policies and procedures.

1. IMMEDIATE DANGER

If a child or young person is in immediate danger, is at immediate risk of harm, requires urgent medical assistance, or a crime is occurring:

CALL 000 IMMEDIATELY.

The safety and wellbeing of the child or young person must always be the first priority.

2. RECEIVING A DISCLOSURE OR CHILD SAFETY CONCERN

If a child or young person tells you that they have been harmed, abused or feel unsafe:

- listen carefully and remain calm
- take what the child or young person says seriously
- allow them to use their own words
- reassure them that they have done the right thing by speaking up
- do not promise secrecy
- do not ask leading or unnecessary questions
- do not confront the person who is the subject of the allegation
- explain that you may need to tell people who can help keep them safe
- record what was said as soon as possible, using the child's own words where possible
- report the matter in accordance with this procedure.

You do not need proof that abuse has occurred before raising or reporting a concern.

3. FAILURE TO DISCLOSE – ALL ADULTS

Victorian law requires **all adults** who form a reasonable belief that another adult has committed a sexual offence against a child under 16 years of age to report that information to **Victoria Police**, unless a lawful exception applies.

Failure to disclose this information to Victoria Police may constitute a criminal offence.

Concerns about the reputation of an individual, the Club or another organisation are not a reason for failing to report.

Victoria Police

Emergency: **000**

Police Assistance Line: **131 444** for non-urgent police matters.

4. FAILURE TO PROTECT

Victorian law also contains a **Failure to Protect** offence.

A person in a position of authority within an organisation must take reasonable steps to reduce or remove a substantial risk that an adult associated with the organisation will commit a sexual offence against a child under 16 who is under the organisation's care, supervision or authority.

Child safety must always take priority over the reputation or interests of the Club or any individual.

5. MANDATORY REPORTING TO DFFH CHILD PROTECTION

Certain professionals are **Mandatory Reporters** under Victorian law.

Mandatory Reporters include, among others:

- registered medical practitioners
- nurses and midwives
- police officers
- registered teachers and school principals
- early childhood workers
- registered psychologists
- school counsellors
- youth justice workers
- out-of-home care workers
- people in religious ministry.

A Mandatory Reporter must make a report to **Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH) Child Protection** as soon as practicable when, in the course of their professional duties, they form a belief on reasonable grounds that:

- a child has suffered, or is likely to suffer, significant harm as a result of physical injury or sexual abuse; and
- the child's parents or carers have not protected, or are unlikely to protect, the child from that harm.

A further report must be made if additional reasonable grounds for the belief become known.

Being involved with Le Page Park Cricket Club does not remove an individual's professional mandatory reporting obligations.

6. EVERYONE CAN REPORT A CHILD SAFETY CONCERN

You do **not** need to be a Mandatory Reporter to contact DFFH Child Protection, Victoria Police or another appropriate authority about concerns for a child's safety.

Le Page Park Cricket Club expects all committee members, coaches, team managers, volunteers, players and other people involved with the Club to act on concerns about the safety or wellbeing of a child or young person.

Concerns may include:

- physical abuse
- sexual abuse or sexual misconduct
- grooming
- emotional or psychological abuse
- neglect
- family violence
- inappropriate behaviour towards a child
- breaches of the Child Safe Code of Conduct
- online abuse or inappropriate electronic communication
- bullying, harassment or discrimination
- behaviour that otherwise places a child or young person at risk.

When in doubt, seek advice rather than ignoring a concern.

7. REPORTABLE CONDUCT SCHEME

The Victorian Reportable Conduct Scheme provides independent oversight of allegations of child abuse and child-related misconduct by workers and volunteers of organisations that are covered by the Scheme.

Reportable conduct includes:

- sexual offences against, with or in the presence of a child
- sexual misconduct against, with or in the presence of a child
- physical violence against, with or in the presence of a child
- behaviour that causes significant emotional or psychological harm
- significant neglect of a child.

Where an organisation is covered by the Reportable Conduct Scheme, the **Head of Organisation** has specific reporting and investigation responsibilities.

The Head of Organisation must notify the **Social Services Regulator (SSR)** of a reportable allegation within **three business days** of becoming aware of it and provide further prescribed information within **30 calendar days**.

A report to the Social Services Regulator does not replace any requirement to report the matter to Victoria Police or DFFH Child Protection.

Where criminal conduct may have occurred, Victoria Police must be notified and any internal investigation must not interfere with a police investigation.

8. REPORTING WITHIN CRICKET

Australian Cricket requires concerns and allegations involving children and young people participating in cricket to be reported in accordance with the **Australian Cricket Policy for Safeguarding Children and Young People**.

If a suspicion or allegation concerns criminal conduct and/or significant harm to a child or young person, the matter must be reported to:

- **Victoria Police**, where appropriate
- the relevant **Victorian Government child protection authority**, where appropriate; and
- the appropriate **Cricket contacts**.

Child safety concerns should also be reported promptly to the Club's:

Child Safety Officer: Narelle Partridge

Phone: 0418507482

Email: lpccchildssafetyofficer@gmail.com

and/or

Complaints Manager: John Ashton

Phone: 0438 123 574

A report to a Club official **does not replace an individual's legal obligation to report directly to Victoria Police, DFFH Child Protection or another relevant authority.**

Concerns involving community cricket may also be reported to Cricket Victoria.

Cricket Victoria

Phone: (03) 9085 4000

Email: mpio@cricketvictoria.com.au

Child safety matters can also be reported through Australian Cricket's child safeguarding and integrity reporting channels.

Australian Cricket / Core Integrity

Phone: 1300 FAIR GAME (1300 3247 4263)

Email: childsafecricket.com.au

HOW TO REPORT TO DFFH CHILD PROTECTION

Reports to DFFH Child Protection should generally be made to the Child Protection intake service covering the Local Government Area where the child normally resides.

Business Hours

Monday–Friday, 8:45am–5:00pm

North Division: 1300 598 521

South Division: 1300 555 526

East Division: 1300 360 452

West Division: 1300 360 462

After Hours

For urgent child protection concerns outside normal business hours:

After-Hours Child Protection Emergency Service: 13 12 78

Emergency

If a child is in immediate danger:

Victoria Police – 000

WHEN MAKING OR RECORDING A REPORT

Where possible, record:

- the child's name, age and relevant details
- the date, time and location of the incident or disclosure
- exactly what the child or young person said, using their own words
- observations or behaviours that caused concern
- the name and details of the person about whom the concern has been raised, if known
- witnesses, if any
- actions taken to protect the child
- who was contacted
- the date and time reports were made
- advice provided by Victoria Police, DFFH, Cricket Victoria or another authority
- any further action required.

Records relating to child safety concerns must be treated as **confidential, securely stored and only shared with people who need the information to protect the child, comply with the law or appropriately manage the matter.**

Do not conduct your own investigation or interview witnesses unless appropriately authorised to do so.

IMPORTANT

Child safety comes first.

Do not delay a report because:

- you do not have all the information
- you are unsure whether the allegation is true
- another person says they will report it
- the person involved is a friend, colleague, coach, volunteer or respected member of the Club
- you are concerned about the Club's reputation
- you have reported the matter internally.

If you form a reasonable belief that requires a report, **make the report as soon as practicable.**

Le Page Park Cricket Club supports children and young people to speak up, be heard and participate in decisions affecting their safety. All concerns will be taken seriously and handled in a child-focused, culturally safe, inclusive and confidential manner.