

# Sample Equal Opportunities Policy

## Statement of Policy

[INSERT CLUB NAME] aims to achieve an inclusive and respectful environment and recognises the right of all people who participate in the club and interact with [INSERT CLUB NAME] to be treated with dignity and respect.

The purposes of this policy are to encourage a club culture based on the Code of Conduct and to prevent unacceptable conduct. This policy sets out the processes and options available to all volunteers and members who encounter unacceptable conduct.

[INSERT CLUB NAME] will:

- promote appropriate standards of conduct in accordance with the Code of Conduct at all times
- take appropriate action against any club member who breaches this policy
- implement strategies to ensure that all members and volunteers know their rights and responsibilities and are protected in relation to those rights.

## Scope

This policy applies to:

- Board/committee members
- all club members and volunteers, including
- how [INSERT CLUB NAME] interacts with other members of the public, other clubs and the media
- all aspects of recruitment and selection; club promotion; task allocation; training, game day, club functions, and transport
- whenever members are wearing the [INSERT CLUB NAME] uniform in public

## Aims

*{This section could directly quote from relevant parts of your club's vision, mission or values}*

[INSERT CLUB NAME] is committed to providing a safe, inclusive and respectful environment for volunteers and members free from all forms of discrimination, bullying, sexual harassment, and racial and religious vilification.

All [INSERT CLUB NAME] volunteers and members are required to treat others with dignity, courtesy and respect.

By effectively implementing our *Equal opportunity policy* we will attract and retain talented players, committed club members and volunteers and create a positive environment.

## **Unacceptable Club conduct**

The following behaviours are unacceptable in [INSERT CLUB NAME] and may be against the law. Volunteers and members (including committee members and leaders) found to have engaged in such conduct might be warned, disciplined or dismissed. Severe or repeated breaches can lead to formal discipline, including dismissal.

Discrimination, bullying, sexual harassment, and racial and religious vilification are unacceptable at [INSERT CLUB NAME] and are covered by federal and state legislation:

- *Equal Opportunity Act 2010* (Vic)
- *Racial and Religious Tolerance Act 2001* (Vic)
- *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004* (Vic)
- *Sex Discrimination Act 1984* (Cth)
- *Racial Discrimination Act 1975* (Cth)
- *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* (Cth)
- *Age Discrimination Act 2004* (Cth)
- *Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986* (Cth).

## **Rights and responsibilities**

All members and volunteers are entitled to:

- recruitment and selection decisions based on merit and not affected by irrelevant personal characteristics
- club participation free from discrimination, bullying, sexual harassment, and racial and religious vilification
- the right to raise issues or to make an enquiry or complaint in a reasonable and respectful manner without being victimised
- reasonable flexibility in club commitments, especially where needed to accommodate their family and carer responsibilities, disability, religion and culture

All members must:

- follow the code of conduct
- take bystander action to challenge discrimination, sexual harassment or vilification and offer support to people who experience this behaviour
- avoid gossip and respect the confidentiality of complaint resolution procedures
- treat everyone with dignity, courtesy and respect

Club leaders and coaches must also:

- model appropriate standards of behaviour
- take steps to educate and make players/members aware of their obligations under this policy and the law
- intervene quickly and appropriately when they become aware of inappropriate behaviour
- act fairly to resolve issues and enforce club behavioural standards, making sure relevant parties are heard
- help players/members resolve complaints informally

- refer formal complaints about breaches of this policy to the appropriate complaint handling officer for investigation
- ensure players/members who raise an issue or make a complaint are not victimised
- ensure that recruitment decisions are based on merit and that no discriminatory requests for information are made

### **Complaints Process**

The [INSERT CLUB NAME] strongly encourages any club member who believes they have been discriminated against, bullied or harassed, sexually harassed, vilified or victimised to take appropriate action. Please do not suffer in silence.

Club members who do not feel safe or confident to take such action may seek assistance from key leaders and appropriate contacts in the for advice and support or action their behalf.

*Insert club contacts here*

All complaints will be taken seriously, treated confidentially, fairly and consistently, and resolved as speedily as possible.

Refer to Club Grievance and Complaints Resolution Policy for further details

### **Discrimination**

Discrimination is treating, or proposing to treat, someone unfavourably because of a personal characteristic protected by the law, such as sex, age, race or disability.

Discrimination can occur:

*Directly*, when a person or group is treated unfavourably because of a personal characteristic protected by law (see list below).

*For example, a player is harassed and humiliated because of their race*

*Indirectly*, when an unreasonable requirement, condition or practice is imposed that has, or is likely to have, the effect of disadvantaging people with a personal characteristic protected by law (see list below).

*For example, committee meetings held at times not suitable for those with caring responsibilities*

### **Protected personal characteristics in Victoria include:**

- a disability, disease or injury, including work-related injury
- parental status or status as a carer, for example because they are responsible for caring for children or other family members
- race, colour, descent, nationality, ancestry or ethnic background
- age, whether young or old, or because of age in general
- sex
- physical features, such as height, weight, size, hair or birthmarks
- religious belief or taking part in religious activity, or not holding a religious belief
- pregnancy and breastfeeding
- lawful sexual activity

- sexual orientation or gender identity, including gay, lesbian, bisexual, transsexual, transgender, queer and heterosexual
- marital status, whether married, divorced, unmarried or in a de facto relationship
- political belief or political activity
- an association with someone who has, or is assumed to have, one of these characteristics, such as being the parent of a child with a disability.

### **Bullying**

If someone is being bullied because of a personal characteristic protected by equal opportunity law, it is a form of discrimination.

Bullying can take many forms, including jokes, teasing, nicknames, emails, pictures, text messages, social isolation or ignoring people, or unfair work practices.

Under the *Equal Opportunity Act 2010*, this behaviour does not have to be repeated to be discrimination – it may be a one-off event.

Behaviours that may constitute bullying include:

- sarcasm and other forms of demeaning language
- threats, abuse or shouting
- coercion
- isolation
- inappropriate blaming
- ganging up
- constant unconstructive criticism
- deliberately withholding information or equipment that a person needs to do their job or access their entitlements
- unreasonable refusal of requests for leave, training or other workplace benefits.

### **Racial and religious vilification**

- Vilification is behaviour that encourages others to hate, disrespect, or abuse a person or group of people because of their race or religion.
- This includes spoken, written, online or physical behaviour towards a particular race or religious group that encourages others to ridicule them, be hateful or violent towards them, damage their property, or make false claims against them.
- It is also against the law to give permission or help someone to vilify others, for example by publishing or distributing information about them.

### **Gossip**

- Gossip about issues or complaints is unacceptable in [INSERT CLUB NAME]
- It is not appropriate for members or volunteers to talk with other members or volunteers about a complaint, whether it is theirs or anyone else's.
- Gossip is likely to reinforce a problem, create new problems (for example, victimisation) and make it harder to solve the original issue.



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