



WELLBEING & PROTECTION POLICY

Approved: 28 October 2025

Reviewed:

Waikato Hockey is dedicated to promoting the wellbeing and protection of its members, staff, parents, volunteers, and participants in Waikato Hockey events. The organisation is committed to eliminating discrimination, harassment, abuse, and any other forms of inappropriate behaviour from the sport.

Staff, (including employees and contractors) and volunteers will work together to respect the right of all players and those associated with Waikato Hockey and Club/School events, especially children and vulnerable individuals.

This policy is to be read together with Waikato Hockey's Policies and Procedures, more specifically **Code of Conduct; Police Vetting Policy; Complaints Policy and Procedure; Waikato Hockey Competition Bylaws, and Data Protection Policy**. These policies can be found by following the link to the Waikato Hockey website <https://www.waikatohockey.org.nz/about-us/resources-policies/>

Any queries about this or any other related Waikato Hockey policy can be directed to the ceo@waikatohockey.org.nz

Purpose

This policy aims to:

Ensure a safe, inclusive, and supportive environment for all participants in Waikato Hockey or Member Club / School events and activities, regardless of age, background, or ability. This policy aims to safeguard individuals from harassment, abuse, and discrimination, while promoting respectful behaviour, positive values, and the overall health and welfare of those involved in hockey events and activities. By implementing this policy, Waikato Hockey is committed to fostering a culture of safety, respect, and wellbeing, ensuring that every participant can enjoy and thrive.

Application

This policy applies to:

- Any person or organisation that is a member of, or affiliated to, Waikato Hockey
- Persons appointed or elected to Waikato Hockey's Board, committees, and sub-committees
- Employees and volunteers of Waikato Hockey and organisations affiliated to Waikato Hockey
- Support personnel appointed or elected to Waikato Hockey teams and squads (e.g. managers, physiotherapists, psychologists, masseurs, sport trainers, etc);
- National coaches and assistant coaches
- Athletes, including national representative athletes
- Officials involved in the regulation of the sport
- Athletes, coaches, and other personnel participating in events and activities, including camps and training sessions, held, or sanctioned by clubs, and Waikato Hockey
- Parents, guardians, spectators and sponsors to the full extent that is possible, including where spectators, parents/guardians and sponsors, who or which agree in writing (whether on a ticket, entry form or otherwise) to be bound by this policy.

Review and Amendments

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Waikato Hockey Board to ensure it remains relevant and effective. The Waikato Hockey Board may, at its sole discretion, amend this policy to suit business needs at any time and will provide an update specifying any such amendments.

ROLES AND RESPONSABILITIES TO SAFEGUARD

Responsibilities of Waikato Hockey

- Promote the health and wellbeing of players, staff and volunteers by providing opportunities for them to take part in Waikato Hockey activities
- Respect and promote the rights, wishes and feelings of all players, staff and volunteers
- Promote and implement appropriate procedures, support and guidance to safeguard the wellbeing of players, staff and volunteers and protect them from abuse
- Placing the safety and welfare of children and vulnerable individuals above other considerations
- Recruit, train, support and supervise staff and volunteers to adopt best practice to safeguard and protect players, staff and volunteers from abuse and to reduce risk to themselves
- Require staff, affiliated clubs and volunteers to adopt and abide by this policy and procedure
- Respond to any allegations of misconduct or abuse of players, staff and volunteers in line with this Policy and these procedures as well as implementing, where appropriate, the relevant disciplinary and appeals procedures as per Waikato Hockey's Constitution
- Maintain confidential records of all complaints, concerns and sanctions against clubs and individuals
- Ensure best practice is extensively promoted, and clubs, coaches, officials and all members are encouraged to follow guidelines set down by Waikato Hockey
- Maintain registration as an Intermediary Body to facilitate Police Checks on behalf of clubs to prevent unsuitable people from working within our sport
- Regularly monitor and evaluate the implementation of this policy and these procedures
- Promote an environment where all legitimate concerns can be raised without fear of victimisation or reprisal

Responsibilities of Member Clubs and Schools

Member Clubs and Schools bound by these policies are responsible to:

- Adopt the Wellbeing & Protection Policy
- Adhere to the guidelines and procedures contained within this policy
- Placing the safety and welfare of children and vulnerable individuals above other considerations
- Accept that all office bearers and committee members have a responsibility for safeguarding, wellbeing and child protection and be prepared to respond to any indication of abuse or poor practice
- Have all volunteers, coaches, athletes and parents adhere to the club's or Waikato Hockey's code of conduct
- Be prepared to challenge and alter poor practice
- Promote an environment where all legitimate concerns can be raised without fear of victimisation or reprisal

Responsibilities of the Individual

Individuals bound by these policies are responsible to:

- Making themselves aware of these policies and complying with their standards of behaviour
- Placing the safety and welfare of children and vulnerable individuals above other considerations
- Being accountable for their own behaviour
- Following the procedures outlined in these policies regarding child protection concerns
- Co-operating in providing a discrimination, abuse and harassment free sporting environment
- Understanding the possible consequences of breaching these policies
- Complying with any decisions and/or disciplinary measures imposed pursuant to these policies.

POLICY DEFINITIONS

Physical Abuse: Physical abuse is any act that results in inflicted injury to a person. Injuries caused through abuse/neglect are known as non-accidental injury. They may include, but are not restricted to:

- a) Shaking, hitting, kicking, pushing, throwing, or, training methods that are inappropriate for the age and physiological development of the athlete.
- b) Any strength training should be used with extreme caution as it can be harmful if not conducted appropriately.

Sexual Abuse: Sexual abuse is any act or acts that result in the sexual exploitation of a person whether consensual or not. It may be perpetrated by an adult, older child, or similar-aged athlete. It may include, but is not restricted to:

- a) Non-contact abuse such as: exhibitionism, suggestive behaviours, or comments; exposing children or vulnerable people to any obscene or inappropriate material or images; and
- b) Contact abuse such as: touching breasts, genital areas, or any inappropriate contact

Emotional/Psychological Abuse: Emotional abuse is any act or omission that results in impaired psychological, social, intellectual and/or emotional functioning and development of a person. It may include, but is not restricted to:

- a) Rejection or isolation; inappropriate or continued criticism, threats, humiliation or accusations of the child or young person; exposing children to, or involvement in anti-social or illegal activities; bullying actions such as sarcasm, persistent teasing, tormenting.

Neglect: Neglect is any act or omission that results in impaired psychological functioning, injury and/or development of a person. It may include, but is not restricted to:

- a) Failing to provide medical care when necessary; neglectful supervision, defined by failure to provide developmentally appropriate supervision of the child or young person or athlete, leading to increased risk of harm; abandonment – leaving a child or young person in a situation without arranging necessary care for them and with no intention of returning.

Sexual Harassment: Sexual harassment is described as ‘unwanted, unwelcome or uninvited sexual attention’. Some of the behaviours that lead to sexual harassment are, but not limited to:

- a) Someone who draws another person into emotional intimacy through developing inappropriate friendships; someone who is coercive about their rights to demand favours from children; inappropriate flattery; someone who is coerced into divulging personal information; jokes; display of offensive material; or propositions.

Discrimination: Discrimination is defined as the unjust or prejudicial treatment of different categories of people, especially on the grounds of race, age, or sex.

Child(ren): For the purposes of this policy, “children”, “child” and “young person” refer to persons under the age of 18. (Children’s Act 2014)

Vulnerable Individuals: An adult who is unable, by reason of detention, age, sickness, mental impairment, or any other cause, to withdraw himself or herself from the care of another person. (Crimes Act 1961)

Individual: Anyone who is part of or associated with Waikato Hockey, including employees, volunteers, and participants or participating in a Waikato Hockey or Waikato Hockey member club activity.

Athlete: means any person who regardless of age or gender, takes part in Waikato Hockey or Waikato Hockey Club training or competition.

Child Abuse: is the harming (whether physically, emotionally, sexually), ill treatment, abuse, neglect, or deprivation of any child.

Member: includes, but is not limited to, any person using, or engaged in, Waikato Hockey services.

Member Club: refers to all clubs or schools affiliated with Waikato Hockey.

Oranga Tamariki - Ministry for Children, formally known as Child Youth and Family. Oranga Tamariki is a Government Ministry dedicated to supporting children in New Zealand whose wellbeing is at significant risk of harm now, or in the future.

Staff: refers to any person working at, or on behalf of, Waikato Hockey and includes, but is not limited to, persons engaged directly by Waikato Hockey, irrespective of whether they are paid or voluntary, or whether they are working on a full time, part time, casual, or temporary basis, as well as any persons contracted or invited to provide services to Waikato Hockey. “Staff” extends to include all Waikato Hockey committees, board members, affiliates, and parent helpers.

POSITION STATEMENTS

Child Protection

Waikato Hockey Association (Waikato Hockey), its staff, and affiliated members, have a responsibility to ensure that those participating in our sport are safeguarded from all forms of harm. It is the primary responsibility of all Waikato Hockey staff to be vigilant, have knowledge and awareness of the indicators of neglect and abuse, whether actual or potential, and report any concerns, suspicions or allegations immediately. Staff have a responsibility to ensure that any concern, suspicion or allegation raised is taken seriously.

Guiding Principles:

- Waikato Hockey aims to foster an environment which ensures the safety and wellbeing of all children.
- Waikato Hockey asserts that all persons have equal rights to protection from abuse, neglect and exploitation regardless of their gender, race, religion, political beliefs, age, physical or mental health, sexual orientation, family and social background, and culture, economic status or criminal background.
- All children engaged in Waikato Hockey services have a right to feel safe and comfortable in that environment.
- The decisions and actions of Waikato Hockey in response to any child protection concern will be guided by the principle of the welfare and best interests of the child.
- Adults should at all times establish and maintain appropriate professional boundaries in their relationships with athletes.

Electronic & Social Media/Networking

Waikato Hockey acknowledges the enormous value of social networking websites, such as (but not limited to) Facebook (Meta) and X, to promote our sport and celebrate the achievements and success of the people involved in our sport.

We expect all people bound by this policy to conduct themselves appropriately when using social networking sites to share information related to our sport.

Social media postings, blogs, status updates and tweets:

- must not use offensive, provocative or hateful language;
- must not be misleading, false or injure the reputation of another person;
- should respect and maintain the privacy of others.

Children and Electronic & Social Media/Networking –

Many children and young people communicate using electronic and social networking platforms, of which many modalities are available to them. Ideally, communication should be conducted between the coach/another adult and the parent of the child, however, if you need to communicate directly with the child/athlete, you need to observe the cautions stated below.

Waikato Hockey recommends the following cautions:

- If coaches use phone text or any other social networking means to communicate directly with athletes of any age, content remains brief and functionally related to hockey and avoids any social comment;
- Any electronic communication by a coach with an athlete of any age remains professional but brief;
- Do not include personal information of yourself or others in social media channels;
- Do not use offensive, provocative or hateful language or images;
- Use your best judgement – do not publish something that makes you feel the slightest bit uncomfortable and, never write/publish if you are feeling emotional or upset (or are intoxicated);
- Always ask for a person's permission before posting their picture on a social networking forum;
- Never comment on rumours, do not deny or affirm them or speculate about rumours; and
- Always use electronic and social network forums to add value and promote the sport in a positive way.

Physical Contact

It is imperative that in all dealings with children, a balance is struck between the rights of the child and the need for intervention. When physical contact is made with a child this should be in response to their needs at the time, of limited duration and appropriate to their age, stage of development, gender, ethnicity and background.

Staff and adult members should always use their professional judgement, observe and take note of the child's reaction or feelings and use a level of contact and/or form of communication which is acceptable to the child for the minimum amount of time necessary. Any sexual activity between Waikato Hockey staff or adult members and a child will be regarded as a criminal offence and will always be a matter for disciplinary action.

Private Spaces

No Waikato Hockey staff or adult members are permitted to enter a private space such as a toilet, bathroom or changing facilities while it is being used by children.

Cyber Bullying/Safety

Waikato Hockey regards bullying and harassment in all forms as unacceptable in our sport. Bullying has the potential to cause great anxiety and distress to the person targeted by hurtful or derogatory comments or statements.

New technologies and communication tools, such as smart phones and social networking websites, have greatly increased the potential for people to be bullied through unwanted and inappropriate comments.

Waikato Hockey will not tolerate abusive, discriminatory, intimidating or offensive statements being made online. In some cases, bullying is a criminal offence. When a child alleges inappropriate harmful behaviour by another child then the child protection procedures outlined within the Waikato Hockey Member Protection Policy must be considered for both children.

Frustration at a referee, teammate, coach, staff or sporting body should never be communicated on social networking websites or online.

Anti-discrimination and Harassment

Waikato Hockey is committed to fostering a sporting environment where everyone involved is treated with dignity and respect, free from harassment or discrimination.

Waikato Hockey recognises that all those involved in its activities cannot enjoy themselves, perform to their best or be effective or fully productive if they are being treated unfairly, discriminated against or harassed because of their age, disability, family responsibilities, gender identity, homosexuality or sexual orientation, medical, marital status, political belief, pregnancy or breastfeeding, race, religion, gender or social origin.

Waikato Hockey opposes all forms of harassment, discrimination and bullying. This includes treating or proposing to treat someone less favourable because of a particular characteristic, imposing or intending to impose an unreasonable requirement, condition or practice which has an unequal, disproportionate effect of 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.

Sexual Relationship

Waikato Hockey takes the position that consensual intimate relationships (whether or not of a sexual nature) between coaches and the adult athletes they coach should be avoided as they can have harmful effects on the athlete involved, on other athletes and coaches and on the sport's public image. These relationships can also be perceived to be exploitative due to the differences in authority, power, maturity, status, influence and dependence between the coach and the athlete.

If an athlete attempts to initiate an intimate sexual relationship with a coach, it is the coach's responsibility to discourage the approach and to explain why such a relationship is not appropriate. Any sexual activity between Waikato Hockey staff or adult members and a child will be regarded as a criminal offence and will always be a matter for disciplinary action.

Pregnancy

Pregnant women should be treated with respect and any unreasonable barriers to their full participation in our sport should be removed.

Waikato Hockey recommends that pregnant women wanting to participate in our sport consult with their medical advisors to ensure they make informed decisions about participation. Pregnant women should be aware that their own health and wellbeing, and that of their unborn children, should be of the utmost importance in their decision making about the way they participate in our sport.

Gender Identity

Waikato Hockey are committed to fostering an inclusive, respectful, and fair environment for all participants, in alignment with the principles of gender equity and inclusion outlined by the International Hockey Federation (FIH) and Hockey New Zealand.

Should any concerns or questions arise regarding competitive fairness or eligibility, Waikato Hockey will seek guidance from Hockey New Zealand and adhere to the relevant national and international policies, including those of the FIH. All decisions will be made in accordance with current legislation, and best practice to ensure the integrity of the sport and the wellbeing of all participants.

Smoke Free Environment

Waikato Hockey is committed to conducting sporting and social events in a manner that promotes a smoke free environment.

The following policies should be applied to sporting and social events:

- No smoking, or vaping shall occur at or near any sporting event or competition involving persons under the age of 18 years. This policy shall apply to coaches, athletes, officials and volunteers; and
- Social functions shall be smoke free (this includes vaping).

Anti-Doping and Illicit Drugs in Sport

Waikato Hockey abides by the Sports Anti-Doping Rules (as amended from time to time by the Board of Drug Free Sport New Zealand) and International anti-doping rules as its anti-doping policy.

Waikato Hockey is committed to providing a drug-free sport in which members can compete. Breaches of the Sports Anti-Doping Rules shall be dealt with in accordance with those Rules.

This position statement is designed to help prevent the uptake of illicit drug use and reduce the drug related harm to individuals, families and stakeholders of Waikato Hockey and the broader community. Some illicit drugs may be legitimately used under the supervision of a physician for a clinically justified purpose and then only if approved by Sports Integrity Commission for each specific application.

If you are using a prohibited substance for a legitimate reason and wish to compete you should obtain a Therapeutic Use Exemption from the Sports Integrity Commission. The possession and use of illicit drugs is subject to New Zealand laws.

EDUCATION

Waikato Hockey will ensure that staff/volunteers receive ongoing education and training to keep up to date with any changes to the law or policy for ensuring the wellbeing and protection of players. Waikato Hockey will:

- Provide training sessions for staff and volunteers on the latest laws and policies related to the wellbeing and protection of all individuals.
- Ensure that all training materials are up-to-date and reflect current legal and policy changes.
- Encourage staff and volunteers to participate in external training opportunities and professional development courses.
- Foster a culture of learning and improvement within the organisation.
- Ensure that all new staff and volunteers receive comprehensive onboarding training on wellbeing and protection.

Indicators of Abuse

Physical indicators: Injuries to a child that occur in a pattern or occur frequently. These injuries range from bruises to broken bones to burns or unusual lacerations and are often unexplained or inconsistent with the explanation given.

Behavioural indicators: The child's actions, attitudes, and emotions can indicate the possibility of abuse or neglect. Behavioural indicators alone are much less reliable than physical indicators, as a child's behaviour may be the result of a variety of other problems or conditions.

When observing changes in behaviour, look for the frequency and pattern of the new behaviour, as well as a child's age and stage of development. For example, it is normal for younger children to be wary of adults, as they may have been taught not to talk to strangers. Look for a combination of physical and behavioural indicators.

Caregiver indicators: Caregivers who abuse, neglect or exploit children are either unable or unwilling to provide care and protection in an appropriate way. Those who are unable to provide care and protection may be physically unable due to their own medical or health condition. They may be overly stressed, tired, or working under the influence of drugs or alcohol which limits their abilities. Caregivers who are unwilling to provide children with the appropriate level of care and protection are more aware that Waikato Hockey they are doing is wrong but continue to act in that way. These caregivers may not view the child as someone who has feelings and emotions and often have the need to control others or have displaced aggression towards weaker persons.

The indicators alone do not prove child abuse or neglect. Likewise, the absence of indicators does not exclude the possibility that abuse is occurring. If you have any concerns about the wellbeing of a child, seek advice from the Waikato Hockey Member Protection Advisor or Oranga Tamariki.

Emotional Abuse Indicators

Physical Indicators:

- Bed wetting or bed soiling with no medical cause
- Frequent psychosomatic complaints (e.g. headaches, nausea, abdominal pains)
- Non-organic failure to thrive
- Pale, emaciated
- Prolonged vomiting and/or diarrhea
- Malnutrition
- Dressed differently to other children in the family

Behavioural Indicators:

- Severe developmental lags with obvious physical cause
- Depression, anxiety, withdrawal or aggression
- Self-destructive behaviour. This can include self-harm, suicide, alcohol and drug abuse
- Overly compliant
- Extreme attention seeking behaviours or extreme inhibition
- Running away from home, avoiding attendance at school/sport practice
- Nightmares, poor sleeping patterns
- Anti-social behaviours
- Lack of self esteem
- Obsessive behaviours
- Eating disorders

Caregiver Indicators:

- Labels the child as inferior or publicly humiliates the child (e.g. name calling)
- Treats the child differently from siblings or peers in ways that suggest dislike for the child
- Actively refuses to help the child
- Constantly threatens the child with physical harm or death
- Locks the child in a closet or room for extended periods of time
- Teaches or reinforces criminal behaviour
- Withholds physical and verbal affection
- Keeps the child at home in role of servant or surrogate parent
- Has unrealistic expectations of child
- Involves child in adult issues such as separation or disputes over child's care
- Exposes child to situations of arguing and violence in the home

Neglect Indicators

Physical Indicators:

- Dressed inappropriately for the season or the weather
- Often extremely dirty and unwashed
- Severe nappy rash or other persistent skin disorders
- Inadequately supervised or left unattended frequently or for long periods
- May be left in the care of an inappropriate adult
- Does not receive adequate medical or dental care
- Malnourished - this can be both underweight and overweight
- Lacks adequate shelter
- Non-organic failure to thrive

Behavioural Indicators:

- Severe developmental lags without an obvious physical cause
- Lack of attachment to parents/caregivers
- Indiscriminate attachment to other adults
- Poor school attendance and performance
- Demanding of affection and attention
- Engages in risk taking behaviour such as drug and alcohol abuse
- May steal food
- Poor social skills
- No understanding of basic hygiene

Caregiver Indicators:

- Puts own need ahead of child's
- Fails to provide child's basic needs
- Demonstrates little or no interest in child's life - does not attend school activities, social events
- Leaves the child alone or inappropriately supervised
- Drug and alcohol use
- Depression

Physical Abuse Indicators

Physical Indicators:

- Bruises, welts, cuts and abrasions
- Burns - small circular burns, immersion burns, rope burns etc.
- Fractures and dislocations - skull, facial bones, spinal fractures etc.
- Multiple fractures at different stages of healing
- Fractures in very young children

Behavioural Indicators:

- Inconsistent or vague explanations regarding injuries
- Wary of adults or a particular person
- Vacant stare or frozen watchfulness
- Cringing or flinching if touches unexpectedly
- May be extremely compliant and eager to please
- Dresses inappropriately to hide bruising or injuries
- Runs away from home or is afraid to go home
- May regress (e.g. bedwetting)
- May indicate general sadness
- Could have vision or hearing delay
- Is violent to other children or animals

Caregiver Indicators:

- Inconsistent or vague explanations regarding injuries
- May appear unconcerned about child's wellbeing
- May state the child is prone to injuries or lies about how they occur
- Delays in seeking medical attention
- May take the child to multiple medical appointments and seek medical treatment without an obvious need

Sexual Abuse Indicators

Physical Indicators:

- Unusual or excessive itching or pain in the genital or anal area
- Torn, stained or bloody underclothing
- Bruises, lacerations, redness, swelling or bleeding in genital, vaginal or anal area
- Blood in urine or stools
- Sexually transmitted infections
- Pregnancy
- Discomfort in sitting or fidgeting as unable to sit comfortably

Behavioural Indicators:

- Age-inappropriate sexual play or language
- Bizarre, sophisticated or unusual sexual knowledge
- Refuses to go home, or to a specific person's home, for no apparent reason
- Fear of a certain person
- Depression, anxiety, withdrawal or aggression
- Self-destructive behaviour. This can include self-harm, suicide, alcohol and drug abuse
- Overly compliant
- Extreme attention seeking behaviours or extreme inhibition
- Dresses inappropriately to hide bruising or injuries
- Eating disorders
- Compulsive behaviours

Caregiver Indicators:

- May be unusually over-protective of the child
- Accuses the child of being sexually provocative
- Misuses alcohol or drugs
- Invades the child's privacy (e.g. during dressing, in the bathroom)
- May favour the victim over other children

Family Violence Indicators

Indicators in the Child:

- Physical injuries consistent with the indicators of physical abuse
- Absenteeism from school
- Bullying or aggressive behaviour
- Complaints of headaches or stomach aches with no apparent medical reason
- Talking or describing violent behaviours

Indicators in the Victim:

- Physical Injuries including: bruising to chest and abdomen, injuries during pregnancy
- Depression and/or anxiety
- Inconsistent explanations for injuries
- Fearful
- Submissive

Indicators in the Offender:

- Isolates and controls partner and children
- Threatens, criticises, intimidates, uses aggressive and physical abuse towards partner and children
- Minimises and denies own behaviour, or blames victim for the perpetrator's own behaviour

REPORTING A CONCERN

Concerns, complaints, or allegations can originate from various sources, such as the child, their friends, their coach, a parent, or someone else within your organisation. These issues might involve the behaviour of a volunteer or employee, or something that has happened to the child outside of the sport, like at home or school. Children often confide in trusted adults in safe environments.

Reports or concerns can range from mild verbal bullying to physical or sexual abuse. If you suspect a someone is being abused, it is not your responsibility to investigate.

It takes significant courage for someone, especially a child or vulnerable individual, to disclose abuse, and such allegations must always be taken seriously

How to Raise Concerns and/or Make Complaints:

Where a complaint is of a serious nature or there is an issue of concern which cannot be resolved at Club, or School level, or it specifically relates to an occurrence at a Waikato Hockey event, please complete the Waikato Hockey [Complaints & Reporting Form](#)

- Noting any complaint made may be directed to a more appropriate authority if deemed necessary.
- Waikato Hockey is committed to resolving complaints in a fair, timely, and responsive manner, providing support to those who raise concerns.
- If you do not feel comfortable raising an issue direct with Waikato Hockey, you may approach ***New Zealand Sports Integrity Commission***

The Sports Integrity Commission New Zealand handles complaints related to bullying, abuse, violence, harassment, intimidation, sexual misconduct, racism, discrimination, match-fixing, corruption, fraud, and other dishonest conduct within the sport and recreation environment.

To make a complaint, you can use the following options:

- **Online Complaint Form:** Visit the Sports Integrity Commission's website and complete the online complaint form. This process is free, confidential, and takes about 10 minutes to complete.
- **Anonymous Complaints:** If you prefer to remain anonymous, you can use the [Whispli](#) platform to submit your complaint without revealing your identity.
- **Email:** Download the complaint form from the Commission's website and email it to complaints@sportintegrity.nz.
- **Phone:** Call the Commission at 0800 378 437 to discuss your complaint and learn more about the process.

For more information, visit the [Sports Integrity Commission's website](#).

URGENT CONCERN

If the concern is urgent and anyone is at immediate risk, an immediate response is required to ensure the child's safety. Staff should directly contact **Oranga Tamariki (Child Services)** : 0508 326 459 and the **NZ Police: 111** straight away

Responding to Concerns & Complaints

A complaint, concern, or allegation can originate from various sources: the child, a friend, their coach, a parent, or another individual within your organisation. It might relate to the actions of a volunteer or employee, or to an incident that occurred outside of the sport, such as at home or school. Children often share their worries with trusted adults in environments where they feel secure.

A report/concern may range from mild verbal bullying to physical or sexual abuse. If you are concerned that a individual may be being abused, it is NOT your responsibility to investigate further BUT it is your responsibility to:

- Reassure the person making the report they have done the right thing in raising a concern
- Listen openly without judgment
- Record anything that is said
- Report it to the appropriate statutory authorities and Waikato Hockey

Responding to a Direct Disclosure

Allegations of abuse must always be taken seriously. False allegations are very rare. Disclosures need to be handled sensitively to avoid causing further distress to the child. If any individual says or indicates they are being abused or information is obtained which gives concern that an individual is being abused the information must be responded to on the same day in line with the following process:

Always

- Stay calm – ensure that the individual is safe and feels safe
- Show and tell the individual that you are taking Waikato Hockey he/she says seriously
- Reassure the individual and stress that he/she is not to blame
- Be aware of interpreting Waikato Hockey an individual says, especially if they have learning or physical disabilities which affect their ability to communicate or English is not their first language
- Keep questions to a minimum so that there is a clear and accurate understanding of Waikato Hockey has been said.
- Be careful about physical contact, it may not be Waikato Hockey the individual wants
- Be honest, explain to the individual that you HAVE to let other people know about Waikato Hockey they have told you, reassure them that this is to help stop the abuse continuing and to keep them safe
- The safety of the individual is paramount. If they need urgent medical attention call an ambulance, inform the doctors of the concern and ensure they are made aware that this is potentially linked to abuse. If there is an immediate risk to the individual, then call the police
- Make a record of Waikato Hockey the individual has said as soon as possible after the event (Incident Report Form Below)
- Report the incident to the Waikato Hockey Member Protection Advisor

Never

- Rush into actions that may be inappropriate
- Make promises you cannot keep (e.g. you won't tell anyone)
- Ask more questions than are necessary for you to be sure that you need to act
- Take sole responsibility – consult someone else (ideally Waikato Hockey member Protection Advisor or the person in charge or someone you can trust) so that you can begin to protect the individual and gain support for yourself

Recording Information

Confidentiality and Information Sharing All concerns that you may receive should be recorded.

You are recording this information for:

- Yourself, so you have a record of what happened
- Waikato Hockey
- The Police/Social Services if appropriate

It is NOT appropriate to share sensitive and confidential information with other people, e.g.:

- Your club/school committee
- Members of your club/school
- Other acquaintances outside Waikato Hockey
- Any information relating to adult protection should be held under secure conditions and made available on a need-to-know basis only

When recording information on the incident report form you should:

- Confine yourself to the facts –record what you have observed/seen, heard or had reported to you
- Distinguish between what is your own personal knowledge and what you have been told by other people
- Not include your own opinions on the matter. Be clear where you are giving either your own or others' interpretation of events and the reasons for this (e.g. context, individual's response to challenge)

Data Protection, Secure Storage

Waikato Hockey will (in line with current data protection legislation) process personal information held. Information relating to employees or volunteers will form part of personnel records. The information may also be shared in certain limited circumstances in accordance with our Data Protection Policy

Wellbeing & Protection Resources

- EAP for staff - <https://www.eapservices.co.nz/>
- Human Rights Commission: www.hrc.co.nz or call 0800 496 877
- WorkSafe: www.worksafe.govt.nz/contact-us/ or call 0800 030 040
- Employment NZ: www.employment.govt.nz/about/contact-us/ or call 0800 20 90 20

Key Relevant Legislation

- **Children's Act 2014:** This act provides a framework for protecting and promoting the wellbeing of children. It includes requirements for child protection policies, safety checks for people working with children, and guidelines for responding to child abuse and neglect
- **Vulnerable Children Act 2014:** This act aims to protect vulnerable children by ensuring that services provided to them are safe and effective. It includes provisions for safety checking of individuals working with children and the development of child protection policies
- **Crimes Act 1961:** This act includes provisions related to the abuse and neglect of children and vulnerable adults. It defines various forms of abuse and sets out the legal consequences for those who harm children or vulnerable individuals
- **Health and Safety at Work Act 2015:** This act requires organisations, including sports clubs and associations, to ensure the health and safety of their workers and participants. This includes taking steps to prevent harm to children and vulnerable individuals
- **Human Rights Act 1993:** This act prohibits discrimination on various grounds, including age, disability, and sex. It ensures that children and vulnerable individuals are treated fairly and with respect in all areas, including sports