



## *SAFE SPORT POLICY*

*January 2023*

## 1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Bowls Singapore is committed to ensuring that all participants in its community play, practice, compete, officiate, work, volunteer and interact in a positive environment, free from harassment and abuse.
- 1.2 This Safe Sport Policy ('Policy') seeks to ensure that all participants are aware of their rights, responsibilities and the standards of behaviour expected of those participating in our sport.
- 1.3 This Policy also sets out procedures to report any abuse and harassment (including protections from any retaliation or repercussions for such reporting).
- 1.4 This Policy should also be read in conjunction with these Bowls Singapore policies in Annex A:
  - a. Recruitment Policy
  - b. Travel Policy
  - c. One-on-One Interactions
  - d. Massage and Rubdowns
  - e. Social Media, Mobile and Electronic Communications Policy
  - f. Changing Room Policy
  - g. Safe Sport Training & Education Policy
  - h. Intimate Relationships Policy
- 1.5 This Policy may be revised by Bowls Singapore at any time.

## 2 DEFINITIONS

"Persons" refers to all individuals employed by, contracted by or engaged in activities with Bowls Singapore or a Member including but not limited to employees, interns, contractors, board members, committee members, athletes, coaches, support personnel, volunteers, technical officials, convenors, managers, administrators and participants (including spectators, parents and guardians) in events hosted, organised and sanctioned by Bowls Singapore.

"Member" refers to an individual or organizations who are members or affiliates of Bowls Singapore

"Safe Sport Commission" is responsible for administering the Safe Sport Programme.

"Safe Sport Unified Code" defines, describes and explains the forms of abuse and harassment which may take place in the sporting environment that can be found at [www.safesport.sg](http://www.safesport.sg)

"Safe Sport Programme" is a framework for applying, implementing and enforcing the Safe Sport Unified Code. It also includes support in policymaking, training and education and a case management service.

“Respondent” refers to the Person against whom a report is made pursuant to this Safe Sport Policy.

### **3 APPLICATION OF THE SAFE SPORT PROGRAMME**

3.1 In promoting the safety and well-being of its participants, Bowls Singapore is a member organisation under the national framework for safeguarding in sport, the Safe Sport Programme.

3.2 Pursuant to its obligations under the Safe Sport Programme, Bowls Singapore has:

- a. adopted the Safe Sport Unified Code (“Unified Code”) and the definitions of Misconduct set out in Article 4 which are sexual, physical and psychological in nature;
- b. adopted the rules, policies and procedures of the Safe Sport Programme set out in the Safe Sport Programme Handbook (“Handbook”) for handling allegations of Misconduct;
- c. delegated jurisdiction and authority to the Safe Sport Commission to:
  - i. assess and investigate allegations of Misconduct which are under its discretionary (low level) and mandatory (medium and high level) jurisdiction;
  - ii. issue interim measures pending conclusion of investigations;
  - iii. make recommendations of sanctions or disciplinary action as a result of such investigations;
- d. delegated jurisdiction and the authority to the committees constituted under the Safe Sport Disciplinary Panel to adjudicate matters referred to it by the Safe Sport Commission.

3.3 Persons within Bowls Singapore’s jurisdiction and/or disciplinary authority are:

- a. responsible for knowing the information, policies and procedures outlined in this Policy the Safe Sport Unified Code and the Handbook. Ignorance of any rule or regulation is not a defence to a breach and/or alleged breach of the Unified Code or Handbook;
- b. subject to the rules, policies and procedures under the Handbook and shall submit, without reservation or condition, to the jurisdiction of the Safe Sport Commission for the resolution of any alleged breach of the Unified Code and/or Handbook.

3.4 A breach of the Unified Code or and Handbook will be considered per se violation of this Policy.

- 3.5 Bowls Singapore will mirror and enforce any decision, measures and/or sanction imposed by the Safe Sport Commission and/or the relevant committees of the Safe Sport Disciplinary Panel.
- 3.6 To the extent that any Bowls Singapore rule, policy or procedure is in conflict with the Unified Code and the Handbook, the Bowls Singapore rule is superseded.

## **4 SCOPE OF APPLICATION**

- 4.1 This Policy applies to Persons' conduct during the business, activities, and events of Bowls Singapore and its Members including, but not limited to, competitions, practices, trials, training camps, travel associated with organizational business, activities, and events including any workshops and meetings.
- 4.2 This Policy also applies to Persons' conduct outside of the business, activities, and events of Bowls Singapore and its Members when such conduct adversely affects the organization's relationships (and the work and sport environment) or is detrimental to the image and reputation of Bowls Singapore or a Member.
- 4.3 This Policy supplements and does not prevent immediate discipline or sanction from being applied during the course of an event or competition by those empowered to do so under the rules of sport. Further disciplinary measures may be applied according to other provisions in this Policy.

## **5 BREACH OF POLICY**

- 5.1 A Person commits a breach of this Policy when they either alone, or in conjunction with another engages in any conduct which constitutes Misconduct under Article 4 of the Unified Code:
  - A. Offences Under Domestic Law
  - B. Sexual Misconduct  
(e.g. Sexual Harassment, Sexual Contact without Consent, Sexual Communications)
  - C. Psychological & Physical Misconduct  
(e.g. Bullying, Harassment, Hazing)
  - D. Other Inappropriate Contact  
(e.g. Grooming, Intimate Relationships, Other Inappropriate Conduct)
  - E. Misconduct related to Process  
(e.g. False Reporting, Abuse of Process, Retaliation)

## **6 REPORTING AND RESOLUTION**

- 6.1 Any individual who experiences or becomes aware of Misconduct should report the incident to any Bowls Singapore Safeguarding Officer(s) or directly to the Safe Sport Commission.
- 6.2 Where an alleged Misconduct falls under the jurisdiction of the Safe Sport Commission, the reporting and resolution procedures set out in the Handbook shall apply.
- 6.3 Where an alleged Misconduct falls under the jurisdiction of Bowls Singapore, Bowls Singapore's reporting and resolution processes in its by-laws shall apply.

## ANNEX A

### 1 DEFINITIONS

“Minor Athletes” refers to athletes under the age of 18 years.

“Persons in Authority” refers to coaches, trainers, support staff, volunteers, medical staff, event staff, technical officials, board members and/or contractors performing any of these roles.

“Vulnerable Persons” refers to Minor Athletes and/or Persons with disabilities, including Persons covered under the Vulnerable Persons Act and Mental Capacity Act.

### 2 RECRUITMENT POLICY

2.1 Bowls Singapore’s Recruitment Policy sets out the criteria and processes to ensure all recruited Persons are qualified, suitable and committed in providing a safe and positive sporting environment.

#### 2.2 Declaration

- a. All applicants are required to provide a declaration of their past history at the point of application.
- b. The declaration form should include questions relating to, but not limited to:
  - i Any past investigations, charges or convictions for a criminal offence;
  - ii Any history of complaints or disciplinary proceedings for misconduct towards another person.

#### 2.3 Reference Checks

- a. All applicants are required to provide the contact details for two professional referees at the point of application.
- b. If the role that an applicant has applied for involves direct contact with Vulnerable Person(s), one of the referees must be asked questions regarding the applicant’s suitability to work with Vulnerable Person(s). Questions should include, but not limited to whether the referee has:
  - i Any concerns that applicant is working in a role that has direct contact with Vulnerable Persons;

- ii Any concerns towards applicant's beliefs, attitudes or values towards Vulnerable Persons.

## 2.4 Face-to-face interviews

- a. All applicants who have direct contact with Vulnerable Person(s) are required to undergo a face-to-face interview.
- b. Apart from the assessment of the professional suitability for the role, interview questions should be designed to assess applicant's suitability to work with vulnerable Persons.
- c. Interview questions should include, but not limited to, the applicant's:
  - i Prior experiences, interactions and/or professional qualifications in working with Vulnerable Persons;
  - ii General beliefs, attitudes and values towards Vulnerable Persons;
  - iii Views and understanding of best practices when working with vulnerable Persons;
  - iv Clarifications about any potential concerns with the applicant's history, such as gaps in working history, previous disciplinary proceedings and/or criminal history.

## 2.5 Disqualifiers

- a. If an applicant declares, or was screened to have a history of the following offences, the applicant shall be deemed unqualified for any work with Vulnerable Persons:
  - i Any offences against persons under the Penal Code and under Singapore law
  - ii Any drug offences
- b. If an applicant declares any history of complaints or disciplinary proceedings for inappropriate behaviours towards another person, or presents with any areas of potential concern during the reference check or interview stage, the final decision to recruit the applicant should be discussed with the General Manager or equivalent position.
- c. The decision to recruit, or not recruit an applicant because of the applicant's criminal history must be clearly communicated, with a rationale, in writing.

## 3 TRAVEL POLICY

A significant part of sport participation involves travel. Travel consists of local travel and team travel. Local travel refers to travel to trainings, competition venues and team events that occur locally and

does not include overnight stay(s). Overnight travel refers to travel to trainings, competition venues and events that includes overnight stay(s) either at a local venue or an overseas venue.

The Travel Policy seeks to minimize on-on-one interactions between Minor Athletes and Persons in Authority as Vulnerable Persons are put at a greater risk during travel when they are away from their families and support network in settings that are less structured and less familiar.

### 3.1 Transportation

- a. Except for emergency circumstances, A Person in Authority must not transport a Minor Athlete alone in a vehicle unless the Person is related to the minor athlete (e.g., a parent or legal guardian).
- b. A Person in Authority should only drive with at least two other Minor Athletes or another adult, unless otherwise agreed to in writing by the Minor Athlete's parent or legal guardian.

### 3.2 For overnight travel, at least one person in the travelling team (e.g. medical support, team manager, strength and conditioning trainer and/or coach) should be of the same gender as the athlete(s)).

### 3.3 Rooming

- a. A Person in Authority must not share the same room with a Minor Athlete unless the Person is related to the Minor Athlete (e.g., a parent, legal guardian or sibling).
- b. All Persons should share the same room with another Person of the same gender.
- c. Individual meetings between a Person in Authority and an athlete, or between athletes of opposite genders, should not occur in the room unless the room door is open.
- d. Regular monitoring and random checks may be made in each athlete's room.

### 3.4 The parent or legal guardian of a Minor Athlete must provide written consent for all Team Travel that involve overnight stay(s).

## 4 ONE-ON-ONE INTERACTIONS

Majority of child sexual abuse is perpetrated in isolated one-on-one situations. By reducing such interactions between Minor Athletes and adults, the risks of such abuse can be reduced. However, one-on-one time with a trusted adult is also a healthy and valuable part of participation. This policy assists with protecting Minor Athletes whilst allowing beneficial relationships to thrive.



- 4.1 One-on-One interactions (e.g. training) between Minor Athletes and Persons in Authority should be observable and at an interruptible distance by another adult.
- 4.2 Meetings between Persons in Authority and Minor Athletes should only occur if another adult is present.
- 4.3 If a one-on-one meeting takes place in an office, the door to the office must remain unlocked and open. If available, meetings should occur in an office with windows, blinds and/or curtains must remain open for the duration of the meeting.
- 4.4 A closed-door meeting may be permitted to protect patient privacy if a mental health care professional or healthcare provider meets with a Minor Athlete and only under the following conditions:
  - a. the door must remain unlocked;
  - b. another adult must be present at the facility and informed that a closed-door meeting is occurring; and
  - c. written consent by the Minor Athlete's parent or guardian must be obtained prior to the provision of services.
- 4.5 Bowls Singapore will make every reasonable effort to monitor one-on-one interactions between Persons in Authority and Minor Athletes that occur under its jurisdiction by knowing that the scheduled time, duration and place of interaction and random checks to observe such interactions.

## **5 MESSAGE AND RUBDOWNS**

- 5.1 Any massage or rubdown performed by an adult Person on a Minor Athlete at Bowls Singapore directed training, event or competition is expressly prohibited unless that adult is authorized by Bowls Singapore to do so.
- 5.2 Any massage or rubdown of Minor Athlete must be conducted in an open and interruptible location with one other adult present.
- 5.3 Where possible, written consent by the Minor Athlete's parent or legal guardian shall be provided before the provision of massage or rubdown to a Minor Athlete.
- 5.4 Consent should always be sought from an adult Athlete before performing any massage or rubdown.

## **6 SOCIAL MEDIA, MOBILE AND ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS POLICY**

Effective communication concerning administrative issues among coaches, administrator and athlete is critical. However, the use of mobile devices, web-based application and other forms of electronic communications increases the possibility for misunderstandings and improprieties.

- 6.1 All electronic communications, including text messages, use of social media and emails, between Persons in Authority and athletes should be professional, appropriate, activity-related and transparent (e.g., team activities, schedules, competition).
- 6.2 Any electronic communication between all Persons must be observant of healthy and appropriate boundaries.
- 6.3 Minor Athlete Communications
- a. electronic communications to a team comprised of Minor Athletes by a Person in Authority shall also include one more additional Person in Authority.
  - b. if a Minor Athlete communicates with a Person in Authority first, the Person in authority should respond to the Minor Athlete and copy another Person in Authority and/or the Minor Athlete's parent(s) or legal guardians.
  - c. private electronic communications between Persons in Authority and Minor Athletes are expressly prohibited, unless under emergency circumstances. Private electronic communication may include but are not limited to direct messages, email, text messages, photos via Snapchat or Instagram.
- 6.4 Video conferencing
- a. All Persons should be fully clothed and dressed appropriately when attending a video conference.
  - b. No sexual imagery, sexually explicit language or conversations should be communicated.
- 6.5 The use of social media, mobile and electronic communications to commit abuse and harassment (e.g., bullying, sexual communications) is strictly prohibited and will be considered as a breach of the Unified Code and this Policy.
- 6.6 All Persons should be provided with training on what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviours when using social media, mobile or electronic communications.

## **7 CHANGING ROOM POLICY**

Changing rooms and similar settings designated for changing (e.g., locker rooms, showers, toilets) may create a conducive environment for abuse and harassment to occur as participants are in various stages of undress and are usually less supervised. Adherence to the changing room policy is important to reduce the likelihood of Misconduct from occurring in the changing room and for the protection of Vulnerable Persons.

- 7.1 Regular monitoring and supervision of the changing rooms will be conducted where reasonably feasible, through the following methods:

- a. Posting a Person in Authority outside the changing room to ensure only approved personnel enter the changing room.
- b. Occasional and random checks on the changing rooms by Person in Authority of the same gender (e.g., female to check on female changing rooms).

#### 7.2 Interactions in changing room and similar settings (e.g., shower, toilets)

- a. Any one-to-one meetings between a Person in Authority and a Minor Athlete in a changing room or similar space is strictly prohibited unless another adult is present.
- b. A Person in Authority must not shower with a Minor Athlete unless the Person is a personal care assistant or a parent/legal guardian.

#### 7.3 In the presence of a Minor Athlete or a Person from the opposite gender, any Person must not intentionally or recklessly be in a state of undress that expose their chest, breasts, buttocks, groins or genitals to another Person.

#### 7.4 The use of photographic or recording devices, including voice and video recording, in changing rooms is strictly prohibited, unless for the sole purpose to celebrate a team victory, sport accomplishment or team event. The following criteria must be met:

- a. prior approval is sought and given;
- b. two or more Persons in Authority are present; and
- c. all Persons are fully clothed.

## 8 SAFE SPORT TRAINING AND EDUCATION POLICY

Training and Education is a key component of any abuse and misconduct prevention strategy. Awareness training provides participants with the necessary information to identify and prevent the occurrence of abuse and harassment in the sporting environment.

All Persons should be empowered to report abuse and misconduct. To do so, all Persons should have a basic understanding of what constitutes a violation of the Safe Sport Policy and how to spot strategies used by offenders to target victims.

### 8.1 Onboarding

- a. As part of the onboarding process, the following Persons are required to complete the online Safe Sport module on the SportSG-ED platform:
  - i board members

- ii employees and staff
- iii coaches;
- iv athletes;
- v volunteers

- b. The online module should be completed as soon as possible, and no later than three (3) months upon commencement of their respective roles or the adoption of this policy, whichever is the later.
- c. Persons in Authority who have regular direct contact with Vulnerable Persons must complete the online training before assuming their role.
- d. All Persons who have completed the online module will be required to produce a certificate of completion to Bowls Singapore's safeguarding officer and/or person in charge of recruitment.

## 8.2 Training

- a. All Persons who have direct contact with Vulnerable Person(s) will be required to undergo continuing education workshops from time to time.
- b. Such workshops will include, but are not limited to, discussions about Safe Sport best practices, case scenarios and a refresher on Bowls Singapore's Code of Conduct for the participant's respective role.
- c. Physical training sessions should ideally be conducted whenever there is a new recruitment or whenever feasible, but no later than six (6) months upon commencement of respective roles.

## 8.3 Refresher

- a. All Persons may be required to undergo a refresher session, either through the online module or a physical training session, at the discretion of Bowls Singapore.

# 9 INTIMATE RELATIONSHIP POLICY

Healthy and consensual intimate and/or romantic relationships are an important aspect to a person's wellbeing. However, intimate relationships where a Power Imbalance exists could give rise to actual or perceived conflict of interest and this could have harmful effects to the sporting community and the persons involved.

A Power Imbalance is present where one person has supervisory, evaluative, a duty of care or other authority over another individual (e.g. Person in Authority). The totality of the circumstances that

give rise to a Power Imbalance and the definition of Intimate Relationships is set out in the Unified Code.

- 9.1 An Intimate relationship between an adult Person and a Minor athlete where a Power Imbalance exists is viewed as exploitative and is prohibited under the Unified Code.
- 9.2 In a relationship where a Power Imbalance exists between two adult Persons, the following shall apply:
  - a. an Intimate Relationship between adults where a Power imbalance exists (e.g., Coach-Athlete) is strongly discouraged and should be avoided;
  - b. if such a relationship exists, it is the duty of the Person in Authority to make a declaration of the relationship to the relevant person in Bowls Singapore. This is to remove the secrecy and stigmatization of healthy relationships which form between adults; and
  - c. Bowls Singapore may then make the necessary and appropriate arrangements to reduce actual or perceived conflict of interests and/or exploitation due to the differences in authority, power, status, influence and dependence between the Person in Authority and the other individual (e.g., re-deployment of Person in Authority, recusing the Person in Authority from selection decisions).