COLAC OTWAY ROVERS AFC
CHILD SAFETY– CODE OF CONDUCT

1. Introduction

The purpose of this Code of Conduct is to promote child safety within all Club environments.

Any form of abusive, derogatory, discriminatory, offensive or intimidating behaviour or language by adults towards minors, or minors towards other minors, is not acceptable.

Any action that may be hurtful or risk being interpreted by a reasonable observer as grooming behaviour is unacceptable. Comments or actions that are negatively and unreasonably critical of a person's culture, ethnicity, language, gender identity, disability, sexuality or age, are unacceptable.

Club Board/Committee members, volunteers, employees, coaches, team managers, players, parents, guardians, spectators and officials at the Club are bound by, and required to abide to, this Code.

2. Unacceptable behaviour

The following matters are derived from the Victorian Government's *Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority*.

These actions are prohibited and may, depending on the specific circumstances, constitute Misconduct in accordance with the Football Victoria (FV) Grievance, Disciplinary and Tribunal By-Law (GDT):

a) ignore or disregard any suspected or disclosed child abuse;

b) put a minor at risk of abuse;

c) speak to a minor in a way that is or could be construed by any observer as overly harsh, threatening, intimidating, shaming, derogatory, demeaning, or humiliating. Some examples are offensive swearing in the presence of a minor, or intimidatory language and gestures directed at a minor;

d) express inappropriate personal views on cultures, race or sexuality in the presence of a minor (unless the minor is a member of your family);

e) discuss sexual activities with a minor (unless it is a specific job requirement and the person is trained to discuss these matters, or the minor is a member of your family), or engaging in any sexually-oriented conversations with a minor;

f) have contact with a minor outside of Club activities or events without the Club's knowledge and/or consent;

g) have any online contact with a minor (including by social media, email, instant messaging etc) or the minor's family without the Club or Team's knowledge and/or consent;

h) exchange personal contact details such as phone number, social networking sites or email addresses with a minor (unless the minor is a member of your family) without the Club or Team's knowledge and/or consent;

i) using, possessing, or being under the influence of illegal drugs while in the presence of a minor;

j) using, possessing, or being under the influence of alcohol while supervising a minor (unless the minor is a member of your family or your contact with the minor is accidental/incidental and you are not performing your professional obligations);

k) providing or allowing a minor to consume illegal drugs;

l) discriminate against any minor, including because of age, gender, race, culture, vulnerability, sexuality, ethnicity or disability;

m) engage in rough physical games (outside of what is reasonably considered appropriate in a Club training session), hold, massage, kiss, cuddle or touch a minor in an inappropriate and or/culturally insensitive way (unless the minor is a member of your family and you comply with all relevant legislation);

n) take a minor to your home or encourage meetings outside Club activities or events (unless the child is a member of your family or parental permission has been provided)without the Club or Team's knowledge and/or consent;

o) photograph or video a minor inappropriately, or in circumstances where you have been requested to cease;

p) being naked in the presence of a minor (unless the minor is a member of your family);

q) possess sexually oriented or morally inappropriate printed materials (magazines, cards, videos, films, messages, clothing, etc.) in the presence of a minor;

r) sleep in the same bed, sleeping bag or tent with a minor (unless the minor is a member of your family); and/or

s) engage in sexual contact with a minor.

Any violation of this Code of Conduct by a Board/Committee member, volunteer, employee, coach, manager, player, parent or guardian or other Club associate at the Club may be dealt with as a disciplinary matter by the Club, or may be referred to the FV as Misconduct under the FV GDT provisions.

3. Physical contact / touching

Board/Committee members, volunteers, employees, coaches, team managers and players, parents, guardians, spectators and officials at the Club are prohibited from using physical

discipline in any way for behaviour management of minors. This prohibition includes spanking, slapping, pinching, hitting, or any other physical force as retaliation or correction for inappropriate behaviours by minors.

Physical contact may be required in an emergency situation to remove minors quickly from danger or threat of danger.

Appropriate contact between Board/Committee members, volunteers, employees, coaches, team managers and players and minors is part of normal human relationships.

a) consider the minor's age, developmental level, maturity and level of care required, for example, touching a minor to gain their attention, guiding or comforting a distressed minor;

b) work in an open environment; for example, in one-to-one discussions indoors the door should be open with visual access;

c) be alert to cues from minors about how comfortable they are in your proximity and respect their need for personal space;

d) be sensitive when interacting with minors who may misinterpret your actions, such as those who may have been traumatised by abuse or adolescents seeking attention from a member of the opposite sex;

e) be aware of cultural norms that may influence the interpretation of your behaviour;

f) be cautious about physical contact in training or during matches. If you need to make physical contact for demonstrations, explain the activity and what you will do, maintain a safe and appropriate distance;

g) physical contact should be made in a way that makes minors feel comfortable, for example, shaking hands, a congratulatory pat on the back or rub on the side of their arm for reassurance. Massaging a minor if you are not trained to do so or allowing a child to massage you is inappropriate physical contact.

4. Transportation and off-site events

Other than in an emergency or other abnormal situation where no other option could be reasonably foreseen, it is unwise to transport children without permission of their parent, carer or guardian.

It is prohibited to have unnecessary and/or inappropriate physical contact with minors while in vehicles. Minors should be transported directly to their destination. No stops should be made other than those that are reasonably scheduled for meals or comfort stops.

It is prohibited to have minors spend the night at the residence of a Board/Committee member, volunteer, employee, coach or manager without parental/guardian prior approval.

Changing and showering facilities or arrangements for adults must be separate from facilities or arrangements for children (unless the child is a member of your family).

5. Confidentiality

Disclosing information to Board/Committee *members and CPO*

The privacy of the child should be respected at all times. When considering breaching the privacy who and how many people are told should be based on what is believed to be in the best interests of the child.

Information in relation to abuse or suspected abuse of a minor should be disclosed to a Board/Committee member or CPO of the Club only, in order to limit the potential dissemination of confidential information.

Disclosing information to people external to the organisation

Board/Committee members, volunteers, employees, coaches, team managers, players and parents and guardians, should not discuss confidential matters about children with people outside the organisation in a way that identifies that child, except when they have the express permission of the child or it complies with the Club's Child Protection Policy and Code of Conduct. In circumstances where Board/Committee members, volunteers, employees, coaches, team managers and players believe that there is not enough knowledge within the Club to provide the best possible assistance to a child, they are able to seek expertise external to the Club. When communicating with people outside the Club the child's identity should be protected.

Informing children

It is the responsibility of the Club to communicate the limits of confidentiality in the Club to children who are likely to have an ongoing relationship with the Club. These guidelines should be published in an accessible place for children.

6. Related legislation

a) *Children, Youth and Families Act 2005* (Vic);

b) *Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic);*

c) *Child Wellbeing and Safety Amendment (Child Safe Standards) Act 2015 (Vic); and*

d) *Crimes Act 1958* (Vic); and

The Department of Families, Fairness and Housing Child Protection Crisis Line may be contacted 24 hours a day seven days a week on telephone: 13 12 78