



MEMORANDUM

Date: 2 December 2016

To: Associations, VSBL Clubs and Charter Committees

Copy To: Baseball Victoria Board and Staff

From: Ashley Blair
General Manger

Re: Victorian Child Safety Standards

From 1 January 2017 the Victorian Child Safety Standards apply to all associations and clubs. These principle-based standards are initially focused on policy, education and capacity building.

Your association or club may already have many relevant processes and practices in place. This advice on the Child Safety Standards will help you to start to identify and address any gaps.

Background

Baseball Victoria (BV) and its affiliated members are collectively a child friendly sporting organisation with a number of important policies and resources currently being developed to ensure our sport continues our commitment to promoting and protecting children.

BV is committed to supporting affiliated members to create safe and inclusive environments for all children in baseball across Victoria.

The Victorian Government has introduced [compulsory minimum standards](#) that apply to all organisations that provide services for children. These standards help to protect children from all forms of abuse. The child safe standards form part of the Victorian Government's response to the Betrayal of Trust Inquiry.

These Standards apply to sporting organisations from 1 January 2017.

Resources are being developed with independent advice to assist affiliated members to understand and meet their obligations.

Ensuring that children have safe and great baseball experiences is of the utmost importance to our sport.

As your first step towards meeting the new Child Safety Standards we suggest that you review the below materials.

1. Strategies to embed an organisational culture of child safety, including effective leadership arrangements

Your committee and your club's coaches have a responsibility to take the lead at your club/association with a preventative, proactive and participatory approach to child safety issues. The first step towards this is awareness of the topic and as leaders in the sport to continue to promote a culture of child safety in our sport.

The Australian Sports Commission also has online training modules, specifically the [Play By The Rules – Child Protection module](#) (30 minutes). You will need to register to complete the online training, and browse to find the correct module.

2. A child safe policy or statement of commitment to child safety

BV is currently developing a child safety policy statement.

A unified policy or statement across all state and local levels is best practice in setting the child safety culture within a sport. As such, BV is working with Vicsport in developing a templated policy statement that clubs will be able to use.

3. A code of conduct that establishes clear expectations for appropriate behaviour with children

BV is currently developing a child safe Code of Conduct.

As per above, BV is working with Vicsport in developing a template Code of Conduct that clubs will be able to use.

4. Screening, supervision, training and other human resources practices that reduce the risk of child abuse by new and existing personnel

A Working with Children Check is a required screening practice for adults who have unsupervised contact with children as part of their role.

Other tools and resources are being developed to assist in determining the suitability of individuals for roles that involve working with children.

5. Process for responding to and reporting suspected child abuse

Baseball Australia's [Member Protection Policy](#), applies to all clubs and members.

The child protection sections of the Member Protection Policy are currently being reviewed to ensure they are consistent with Victorian laws that require mandatory reporting by any adult who has a reasonable belief that child sexual abuse has occurred.

6. Strategies to identify and reduce or remove risks of child abuse

The Victorian Commission for Children and Young People has a comprehensive guide on this topic. We recommend that you review pages [46 to 49 of this guide](#) regarding a risk management approach to your club's physical and online environment.

7. Strategies to promote the participation and empowerment of children

Baseball Victoria will be holding sessions in the New Year to assist associations and clubs to develop strategies as well as utilise other resources and tools.

Additional resources

Vicsport, the peak industry body for sporting organisations, has worked in conjunction with Sport & Recreation Victoria to develop a number of guides related to the Child Safety Standards. These are available on its website: <https://vicsport.com.au/child-safe-standards>

In particular, Vicsport has made available a [12 minute summary video](#) on the Child Safety Standards based on a presentation to State Sporting Organisations, delivered by BV's legal advisors, Lander & Rogers.

More information will be provided to you over the coming weeks. Even though these standards apply from the 1 January 2017, the above strategies do not all need to be implemented by this date. It is however important that we have a plan in place to roll this out over the coming months to ensure we comply with these minimum standards. We anticipate that all our resources will be finalised by the end of February at the very latest.

In the meantime if you have any concerns regarding these new standards, please feel free to contact the Baseball Victoria office.

Regards

Ashley Blair
General Manager
Baseball Victoria