

# SAGF Safeguarding Policy & Procedures

## Briefing for SAGF Clubs, Regions, Provinces & Disciplines



The South African Gymnastics Federation (SAGF) has adopted a policy and procedures to safeguard participants in the sport of gymnastics from harassment, abuse and poor practice. Safeguarding has become a priority for the Fédération Internationale de Gymnastique (FIG) and member Federations following high profile cases of sexual harassment and abuse in the sport. The International Olympic Committee's (IOC) Basic Universal Principles of Good Governance encompass safeguarding and makes it compulsory for organisations that belong to the Olympic movement to adopt these principles, implement relevant measures and monitor compliance. FIG has developed a policy for the prevention of harassment and abuse within gymnastics which requires each member federation to adopt and implement their own suitable policy and procedures.

**All clubs and organisations providing gymnastics activity in South Africa have a responsibility for the safety and welfare of their gymnasts and employees (paid staff or volunteers).** This responsibility applies to all SAGF members and affiliated clubs, regardless of their size or structure. **There is a legal responsibility to ensure that participants are protected from harm whilst taking part in gymnastics.** This is legally termed as a 'duty of care' and is of paramount importance when dealing with children or persons with a mental disability.

**The SAGF, its members and affiliated clubs are required to comply with South African legislation that is in place to protect children and adults from harassment and abuse.** The SAGF safeguarding policy and procedural guidelines are designed to safeguard all who take part in the sport from non-accidental harm and to ensure that the federation, its members and clubs are compliant with related legislation.

**Gymnastics clubs in South Africa will be required to adopt the SAGF safeguarding policy and procedures and to:**

- Have their **own safeguarding policy** as a requirement for affiliation to the SAGF (the SAGF has produced a model safeguarding policy for affiliated clubs);
- Appoint a competent person as their **Safeguarding Officer**. The club safeguarding officer must be registered with the SAGF and must complete approved Safeguarding Training in 2020;
- Ensure that SAGF **safeguarding policy and procedures are communicated** to their employees (staff and volunteers), gymnasts, and their parents and carers of gymnasts;
- Ensure that **employees, gymnasts, parents and carers know how to raise safeguarding concerns** within the club or to the SAGF;
- Ensure that **all coaches and other persons in the club with regular contact** (defined as more than once per month) with children, young people, persons with a mental and/or physical

disability and other vulnerable adults, **whether staff or volunteers, have been vetted which is a legal requirement in South Africa).**

- There are two options when vetting coaches and other persons in the club with regular contact (defined as more than once per month) with children, young people, persons with a mental and/or physical disability and other vulnerable adults, whether staff or volunteers:

**Each employee** (staff or volunteer) must either:

- Obtain **Checks on Criminal, Sexual Offenders Register & Child Protection Register through the SAGF/The Guardian process** to be available at Provincial/National Events;

Or;

- Have **submitted a police clearance certificate** (full check, not just name clearance);
- Have **disclosed on affidavit that they have never been convicted of a sexual offence against a child or a mentally disabled person and that their name does not appear in Part B of the National Child Protection Register** as a person deemed unsuitable to work with children;

**Gymnastics Clubs who are regarded as employers in law** must also:

- Ask **employees (staff and volunteers) to provide references from two referees** who must each provide a reference using the SAGF's employee (staff or volunteer) reference form.
- **Complete a submission to the Sexual Offences Registrar at the Department of Justice** using the SAGF Submission form providing details of Names and ID numbers of all employees with regular contact with children or adults with a mental disability

The SAGF will provide vetting forms and guidance to assist clubs in ensuring they are compliant with the SAGF's Safe Recruitment policy and procedural guidelines as well as legislation contained in the Children's Act and Criminal Law (Sexual Offences and Related Matters) Amendment Act.

**Clubs will be given until October 2020 to become fully compliant, however all clubs will be legally vulnerable until they are compliant with the law.**

*For further information, please visit the Safeguarding documents on the SAGF website.*

ENDS

June 2019