



Child Safe Policy

1. Policy overview

1.1 Purpose

1.1.1 Blind Bats Inc. is strongly committed to safe, supportive and friendly environments where children and young people are valued and enjoy sport.

1.1.2 All children and young people have the right to feel and be safe and be protected from all forms of Child Abuse and Neglect.

1.1.3 Blind Bats Inc. aims to create and maintain an inclusive, child-safe environment that is understood, endorsed, put into action and adhered to by everyone, as set out in the Blind Bats Inc.'s Child Safe Commitment Statement (Appendix A).

1.1.4 The Blind Bats Inc.:

- (a) has a zero-tolerance policy to Child Abuse and Neglect in any form;
- (b) is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people by providing a safe, inclusive and culturally safe environment; and
- (c) ensures that relevant persons are educated and informed of their responsibilities to protect and look after children.

1.1.5 This Policy:

- (a) is part of the Blind Bats Inc.'s proactive and preventative approach to upholding its commitment to the safety, wellbeing, participation and empowerment of all children accessing the Blind Bats Inc.'s programs, services and facilities;
- (b) outlines prohibited conduct, and imposes obligations on all persons bound by this Policy to respond to allegations or instances of prohibited conduct and to implement a commitment to child safety and child safe practices, including the recruitment and screening of people that have contact with children;
- (c) seeks to ensure that persons bound by this Policy are aware of their legal and ethical rights and responsibilities as well as the standards of behaviour expected of them; and
- (d) gives effect to the Commonwealth Child Safe Framework, including the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations.

1.2 Scope

1.2.1 This policy applies to all persons who undertake work for the Blind Bats Inc., including:

- (a) Blind Bats Inc Board members;
- (b) Blind Bats Inc. employees;

(c) Blind Bats Inc. contractors, site users and grant recipients who have agreed to be bound by this policy; and

(d) Any other individual or organisation who has agreed to be bound by this policy.

1.2.2 Blind Bats Inc. will consider this Policy when developing, designing and managing other policies and programs to ensure they promote children's rights and include relevant child safety considerations.

2. Child Safe Obligations

2.1.1 Persons bound by this Policy must:

- (a) treat all children and young people with respect;
- (b) comply with the Child Safe Practices (Appendix B);
- (c) comply with Australian Child Protection Legislation;
- (d) if undertaking, managing or supervising child-related work; familiarise themselves and comply with the mandatory reporting requirements in the relevant jurisdiction; and
- (e) report any allegation, disclosure or concern relating to child safety, including prohibited conduct.

2.1.2 Persons bound by this Policy must not engage in any prohibited conduct, including:

- (a) Child Abuse in any form;
- (b) Harmful behaviours towards a child or young person, such as:
 - harmful training methods, including physical punishment or overtraining, which may cause harm to a child or young person;
 - excessive or unnecessary emphasis on appearance, weight or body composition;
 - forcing a child or young person to train or compete when ill or injured;
 - threatening or humiliating a child or young person;
 - disciplinary action that involves physical punishment or any form of conduct that could be considered degrading, cruel, frightening or humiliating; and
 - use of language that is inappropriate, harassing, humiliating or culturally inappropriate;
- (c) Sexual behaviours toward, or in the presence of, a child or young person;
- (d) Bullying, discrimination, harassment, victimisation or vilification of a child or young person;
- (e) Taking inappropriate photos or images of a child or young person;

- (f) Use of any Blind Bats Inc. owned technology, or child-related information held by the Blind Bats Inc., to exploit or harass a child or young person;
- (g) Requesting or inferring that a child or young person keep any communication secret from their parent, carer or other persons bound by this Policy; and
- (h) Supplying alcohol or drugs to a child or young person.

3. Accountabilities and Responsibilities

3.1.1 Ensuring the safety, welfare and wellbeing of children and young people is a shared responsibility. Key roles and responsibilities within the Blind Bats Inc . are outlined below.

Table 1. Accountabilities and Responsibilities

Who - Responsibilities

Blind Bats Inc. committee members Act as the Accountable Authority of the Blind Bats Inc Child Safety Policy and Approve the Child Safe Policy. They also ensure the Blind Bats Inc.'s annual compliance with the Commonwealth Child Safe Framework.

Child Safe Champions are members of the Blind Bats Inc . Committee, and responsible for promoting the importance of child safety and how it applies to employees, contractors and site users.

The Champions will:

- Oversee the implementation and review of the Child Safe Policy;
- Oversee the annual Blind Bats Inc's Child Safe Risk Assessment;
- Support, advise and provide expertise to Blind Bats Inc . employees on child safety issues;
- Raise awareness of child safety
- Screen and Onboard Volunteer
- Periodically report to the Committee
- Promote training for child safety.

Child and Safety Committee Champions - Lead a child safe culture for the Blind Bats Club.

- Monitor and assess the Blind Bats Inc.'s compliance with the Commonwealth Child Safe Framework, including the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations.
- Safeguarding & Integrity
- Annually review the Blind Bats Inc .'s Child Safe Policy.
- Annually review the Blind Bats Inc .'s Child Safe Risk Assessment.
- Periodically review and audit the currency of Working with Children Checks, or relevant state equivalents (WWCCs).
- Coordinate child safe training for employees and monitor compliance.
- Support, advise and provide expertise to employees on child safety issues.
- Coordinate and manage all child safety reports.

- Refer, as required, to law enforcement and child protection agencies. Provide referrals for support related to Blind Bats Inc . child safety issues.
- Coordinate preparation of the Annual Statement of Compliance.
- Maintain a WWCC register for all Blind Bats Inc . employees. Assist Blind Bats Inc . employees to access support services.
- Ensure access to and awareness of policies and procedures related to child safety.
- Assist employees and children to make reports about child safety. Keep accurate records of any child safe reports.
- Demonstrate commitment to the Blind Bats Inc’s Child Safe Policy.
- Ensure Blind Bats Inc . employees are aware of the policies, procedures and obligations related to child safety and assist them to meet their obligations.
- Ensure child safety is embedded in the design of any program, policy or service that impacts upon children.
- Ensure child safety clauses are included when approving applicable agreements.
- Ensure child safety is considered in the design and implementation of programs, policies or activities funded or delivered by the Blind Bats Inc that involve children.
- Provide immediate feedback and act accordingly if a person bound by this Policy may not be meeting their requirements.
- Ensure support is provided for anyone that initiates or is involved in a matter relating to the safety and wellbeing of children, including access to professional support.

Employees Comply with the Blind Bats Inc. Code of Conduct.

Comply with this Policy, including the Child Safe Practices, as applicable in the course of their work.

Complete child safety training as directed.

Comply with Australian Child Protection Legislation.

Appropriately report potential risk to child safety, including any breaches of this Policy.

Employees involved in contract and grant design or management Ensure, where applicable, that the appropriate child safe clauses are included in agreements and procurement documents.

Ensure compliance with child safety obligations.

Grant, Procurement and Contract Managers must consider any assurance required from the grant and contract recipient to monitor compliance requirements in relation to Child Safe obligations.

Contractors Comply with this Policy, including the Child Safe Practices, and any other child safety requirements required by their agreements with Blind Bats Inc.

4. Risk Assessment and Mitigation

4.1.1 Blind Bats Inc will undertake an Annual Risk Assessment in relation to child safety to identify the level of responsibility for and contact with children and young people, evaluate the risk of harm or abuse, and put in place appropriate strategies to manage identified risks.

4.1.2 Further risk assessments will be conducted as directed by the Executive and/or following a change in programs and operations.

4.1.3 Blind Bats Inc Board and employees commit to understanding and implementing the child safe risk management process, as outlined in the Child Safe Procedure - Risk Assessment and Reporting.

4.1.4 Blind Bats Inc employees must ensure child safety is considered when developing project and risk plans and must manage this in accordance with the Risk Framework.

4.1.5 Blind Bats Inc will identify applicable child safety obligations for contractors, site users and grant recipients to be included in grant and procurement templates and agreements.

4.1.6 Blind Bats Inc will publish an Annual Statement of Compliance in accordance with the Commonwealth Child Safe Framework by 31 October annually.

5. Recruitment and Screening

5.1.1 Blind Bats Inc will take measures to ensure the recruits employees and contractors who are suitably qualified and committed to providing professional, safe and enjoyable programs and services to children, and who meet the Australian Child Protection Legislation requirements.

5.1.2 Blind Bats Inc will implement child safe recruitment processes; including advertising, selection criteria, interview questions and referee checks; to emphasise child safety.

5.1.3 It is a condition of employment at t Blind Bats Inc hat employees hold and maintain a current Working with Children Check (WWCC), or equivalent, in the state or territory in which they work.

5.1.4 If an employee is not able to attain and/or maintain a WWCC, the matter will be referred to President for advice. Failure to attain and/or maintain a WWCC may result in termination of employment.

5.1.5 Where an Blind Bats Inc. employee is a child or young person (16-18yo), Blind Bats Inc will ensure that their rights are supported and they are protected under this Policy.

5.1.6 All contactors who undertake child-related work will be identified as requiring a WWCC in their contract or agreement. The WWCC must be maintained while contracted to Blind Bats Inc.

5.1.7 Any employee or contractor must notify Blind Bats Inc immediately if they are charged with, or found guilty of, any breach of Australian Child Protection Law or have been charged or convicted of a crime that would result in the revocation of a WWCC.

5.1.8 Further detail can be found in Blind Bats Inc Recruitment Policy and the Child Safe Procedure – Recruitment and Screening.

6. Induction and Training

6.1.1 Blind Bats Inc will provide employees and contractors with information to assist them to:

- (a) be aware of and remain alert to the risk of Child Abuse;
- (b) understand Blind Bats Inc's commitment to preventing and responding to Child Abuse;
- (c) understand how they are expected to behave towards children, including the Child Safe Practices;
- (d) understand their responsibility in relation to child safety; and
- (e) know how to identify and respond to Child Abuse.

6.1.2 Blind Bats Inc will provide trauma-informed training to assist relevant employees and contractors to improve and enhance Child Safe Practices.

6.1.3 All Blind Bats Inc employees must complete Child Safety online module annually.

6.1.4 Blind Bats Inc employees who have direct contact with children and young people must complete additional training as directed by the Safeguarding & Integrity Team.

7. Engagement with Children and Families

7.1.1 Blind Bats Inc will ensure that children, young people and their families:

- (a) are informed about their rights, including the right to safety and the right to be heard;
- (b) have access to information relevant to them, including how to raise concerns, Blind Bats Inc's approach to child safety and relevant policies and procedures; and
- (c) are engaged in decision making processes and provided with the opportunity to give feedback on Blind Bats Inc's approach to child safety.

7.1.2 Blind Bats Inc will seek informed consent from children and young people prior to participation in Blind Bats Inc's programs or services.

7.1.3 Blind Bats Inc will make children and young people accessing our sites, services and programs aware of the acceptable limits of their behaviour so we can provide a positive experience for all participants.

7.1.4 Blind Bats Inc will take into account the diverse needs of children and young people, including the needs of vulnerable children, when providing programs or services.

7.1.5 Blind Bats Inc will communicate with children and young people in an age-appropriate way about child safety.

8. Responding and Reporting for Child Safety

8.1.1 Blind Bats Inc promotes and provides an environment in which all people, including children and young people, are encouraged to speak up when they are uncomfortable or concerned about child safety.

8.1.2 Persons bound by this Policy must:

- (a) recognise, respond to and report any allegation, disclosure or concern regarding Child Abuse, Neglect or a breach of this policy; and
- (b) meet any legislated mandatory, jurisdictional or industry reporting requirements.

8.1.3 Further detail can be found in the Child Safe Procedure – Complaint Handling, Responding and Reporting for Child Safety.

8.2 Responding to a disclosure

8.2.1 Any person bound by this Policy may receive a direct or third-party disclosure relating to child safety.

8.2.2 When responding to an allegation or disclosure relating to child safety, persons bound by this Policy should:

- (a) remain calm;
- (b) prioritise the safety and wellbeing of the child or young person and respond to any immediate risk or harm;
- (c) listen to and support the child or young person;
- (d) reassure the child or young person that they did the right thing;
- (e) tell them what will happen next;
- (f) not make promises they cannot keep to the child or young person; and
- (g) keep records of the disclosure and report to Blind Bats Inc as soon as practicable.

8.3 Child Safe reporting and complaints

8.3.1 Appendix C outlines Blind Bats Inc's process for the reporting of child safety allegations, disclosures and concerns.

8.3.2 Blind Bats Inc will report all actual or suspected Child Abuse or Neglect to the Police (where required) or relevant child protection agency (see Appendix C).

8.3.3 Where a complaint, disclosure or concern about child safety relates to a sport organisation, the Blind Bats Inc . may need to refer the matter to Sport Integrity Australia (SIA).

8.3.4 Blind Bats Inc will offer support to children and young people, employees, their families, and any person who reports a child safety allegation, disclosure or concern, including referral to external support services as necessary.

Managing complaints

8.3.5 Blind Bats Inc. will manage complaints as outlined in the Blind Bats Inc. Complaints Handling Policy with the Child Safe Procedure – Complaint Handling and Responding and Reporting for Child Safety.

8.3.6 Blind Bats Inc is committed to treating concerns and complaints regarding children and young people seriously and aims to address all complaints quickly and appropriately.

8.3.7 Blind Bats Inc is committed to protecting the rights of children and young people and treating all parties with respect.

8.3.8 Blind Bats Inc will be flexible when dealing with complaints or concerns from children and their families, including providing communication support or making reasonable adjustments to the complaints process to ensure that diverse needs are accommodated.

8.3.19 Any complaint process which involves children or young people will be informed by the Complaint Handling Guide: Upholding the rights of children and young people¹, specifically addressing the role of children in the complaints and concerns management process.

8.3.10 Complaints may be child-initiated or adult-initiated and the Blind Bats Inc. encourages people to raise concerns to address the needs and safety of children.

8.3.11 Complaints and concerns may be raised informally or formally. Informal concerns may be raised to an Blind Bats Inc . employee at the time of the concern being identified. Formal complaints must be lodged in writing to the Blind Bats Inc . by letter, or email .

8.4 Record keeping and information sharing

8.4.1 Blind Bats Inc. will manage all information, including personal information, in accordance with the Privacy Act and applicable child safety legislation.

8.4.2 Blind Bats Inc will comply with the Archives Act for records relating to children.

8.4.3 Blind Bats Inc will share information when requested, provided it is consistent with the protected disclosure, freedom of information and privacy requirements of Blind Bats Inc and applicable legislation.

1 <https://www.childsafety.gov.au/resources/complaint-handling-guide-upholding-rights-children-and-young-people>

9. BLIND BATS INC. Contracts

9.1 Commonwealth Child Safe Framework

9.1.1 Blind Bats Inc will include mandatory child safety requirements for organisations that receive Commonwealth funding for activities involving children, including grants and procurement, in line with the Commonwealth Child Safe Framework.

9.2 Child safe requirements in Blind Bats Inc. agreements

9.2.1 Blind Bats Inc will include child safety requirements in applicable agreements with contractors or grant recipients.

9.2.2 Applicable agreements will include those where the contractor or grant recipient provides services directly to children or for activities that will or may involve contact with children as a usual part of, and more than incidental to, those services. If the services involve children more broadly, the inclusion of child safety requirements is still advised.

9.2.3 The Department of Finance provides model child safe clauses that comply with the requirements of the Commonwealth Child Safe Framework.²

² <https://www.finance.gov.au/government/procurement/clausebank/child-safety>

10. Procedures

Child Safe Procedures noted in

- Annual Risk Assessment
- Complaint Handling, Responding and Reporting for Child Safety
- Filming and Photography
- Volunteer and Screening

Related Blind Bats Inc. policies and guidelines

- Code of Conduct
- Complaints Policy
- Child Safety Policy
- Information & Records Management Policy

11. Definitions

Term Definition

Australian Child Protection Legislation means all state/territory child protection legislation (see Appendix D for legislation as at January 2024).

Bullying means a person or group of people repeatedly and intentionally using words or actions, or the inappropriate use of power, against someone or a group of people to cause distress and risk to their wellbeing.

Child / young person means a person under the age of 18 years.

Child Abuse is the mistreatment of a child that:

- Causes, is causing or is likely to cause a detrimental effect of a significant nature to that child's physical, psychological or emotional wellbeing; or

- Does, or is likely to, endanger that child's physical or emotional health, development or wellbeing,

Whether through a:

- Single act, omission or circumstance; or
- Series of combination of acts, omissions or circumstances;

And:

- Includes physical abuse, emotional or psychological abuse, sexual abuse, grooming and neglect.

Physical abuse occurs when a person subjects a child to non-accidental physically aggressive acts, which may cause injury intentionally or inadvertently as a result of physical punishment or the aggressive treatment of a child. Physically abusive behaviour includes:

- Shoving, hitting, slapping, shaking, throwing, punching, biting, burning, kicking; and
- harmful methods or overtraining where there is potential to result in significant damage to a child's physical development.

Emotional or Psychological abuse occurs when a child does not receive the love, affection, or attention they need for healthy emotional, psychological and social development. Such abuse may involve:

- Repeated rejection or threats to a child;
- Constant criticism, teasing, ignoring, threatening, yelling, scapegoating, ridicule and rejection;
- Bullying or Harassment;
- Continual coldness; and
- Harmful training methods or overtraining where there is the potential to result in significant damage to a child's physical, intellectual or emotional wellbeing and support.

Sexual abuse occurs when an adult or person in authority (i.e. older, or younger but more physically or intellectually developed) involves a child in any sexual activity. Perpetrators of sexual abuse take advantage of their power, authority or position over the child for their own benefit. It can include making sexual comments to a child, kissing, touching a child's genitals or breast, oral sex or intercourse with a child. Encouraging a child to view pornographic videos, websites or images, or engaging a child to participate in sexual conversations over social media or otherwise is also considered sexual abuse.

Sexual exploitation is a form of sexual abuse which occurs when a child is forced to or involved in sexual activities that are then unlawfully recorded in some way, or recorded without the consent of one or more parties, or used to produce pornography. Such pornography can be in the form of photographs or videos, whether published or circulated on the internet or social media.

Child Safe Commitment means Blind Bats Inc. 's commitment to child safety as set out in **Appendix A.**

Child Safe Practices means the child safety requirements and practice adopted and implemented by the Blind Bats Inc. to help ensure the safety of children, as set out in Appendix B.

Commonwealth Child Safe Framework is the Australian government policy that sets minimum standards for creating and embedding a child safe culture in Commonwealth entities.

Contractors includes individuals or organisations engaged by the Blind Bats Inc. by contract and their employees and subcontractors.

Employees includes all ongoing, fixed term and casual employees engaged under Blind Bats Inc. The term also refers to any persons working in the BLIND BATS INC. on secondment from other Commonwealth government entities and BLIND BATS INC. employees on secondment to other organisations.

Grooming describes what happens when a perpetrator or potential perpetrator of Child Abuse builds a relationship with a child with a view to abusing them in the future. There is no set pattern in relation to the grooming of children. For some perpetrators, there will be a lengthy period of time before the abuse begins – the child may be given special attention and what starts as an apparently normal display of affection, such as cuddling, can develop into sexual touching or masturbation and then into more serious sexual behaviour. Other perpetrators may draw a child in and abuse them relatively quickly. Some abusers do not groom children but abuse them without forming a relationship at all. Grooming can take place in any setting where a relationship is formed, such as sport, leisure, music, religious activities, on social media or by other technological means.

Harassment means any type of behaviour (including one-off incidents) towards a person that they do not want and that is offensive, abusive, belittling or threatening and that is reasonably likely to cause harm to the person who is subject to the harassment.

National Principles for Child Safe Organisations means the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations approved by the Council of Australian Governments in 2019, as set out in Appendix E.

Neglect is the persistent failure or deliberate failure or denial to meet a child's basic needs. Child Neglect includes the failure to provide adequate food, clothing, shelter, adequate supervision, clean water, medical attention or supervision to the extent that the child's health and development is or is likely to be harmed. Types of neglect include physical, medical, emotional and educational neglect, as well as abandonment.

Risk Management means identifying the potential for an incident or potential harm to occur and taking steps to reduce the likelihood of its occurrence.

Sexual behaviours is to be interpreted widely to encompass the entire range of actions that would reasonably be considered to be sexual in nature, including but not limited to:

- i. 'Contact behaviour'; such as sexual intercourse, kissing, fondling, inappropriate touching that is sexual in nature or sexual penetration; and

ii. 'Non-contact behaviour'; such as flirting, sexual innuendo, sexual comments or questions, inappropriate text messaging, inappropriate photography or exposure to pornography or nudity.

Site user means a person accessing or utilising an Blind Bats Inc. site, facility or service.

Trauma can be the result of a singular event or a series of incidents and experiences and can impair normal functioning, reactions, decision making, behaviours and relationships.

Blind Bats Inc recognises that trauma can manifest itself in a variety of ways and at different points in time dependent on the individual and the incident/s.

Victimisation means subjecting a person, or threatening to subject a person, either in person or online, to any unfair treatment because the person has made, or intends to pursue their right to make, a complaint, report or lawful disclosure, including under applicable legislation or this Policy, or for supporting another person to take such action.

Vilification means a public act, conduct or behaviour, either in person or online, that incites hatred, serious contempt for or revulsion or severe ridicule of a person or group of people because of a characteristic they hold (including age, disability, race or ethnicity, sex or gender identity, sexual orientation or religion).

Appendix A: BLIND BATS INC. Committee Child Safe Commitment Statement

Blind Bats Inc. Committee Child Safe Commitment Statement

Blind Bats Inc is strongly committed to safe, supportive and friendly environments where children and young people are valued and enjoy sport.

Blind Bats Inc. has adopted the Commonwealth Child Safe Framework and is committed to implementing the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations and ensuring that child safety is reflected in everything we do. Blind Bats Inc . takes seriously our responsibility to provide an environment that is caring, nurturing and safe.

We are committed to keeping children and young people safe

- We have zero tolerance to child abuse and neglect.
- Through our Child Safe Policy, we document our clear commitment to keeping children and young people safe from abuse and neglect.
- We publicly communicate our commitment to all stakeholders.

We encourage the involvement of children and young people

- We involve and communicate with children and young people in developing a safe, inclusive and supportive environment.
- We give all children and young people access to information, support and complaints processes.

- We actively listen to children and young people and ensure that they are informed about their rights, including their right to safety and their right to be heard.

We involve families and the community in promoting child safety and wellbeing

- We provide information to families and communities about:
 - our commitment to keeping children and young people safe and communicating their rights;
 - the behaviour we expect of our employees, contractors and of themselves; and
 - our policy about responding to child abuse.
- We seek feedback and have a process for responding to concerns.

We promote equity and respect diversity

- We consider the needs of children and young people; particularly Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children with a disability, children who identify as LGBTQI+ and children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.
- We respect the rights of children who identify as LGBTQI+ to be recognised for their gender identity, sexual orientation or intersex status and to feel safe and respected when participating in sport.
- We respect diversity and seek to create culturally safe sporting environments.

We ensure that our people are suitable and supported to work with children and young people

- We require all staff to undergo mandatory screening prior to commencement, including Working with Children Checks.
- We have embedded child safety into our recruitment processes, to minimise the likelihood that we will recruit employees or contractors who are unsuitable to work with children.

We encourage reporting of all complaints and concerns

- We actively encourage reporting of any allegation, disclosure or concern regarding child abuse, neglect or harm.
- We respond to all allegations, disclosures or concerns and act to ensure that processes are fair, transparent and child focused.
- We will meet the requirements of legislated mandatory or industry reporting requirements, including Australian Child Protection Legislation.

We equip our staff, contractors and site users with ongoing education and training

- We have Child Safe Practices that outlines our expectations for behaviour towards children and young people.

- We provide all employees and contractors with information and ongoing education about our commitment to child safety including our Child Safe Policy, Child Safe Practices and how to report a concern.
- We promote awareness of the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations to our staff, contractors and stakeholders.

We ensure that environments are safe

- We will identify and implement improvements to our physical and online environments to minimise opportunities for abuse to occur.
- We actively seek to create environments where children and young people feel safe.

We maintain and improve our policies and practices

- We are committed to maintaining and improving our policies, procedures and practices to keep children and young people safe from abuse or neglect.
- We have an appointed Child Safe Champion who is responsible for promoting child safety and the implementation of the Blind Bats Inc Child Safe Policy.
- We undertake an annual risk assessment to identify and document the risk of harm to children and young people, in line with the Commonwealth Child Safe Framework.
- We seek independent advice and conduct external reviews to support our implementation of the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations.

Appendix B: Child Safe Practices

Blind Bats Inc is committed to safeguarding Children. . Blind Bats Inc's Child Safe Practices have been developed to identify and prevent behaviour that may be harmful to children and young people.

A failure to comply with the Child Safe Practices will be a breach of the Child Safe Policy.

Physical contact with children

- a. You must ensure that any physical contact with children/young people is appropriate to the delivery of . Blind Bats Inc programs or services and based on the needs of the child; such as assisting with the use of equipment, technique, treatment by a health practitioner or administering first aid.
- b. You must not have contact with children/young people that:
 - i. involves touching of genitals, buttocks or the breast area other than as part of delivering medical or allied health services;
 - ii. would appear to a reasonable observer to have a sexual connotation;
 - iii. is intended to cause pain or distress to the child (e.g., corporal punishment);

- iv. is overly physical (e.g., wrestling, horseplay, tickling or other roughhousing);
- v. is unnecessary (e.g., assisting with toileting when a child does not require assistance);
and
- vi. is initiated against the wishes of the Child except if such contact may be necessary to prevent injury to the Child or to others, in which case:
 - physical restraint should be a last resort;
 - the level of force used must be appropriate to the specific circumstances, and aimed solely at restraining the Child to prevent harm to themselves or others; and
 - the incident must be reported to Safeguarding and Integrity as soon as possible.
- c. You must report to Safeguarding & Integrity any physical contact initiated by a Child that is sexual and/or inappropriate, for example, acts of physical aggression, as soon as possible.

Professional boundaries

- a. You must establish and maintain professional boundaries when working or interacting with children.
- b. You must act within the scope of your role (as specified in your position description or contract) when working or interacting with children.
- c. You must not:
 - i. provide any form of support to a child or their family unrelated to the scope of your role (e.g. financial assistance, babysitting);
 - ii. use a personal phone, camera or video to take images or video footage of Children unless specifically approved;
 - iii. wear uniform or identification outside of authorised activities;
 - iv. exhibit any type of favouritism towards a Child;
 - v. transport Children unless specifically approved;
 - vi. give gifts/presents to Children other than the provision of official awards;
 - vii. engage in open discussions of a mature or adult nature in the presence of Children, or share overly personal information with a child;
 - viii. use inappropriate language in the presence of Children (e.g. swearing, sexually explicit language);
 - ix. discriminate against any Child, including on the basis of gender identity, culture, race, or disability;
 - x. have one on one contact with a Child outside of authorised activities (includes in-person as well as by phone or online); or
 - xi. where there is no pre-existing social, personal or family relationship, accept an invitation to attend any social function at the request of a Child or their family.

d. If you become aware of a situation in which a Child requires assistance that is beyond your role, or in the case of emergency, you must undertake any or all of the following at the earliest opportunity:

- i. refer the matter to an appropriate support agency;
- ii. refer the Child to an appropriate support agency;
- iii. contact the Child's parent, guardian or carer; and/or
- iv. seek advice from the Safeguarding & Integrity team or a Child Safety Officer.

Use of, possession or supply of alcohol or drugs

a. You must not:

- i. use, possess or be under the influence of an illicit drug in the presence of a child or young person;
- ii. use or be under the influence of alcohol while supervising a child or young person;
- iii. be impaired by any other legal drug such as prescription or over-the-counter drugs while in the presence of a child or young person; or
- iv. supply alcohol or drugs (including tobacco) to children or young people.

b. You must not supply or administer medicines, except with the consent of the parent/guardian/carer of the Child and under a valid prescription for that Child and at the prescribed dosage..

Transporting Children

- a. You may only transport Children in circumstances that are directly related to the delivery of Blind Bats Inc. programs and services.
- b. You must not transport Children without prior written approval from their parent, guardian or carer, unless in an emergency.
- c. When transporting children, you must drive responsibly, not be impaired by alcohol or any mind-altering substances, have an unrestricted drivers' license and, to the extent practicable, not be alone in the car with a child or young person.
- d. You may only transport Children in a vehicle when the manufacturer stated capacity is adhered to and seatbelts and child restraints must meet Australian Standards (AS/NZS1754).

Photographing and filming of Children

- a. Photography and filming of children and young people at BLIND BATS INC. programs or facilities must be conducted in accordance with the Child Safe Procedure – Filming and Photography.
- b. You may only photograph or film a child or young person if:
 - i. the Child's parent or guardian has provided written consent for the photographs to be taken or for the video footage to be captured. Where appropriate and possible, consent should also be sought from the child or young person;

- ii. the context directly relates to Blind Bats Inc . or activities on Blind Bats Inc e . site;
 - iii. the child/young person is appropriately dressed and posed; and
 - iv. the image or footage is taken in the presence of other person.
- c. You must not distribute images or footage (including as an attachment to an email) to anyone outside the Blind Bats Inc. other than the Child photographed or their parent, guardian or carer, without . Blind Bats Inc management knowledge and approval.
 - d. You must store images and footage (digital or hard copy) in a manner that prevents unauthorised access by others and will be destroy or delete the images and footage as soon as they are no longer required.
 - e. You must not publish any images or footage online or in publications (eg. annual report), or identify the child, without written consent from the parent, guardian or carer. Where appropriate and possible, consent should also be sought from the child or young person.

Supervision

- a. You must ensure that children and young people participating in Blind Bats Inc. programs and services, or using. Blind Bats Inc facilities, are adequately supervised, based on the age and gender of the children and young people and the size of the group.
- b. You must ensure that supervision is constant, active and diligent, prioritising the safety and wellbeing of children and, where possible, requires the supervisor to be in a position to observe each Child.
- c. Where direct supervision is not possible, the supervisor must know the location of each child or young person and ensure that they are able to respond to individual needs and immediately intervene if necessary.
- d. You must avoid one-to-one situations with Children, except when required for service or program delivery (e.g., medicine and physical therapy) or in an emergency. If you are required to be in a one-to-one situation with a child, the situation should be identified and recorded by Blind Bats Inc.
- e. You must report any incident of one-to-one unauthorised contact to a supervisor and the Safeguarding & Integrity Team within 24 hours of the incident occurring.
- f. You must allow parents, guardians and carers to be present when children and young people are participating in BLIND BATS INC. programs and services or using BLIND BATS INC. facilities.
- g. appropriate dress standards are observed when Children are present – such as no exposure to adult nudity;
- h. Children will not be exposed to pornographic material, for example, through movies, television, the internet or magazines;
- i. Children will not be left under the supervision or protection of unauthorised persons such as accommodation staff or peers;
- j. Children have the right to contact their parents, guardian, carer or another adult, if they feel unsafe, uncomfortable or distressed during the stay.

Change room arrangements

- a. You must ensure that:
 - i. Children are supervised in change rooms whilst ensuring their right to privacy;
 - ii. adults do not shower or change at the same time as supervising groups of children; and
 - iii. adequate supervision in 'public' change rooms is provided when they are used, providing the level of supervision required for preventing abuse by members of the public, adult users, or general misbehaviour, while also respecting a Child's privacy; and
- b. You should not be alone in a change room facility with a child or young person.
- c. You should not use phones, cameras or recording devices in changing rooms and in particular while Children are getting dressed.

Drop off and pick up of Children and young people

- a. Blind Bats Inc. programs and services involving Children have specific procedures for the drop off and pick up of Children.
- b. Blind Bats Inc. programs must maintain an accessible register of parent, guardian or carer emergency contact numbers and an operational phone.
- c. Where a parent, guardian or carer is late, reasonable attempts to contact them are made. It is not the responsibility of employees or contractors to transport Children home if their parent or guardian is late for pick up.
- d. You must not leave Blind Bats Inc . sites or facilities until all Children have been collected by their parents, guardian or carer.

Children and young people in the workplace

- a. Where an Blind Bats Inc employee is a child or young person, you must ensure that they are protected under this Policy, including implementing the child safe practices in their work environment.
- b. There may be occasions whereby employees or contractors who are parents/guardians/carers may bring their Children into the . Blind Bats Inc workplace.
- c. You must directly supervise your children brought into the workplace at all times and are responsible for their safety.
- d. Children must not be brought into Blind Bats Inc . work environments if they are sick or unwell. Flexible work arrangements are available to Blind Bats Inc . employees and supervisors are encouraged to cater for caring commitments.

Use of language and tone of voice

- a. You should ensure that language and tone of voice used in the presence of children and young people:
 - i. provides clear direction, boosts their confidence, encourages or affirms them;
 - ii. is age appropriate; and

- iii. must not be harmful to children or young people.
- b. You must not use language towards, or in the presence of, children or young people, that is:
 - i. discriminatory, racist or sexist;
 - iv. derogatory, belittling or negative (for example, calling a child a 'loser' or telling them they are 'too fat');
 - v. intended to threaten or frighten; or
 - vi. profane or sexual.
- b. You should address any negative language or tone by a child, parent, guardian or other person and reinforce that it is not appropriate.

Positive guidance

- a. You should set clear guidelines for expected behaviour for children and young people involved in Blind Bats Inc . programs, services or facilities.
- b. You should use appropriate techniques and behaviour management strategies to ensure
- c. :
- i. an effective and positive environment; and
- ii. the safety and wellbeing of children, young people and other participants.
- d. You must use strategies that are fair, respectful and appropriate to the developmental stage of children and young people involved.
- e. You must provide children and young people with clear directions and give an opportunity to redirect any misbehaviour in a calm and positive manner.
- f. You must not take disciplinary action against children or young people involving physical punishment or any form of treatment that could reasonably be considered as degrading, cruel, frightening or humiliating.
- g. You must ensure that children and young people are encouraged to speak up if they are unsure or feel unsafe.

Digital communication

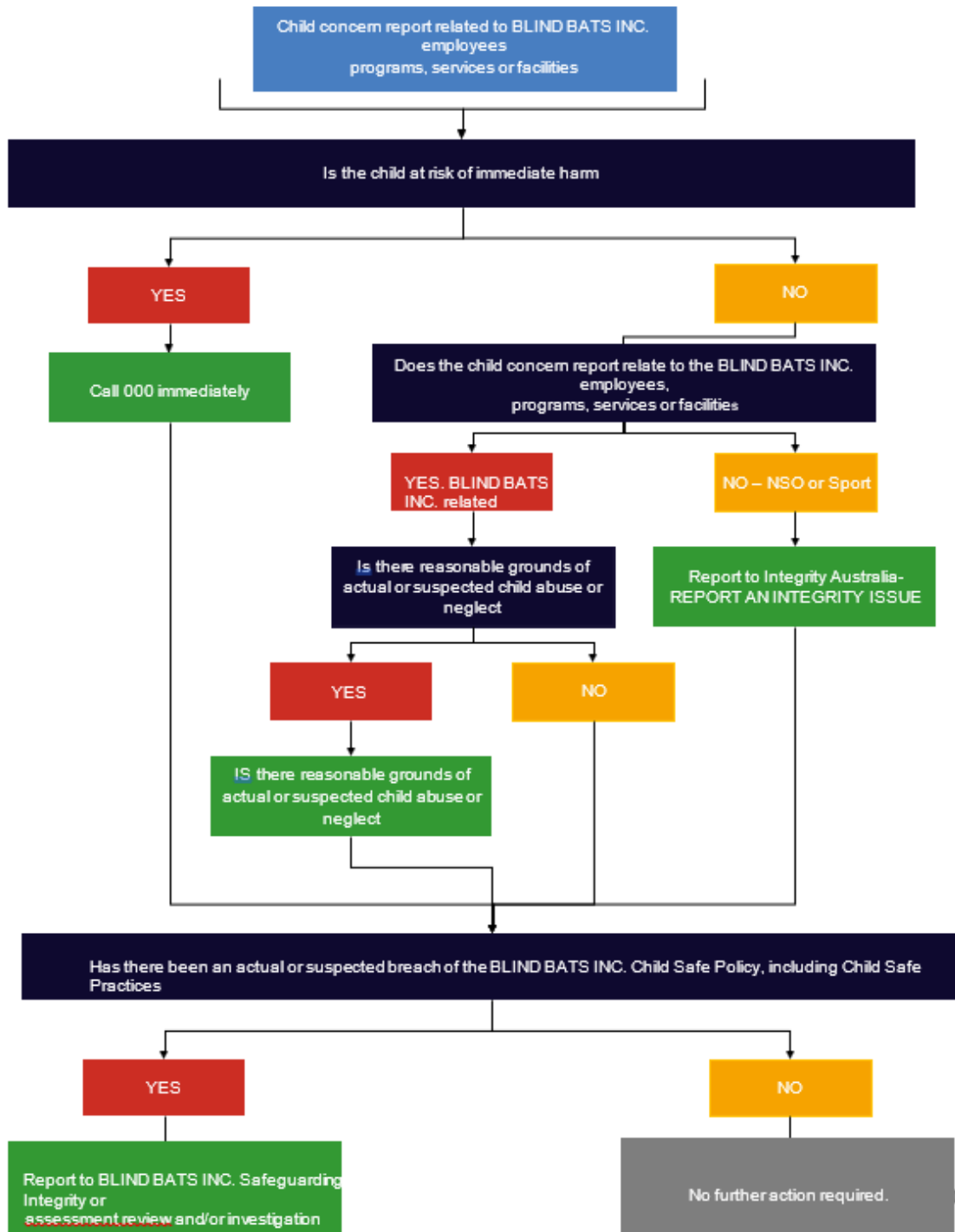
- a. You must adopt a two deep model for any electronic or online communication with Children and young people, that is, copy in a supervisor and a parent/guardian/carer in all communication.
- b. When communicating with Children, you must ensure that content is:
 - i. directly associated with delivering Blind Bats Inc. services, such as advising that a scheduled event is cancelled;

- ii. concise with personal or social content limited only to convey the message in a polite and friendly manner;
 - iii. devoid of any inappropriate language or language that is sexual in nature; and
 - iv. not promoting unauthorised social activity or contact.
- c. You must not:
- i. befriend a child or young person on your personal social media; or
 - ii. request that a child keep online communication secret from their parents/guardian/carer or other Blind Bats Inc. employees.
- b. You must report to Blind Bats Inc . any online contact initiated by a child or young person that is outside of your official role.

Appendix C: Blind Bats Inc . Child Safe reporting

Blind Bats Inc. will manage all information, including personal information, in accordance with the Privacy Act and applicable child safety legislation.

- 1.1 Blind Bats Inc will screen volunteers and collect Applications forms for all positions
- 1.2 All applications and records will relating to children will be filled according to recording keeping policy.
- 1.3 Blind Bats Inc will share information when requested, provided it is consistent with the protected disclosure, freedom of information and privacy requirements of Blind Bats Inc and applicable legislation.



Appendix D: Relevant standards and legislation

The information listed below is current as January 2024. All current legislation can be referenced at the Australian Institute of Family Studies.

1.1 International covenants, declarations and treaties

Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Available online: <https://www.un.org/en/universal-declaration-human-rights/>

Geneva Declaration of the Rights of the Child

This declaration, adopted on 26 September 1924, sets out the fundamental human rights accorded to children. It is the foundation for the later United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Available online: <http://www.un-documents.net/gdrc1924.htm>

United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

This convention, which entered into force on 2 September 1990, outlines the internationally agreed rights of children. Articles 3, 19, 25, 34 and 37 specifically reference children's rights and the obligations of states in terms of child protection and safety.

Available online: <https://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/crc.aspx>

1.2 Commonwealth legislation and policy

Archives Act 1983

Available online: <https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/C2023C00281>

General Records Authority for Child Sexual Abuse Incidents and Allegations

Available online: <https://www.naa.gov.au/information-management/records-authorities/types-records-authorities/general-records-authority-41>

Crimes Act 1914

Available online: <https://www.legislation.gov.au/Series/C1914A00012>

Criminal Code Act 1995

Available online: <https://www.legislation.gov.au/Series/C2004A04868>

Family Law Act 1975 (Cth)

Available online: https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/C2019C00101/Html/Volume_1

Human Rights Act 2004 (ACT)

Available online: http://www8.austlii.edu.au/cgi-bin/viewdb/au/legis/act/consol_act/hra2004148/

Mapping to the Information Management Standard for Australian Government

Available online: <https://www.naa.gov.au/information-management/information-management-standards/information-management-standard-australian-government/recommendations-royal-commission-institutional-responses-child-sexual-abuse>

Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013

Available online: <https://www.legislation.gov.au/Series/C2013A00123>

Public Service Act 1999

Available online: <https://www.legislation.gov.au/Series/C2004A00538>

Commonwealth Child Safe Framework

Available online: <https://www.childsafety.gov.au/what-we-do/lead-commonwealth-child-safe-framework>

1.3 State and territory legislation and policy

For more information, visit the Australian Institute of Family Studies.

- Mandatory reporting of child abuse and neglect | Australian Institute of Family Studies (aifs.gov.au)
- Pre-employment screening: Working With Children Checks and Police Checks | Australian Institute of Family Studies (aifs.gov.au)

Jurisdiction Authority Requirements

Australian Capital Territory Access Canberra Working with Vulnerable People (WWVP) Mandatory Reporting

New South Wales Service NSW Communities & Justice Working with Children Checks (WWCC) Mandatory Reporting

Northern Territory NT.GOV.AU

Northern Territory Government information and services Working with Children Clearance (WWCC) also called Ochre Card

Mandatory Reporting Link

Queensland Queensland Government Queensland Blue Card Services Mandatory Reporting Link

South Australia South Australian Government Working with Children Check (WWCC) Mandatory Reporting Link

Tasmania Tasmania Government Working with Vulnerable People (WWVP) Mandatory Reporting

Victoria Victoria State Government Working with Children Check (WWCC) Mandatory Reporting

Western Australia WA.gov.au Working with Children Check (WWCC) Mandatory Reporting Link

Appendix E: National Principles for Child Safe Organisations

National Principles for Child Safe Organisations

- 1 Child Safety and wellbeing is embedded in organisational leadership, governance, and culture.
- 2 Children and young people are informed about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously.

- 3 Families and communities are informed and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing
- 4 Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice.
- 5 People working with children and young people are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice
- 6 Processes for complaints and concerns are child focused
- 7 Staff and volunteers are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children and young people safe through ongoing education and training
- 8 Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing, while minimising the opportunity for children and young people to be harmed.
- 9 Implementation of the National Child Safe Principles is regularly reviewed and improved
- 10 Policies and procedures document how the organisation is safe for children and young people