

2014

Harrington United Football Club



Club Policies

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1. CODES OF BEHAVIOUR

The Harrington United Football Club Codes of Behaviour aims to set out the minimum standards of behaviour. It should apply when playing, training or taking part in any club-sanctioned activities.

- Act within the rules and spirit of your sport & promote fair play over winning at any cost.
- Encourage and support opportunities for people to learn appropriate behaviours and skills.
- Support opportunities for participation in all aspects of the sport.
- Treat each person as an individual & show respect and courtesy to all involved.
- Respect the rights and worth of every person, regardless of their age, race, gender, ability, cultural background, sexuality or religion.
- Respect the decisions of officials, coaches and administrators.
- Wherever practical, avoid unaccompanied and unobserved one-on-one activity (when in a supervisory capacity or where a power imbalance exists) with people under the age of 18.
- Display appropriate and responsible behaviour in all interactions.
- Display responsible behaviour in relation to alcohol and other drugs.
- Act with integrity and objectivity, and accept responsibility for your decisions and actions.
- Ensure your decisions and actions contribute to a safe, harassment-free environment.
- Do not tolerate abusive, bullying or threatening behaviour.

Players

- Give your best at all times & participate for your own enjoyment and benefit.
- Play by the rules and show respect for other players, coaches and officials.

Coaches

- Place the safety and welfare of the players above all else.
- Help each player reach their full potential. Respect the talent, developmental stage and goals of each person and encourage them with positive and constructive feedback.
- Obtain appropriate qualifications and keep up-to-date with the latest coaching practices and the principles of growth and development of young players.
- Ensure that any physical contact with another person is appropriate to the situation and necessary for the person's skill development.

Officials

- Place the safety and welfare of the players above all else.
- Ensure all players are included and can participate, regardless of their race, gender, ability, cultural background, sexuality or religion.
- Be consistent, impartial and objective when making decisions.
- Address unsporting behaviour and promote respect for other players and officials.

Administrators

- Ensure quality supervision and instruction for players.
- Support coaches and officials to improve their skills and competencies.
- Act honestly, in good faith and in the best interests of the sport as a whole.
- Ensure that any information acquired from the position is not used improperly.
- Conduct club responsibilities with due care, competence and diligence.

Parents

- Encourage your child to participate, do their best and have fun.
- Focus on your child's effort and performance, rather than winning or losing.
- Never ridicule or yell at a child for making a mistake or losing a competition.
- Help out the coach or officials at training and games, where possible.
- Model appropriate behaviour, including respect for other players and officials.

Spectators

- Respect the effort and performances of players and officials.
- Reject the use of harassment, bullying or violence in any form, whether by other spectators, coaches, officials or players.
- Adhere to the Spectators Behaviour policy in section 2 of this document.

Non-Compliance

Members, Officials, Parents, Spectators or others found to have behaved inappropriately, and who are associate members or have agreed to abide by our club's Code of Behaviour and this policy, may face disciplinary action as outlined in our Member Protection Policy.

Our commitment

The Harrington United Football Club is committed to providing a safe environment for participation. Aggressive, threatening or other inappropriate behaviour by members, their families, their friends, and other sporting personnel while attending a game or event will not be tolerated.

These behaviours are outlined in our Code of Behaviour and specifically include:

- using bad language
- harassing or ridiculing players, coaches, officials or other spectators
- making racist, religious, sexist or other inappropriate comments to players, coaches, officials or other spectators
- any threatening behaviour or physical altercation between spectators and players, coaches, officials or other spectators
- putting undue pressure on children, berating them or putting down their performance
- Drinking alcohol at a game or training or being drunk at a club event.

What we will do

- Provide members, their parents and other sporting personnel with our Code of Behaviour and make clear what is expected and the consequences of non-compliance.
- Where possible, bind non-members by prominently displaying conditions of entry to grounds and facilities and by requiring parents to abide by club rules (e.g. by making parents associate members, signing our Code of Behaviour).
- Reinforce messages of fair and respectful behaviour by displaying signs and posters around our facilities and providing information on our website, in our newsletter and through other club communication.
- Encourage our coaches and officials to complete training to develop their skills and confidence.
- Ban bringing alcohol to training, a game or no-alcohol club event.
- Consult with our local police and seek their support and advice on how to handle issues involving inappropriate behaviour by spectators prior to, at or after a game.
- Encourage the reporting of incidents and investigate inappropriate behaviours as outlined in this policy and take disciplinary or whatever other actions as are deemed necessary (e.g. appoint a ground official to monitor behaviour).
- Encourage our players, coaches, officials and spectators to call the police if they are concerned about escalating behaviour and their safety or the safety of others.

What we ask you to do

- Help create a positive atmosphere for players, officials and other spectators by showing respect for players, officials and other spectators.
- Abide by our club's Code of Behaviour and refrain from using bad language, harassing or ridiculing others or behaving in a threatening or violent manner.
- If you are aware of inappropriate spectator behaviour and you feel confident to do so, speak with the person and ask them to stop. If there is a ground official or committee member present, ask for their assistance.
- Report any inappropriate spectator behaviour to the club president or someone in a position of authority.
- Call the police or a club official if you are concerned for your safety or the safety of others.

Non-Compliance

Parents or others found to have behaved inappropriately, and who are associate members or have agreed to abide by our club's Code of Behaviour and this policy, may face disciplinary action as outlined in our Member Protection Policy.

3. COMMUNICATION POLICY

Our commitment

Electronic communication is essential for sharing club news and information with our members. Our communication will be timely, appropriate and related to club business.

What we will do

We use a range of electronic tools to communicate with our members.

Our communication will protect members' privacy, maintain clear boundaries and ensure that bullying and harassment does not occur.

A publicity officer will be appointed to provide accountability and control over material published on our club's website, www.hornetsfc.com.au and any related discussion groups or social media websites, such as Facebook, YouTube or Twitter.

Website

- Our website will include current information on competitions, social events, committees, policies, constitution, rules and by-laws.
- No offensive content or photos will be published.
- If we intend to publish a photo of a child, we will first seek permission from his or her parents and take care not to provide identifying information.
- We will seek feedback from members to improve the information available on the site.

SMS and email

Committee members, coaches and team managers may use SMS and email to provide information about competition, training, club-sanctioned social events and other club business, however:

- SMS messages should be short and about club/team matters
- email communication will be used when more information is required
- ANY communication involving children will be directed through their parents.

Social media websites

- We treat all social media postings, blogs, status updates and tweets as public 'comment'.
- Postings (written, photos or videos) will be family-friendly and feature positive club news and events.
- No personal information about our members will be disclosed.
- No statements will be made that are misleading, false or likely to injure a person's reputation.
- No statements will be made that might bring our club into disrepute.
- Abusive, discriminatory, intimidating or offensive statements will not be tolerated. Offending posts will be removed and those responsible will be blocked from the site.

What we ask you to do

We expect our members to conduct themselves appropriately when using electronic communication to share information with other members or posting material on public websites connected to the club.

Electronic communication:

- should be restricted to club matters
- must not offend, intimidate, humiliate or bully another person
- must not be misleading, false or injure the reputation of another person
- should respect and maintain the privacy of members
- Must not bring the club into disrepute.

Coaches and others who work with children and young people must direct electronic communication through the child's parents.

Non-compliance

Members may face disciplinary action for sending inappropriate electronic communication or posting online content or comments that harass, offend, intimidate or humiliate another member, as outlined in our member protection policy or code of conduct.

Under certain circumstances, cyber bullying (e.g. bullying that is carried out through an internet service such as email, a chat room, discussion group, instant messaging or website) is a criminal offence that can be reported to the police.

In addition, members who publish false or misleading comments about another person in the public domain (e.g., Facebook, YouTube or Twitter) may be liable for defamation.

4. DROP OFF / PICK UP OF CHILDREN

Our commitment

Our club is committed to providing a safe environment for the participation of children and young people. Part of this is ensuring that children and young people are not left alone after practice or games.

What we will do

- Make sure parents/guardians and children know the time and location of practice and games and when they can expect to collect their children.
- Request coaches and other sporting personnel to arrive before scheduled practice or game times.
- Give coaches a register of parent/guardian emergency contact numbers and make sure they have access to a phone.
- Ensure that if parents/guardians are late, coaches will try to make contact with them and:
 - ask the second to last child and their parent/ guardian to wait with the coach/official and the child
 - Get parents/guardians to collect their children from the club room (e.g. if there is a club room where other people will be).
 - Avoid transporting children to their homes unless permission has been given by parents/guardians.

What we ask you to do

- Parents or guardians must remain with their children at games and training unless arrangements have been made with the coach, manager or other parent.
- Pick your children up on time or make other arrangements.
- Inform the coach about any changes in arrangements for picking up your child.

Our commitment

Our club supports the responsible consumption of alcohol and takes seriously any inappropriate behaviour that results from excessive drinking.

Alcohol-free social events will be provided for young people and families.

We will not endorse or support events, celebrations or end of season trips that involve excessive consumption of alcohol.

What we will do

Harrington United Football Club is not licensed to serve alcohol & in accordance with Macarthur District Soccer Football Association, Alcohol is not permitted at the Hive under any circumstances.

What we ask you to do

All members and sporting personnel are required to comply with the following.

- Drink and behave responsibly at all club functions, events and away trips.
- Do not supply alcohol to team members if they are aged under 18.
- Do not drink alcohol at the club, club functions, and matches or while away on trips if you are aged under 18.
- Do not bring alcohol or drink alcohol while at games (e.g. as a spectator, in your role as a coach, as an official or as a volunteer).
- Do not encourage others to drink excessively & do not spike another person's drink.

Non-Compliance

The club will take action for breaches of behaviour and responsibilities outlined in this policy.

- If members or sporting personnel become drunk at the club or other social events they will be asked to leave. Ongoing instances of intoxication will be in breach of our Code of Behaviour and can result in disciplinary action (e.g. suspension or termination of membership).
- Spiking of drinks is a criminal offence that can be reported to police by victims. It can lead to serious police charges being laid against the offender/s. Separate action can be taken as a breach of our state sporting organisation's and our club's Member Protection Policy to provide for the protection, safety and welfare of members.
- Serving alcohol to a minor is a criminal offence that can be reported to the police and the relevant liquor licensing authority by victims and their parents. It can lead to heavy fines. Separate action can be taken as a breach of our state sporting organisation's and our club's Member Protection Policy to provide for the protection, safety and welfare of children.
- Any person aged under 18 found to have consumed alcohol while at a club function or on a trip in the care of the club (e.g. while attending a country carnival) may be suspended for the remainder of the competition/tournament. The young person's parents shall be advised and will be responsible for getting their son/daughter home at their own expense.
- Any member or sporting personnel found to have behaved inappropriately because of over-consumption of alcohol (e.g. sexual harassment, verbal abuse, physical assault, and neglect of a child) will face disciplinary action as outlined in our Member Protection Policy or Code of Behaviour.

Purpose of Our Policy

The main objective of our Member Protection Policy (policy) is to maintain responsible behaviour and the making of informed decisions by participants in this club. It outlines our commitment to a person's right to be treated with respect and dignity, and to be safe and protected from abuse. Our policy informs everyone involved in our club of his or her legal and ethical rights and responsibilities and the standards of behaviour that are required. It also covers the care and protection of children participating in our club's activities.

Our policy applies to everyone involved in the club including committee members, administrators, coaches, officials (referees), players, parents and spectators.

Extent of Our Policy

Our policy covers unfair decisions (e.g. team selection) and actions, breaches of our code of behaviour and behaviour that occurs at practice, in the club rooms, at social events organised or sanctioned by the club (or our sport), and on away and overnight trips. It also covers private behaviour where that behaviour brings our club or sport into disrepute or there is suspicion of harm towards a child or young person.

Club Responsibilities

We will:

- implement and comply with our policy;
- promote our policy to everyone involved in our club;
- promote and model appropriate standards of behaviour at all times;
- respond to breaches or complaints made under our policy promptly, fairly, and confidentially;
- review this policy every 12-18 months; and
- Seek advice from and refer serious issues to Macarthur District Soccer Football Association (MDSFA) or Football NSW as appropriate.

Note - *Serious issues include unlawful behaviour that involves or could lead to significant harm and includes criminal behaviour (e.g. physical assault, sexual assault, child abuse) and any other issues that our state or national body request to be referred to them.*

Individual Responsibilities

Everyone associated with our club must:

- comply with the code of behaviour outlined in our policy;
- treat others with respect;
- always place the safety and welfare of children above other considerations;
- be responsible and accountable for their behaviour;
- Follow the guidelines outlined in this policy if they wish to make a complaint or report a concern about possible child abuse, discrimination, harassment or other inappropriate behaviour.

Protection of Children

Harrington United Football Club is committed to the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people associated our Club. We support the rights of the child and will act without hesitation to ensure a child safe environment is maintained at all times. We also support the rights and wellbeing of our committee, who are all volunteers, and encourage their active participation in building and maintaining a secure environment for all participants.

Harrington United Football Club acknowledges that our members and volunteers provide a valuable contribution to the positive experiences of children involved in our sport. Harrington United Football Club aims to continue this and to take measures to protect the safety and welfare of children participating in our sport by:

Identify and Analyse Risk of Harm

The Harrington United Football Club will develop and implement a risk management strategy, which includes a review of existing child protection practices, to determine how child-safe and child-friendly the organisation is and to determine what additional strategies are required to minimise and prevent risk of harm to children because of the action of an employee, volunteer or another person.

Develop Codes of Conduct for Adults and Children

The Harrington United Football Club will ensure that the organisation has codes of conduct that specify standards of conduct and care when dealing and interacting with children, particularly those in the organisation's care. The organisation will also implement a code of conduct to address appropriate behaviour between children.

Choose Suitable Committee, Coaches, Managers and Volunteers

- Harrington United Football Club will ensure that the organisation takes all reasonable steps to ensure that it engages the most suitable and appropriate people to work with children (in prescribed positions).
- This may be achieved using a range of screening measures. Such measures will aim to minimise the likelihood of engaging (or retaining) people unsuitable to work with children.
- Harrington United Football Club will ensure that working with children checks/criminal history assessments are conducted for all Committee, Coaches, Managers & Volunteers working with children, where an assessment is required by law.
- If a criminal history report is obtained as part of their screening process, the Harrington United Football Club will ensure that the criminal history information is dealt with in accordance with relevant state requirements.

Support, Train, Supervise and Enhance Performance

Harrington United Football Club will ensure that all Committee, Coaches, Managers & Volunteers who work with children or their records have ongoing supervision, support and training such that their performance is developed and enhanced to promote a child-safe environment.

Empower and Promote the Participation of Children in Decision-Making

The Harrington United Football Club will promote the involvement and participation of children and young people in developing and maintaining child-safe environments.

Report and Respond Appropriately To Suspected Abuse and Neglect

The Harrington United Football Club will ensure that all Committee, Coaches, Managers & Volunteers are able to identify and respond to children at risk of harm.

The Harrington United Football Club will make all Committee, Coaches, Managers & Volunteers aware of their responsibilities under respective state laws if they have suspicion on reasonable grounds that a child has been or is being abused or neglected.

In addition to any legal obligation, if any person feels another person or organisation bound by this policy is acting inappropriately towards a child or is breaching the code(s) of practice set out they may make an internal complaint. Please refer to our complaints procedure outlined in attachment [Appendix A] of this policy. This will explain what to do about the behaviour and how the Harrington United Football Club will deal with the problem.

Supervision

Members under the age of 18 must be supervised at all times by a responsible adult. Our club will provide a level of supervision adequate and relative to the members' age, maturity, capabilities, level of experience, nature of activity and nature of venue. If a member finds a member under the age of 18 is unsupervised, they should assume responsibility for the member's safety until the parent/guardian or supervisor can be found.

Parents must turn up on time to collect their child for reasons of courtesy and safety. If it appears a member will be left alone at the end of a training session with just one child, they will ask another member to stay until the child is collected.

Transportation

Parents/guardians are responsible for transporting their children to and from club activities (e.g. training and games). Where our club makes arrangements for the transportation of children (e.g. for away or overnight trips), we will conduct a risk assessment that includes ensuring vehicles are adequately insured, the driver has a current and appropriate licence for the vehicle being used and appropriate safety measures are available (e.g. fitted working seatbelts).

Taking Images of Children

Images of children can be used inappropriately or illegally. The club requires that members, wherever possible, obtain permission from a child's parent/guardian before taking an image of a child that is not their own and ensure that the parent knows the way the image will be used. We also require the privacy of others to be respected and disallow the use of camera phones, videos and cameras inside changing areas, showers and toilets.

If the club uses an image of a child it will avoid naming or identifying the child or it will, wherever possible, avoid using both the first name and surname. We will not display personal information such as residential address, email address or telephone numbers without gaining consent from the parent/guardian. We will not display information about hobbies, likes/dislikes, school, etc as this information can be used as grooming tools by pedophiles or other persons. We will only use appropriate images of a child, relevant to our sport and ensure that the child is suitably clothed in a manner that promotes the sport, displays its successes, etc.

Anti-harassment, Discrimination and Bullying

Our club opposes all forms of harassment, discrimination and bullying. This includes treating or proposing to treat someone less favourably because of a particular characteristic; imposing or intending to impose an unreasonable requirement, condition or practice which has an unequal or disproportionate effect on people with a particular characteristic; or any behaviour that is offensive, abusive, belittling, intimidating or threatening – whether this is face-to-face, indirectly or via communication technologies such as mobile phone and computers. Some forms of harassment, discrimination and bullying are against the law and are based on particular characteristics such as age, disability, gender, sexual orientation, pregnancy, political or religious beliefs, race, and marital status.

Our club takes all claims of harassment, discrimination, bullying and cyber bullying seriously. We encourage anyone who believes they have been harassed, discriminated against or bullied to raise the issue with the club (see Responding to Complaints).

Inclusive practices

Our club is welcoming and we will seek to include members from all areas of our community.

People with a disability

Where possible we will include people with a disability in our teams and club. We will make reasonable adaptations (e.g. modifications to equipment and rules) to enable participation.

People from diverse cultures

We will support and respect people from diverse cultures and religions to participate in our club and where possible will accommodate requests for flexibility (e.g. modifications to uniforms).

Sexual & Gender Identity

All people, regardless of their sexuality, are welcome at our club. We strive to provide a safe environment for participation and will take action over any homophobic behaviour.

Pregnancy

Pregnant women should be aware that their own health and wellbeing, and that of their unborn children, should be of utmost importance in their decision making about the way they participate in our sport. We recommend pregnant women to consult with their medical advisers, make themselves aware of the facts about pregnancy in sport, and ensure that they make informed decisions about participation.

Responding to Complaints

Complaints

Our club takes all complaints about on and off-field behaviour seriously. Our club will handle complaints based on the principles of procedural fairness (natural justice), that is:

- all complaints will be taken seriously;
- both the person making the complaint (complainant) and the person the complaint is against (respondent) will be given full details of what is being said against them and have the opportunity to respond (give their side of the story);
- irrelevant matters will not be taken into account;
- decisions will be unbiased and fair; and
- Any penalties imposed will be fair and reasonable.

More serious complaints may be escalated to Macarthur District Soccer Football Association or Football NSW. If the complaint relates to suspected child abuse, sexual assault or other criminal activity, then our club will need to report the behaviour to the police and/or relevant government authority.

Complaint Handling Process

When a complaint is received by our club, the person receiving the complaint (e.g. President, Member Protection Information Officer) will:

- listen carefully and ask questions to understand the nature and extent of the problem;
- ask what the complainant would like to happen;
- explain the different options available to help resolve the problem;
- Take notes and maintain confidentiality but not necessarily anonymity.

Once the complainant decides on their preferred option for resolution, the club will assist, where appropriate and necessary, with the resolution process. This may involve:

- supporting the person complaining to talk to the person being complained about
- bringing all the people involved in the complaint together to talk objectively through the problem (this could include external mediation);
- gathering more information (e.g. from other people that may have seen the behaviour);

- seeking advice from our district, regional, state and/or national body or from an external agency (e.g. State Department of Sport or anti-discrimination agency);
- referring the complaint to Macarthur District Soccer Football Association; and/or
- Referring the complainant to an external agency such as a community mediation centre, police or anti-discrimination agency.

In situations where a complaint is referred to Macarthur District Soccer Football Association and an investigation is conducted, the club will:

- co-operate fully;
- ensure the complainant and respondent are not victimised;
- where applicable, ensure the complainant is not placed in an unsupervised situation with the respondent(s); and
- Act on Macarthur District Soccer Football Association's recommendations.

At any stage of the process, a person can seek advice from or lodge a complaint with an anti-discrimination commission or other external agency.

Disciplinary Measures

Our club will take disciplinary action against anyone found to have breached our policy or made false and malicious allegations. Any disciplinary measure imposed under our policy must:

- Be applied consistent with any contractual and employment rules and requirements;
- Be fair and reasonable;
- Be based on the evidence and information presented and the seriousness of the breach;
- Be determined by our Constitution, By Laws and the rules of the game.

Possible measures that may be taken include:

- verbal and/or written apology;
- counselling to address behaviour;
- suspension or termination of membership, participation or engagement in a role or activity;
- de-registration of accreditation for a period of time or permanently;
- A fine or any other form of discipline that our club considers reasonable and appropriate.

Appeals

The complainant or respondent can lodge one appeal against decisions of or disciplinary measures imposed by our club to Macarthur District Soccer Football Association or Football NSW. Appeals must be based on either a denial of natural justice, because of unjust or unreasonable disciplinary measure(s) being imposed, or on the grounds that the decision was not supported by the information/evidence presented and available to the decision maker/club.

7. COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

How to make Complaint

The Harrington United Football Club takes all complaints about on and off-field behaviour seriously.

Complaints should be made directly to the Member Protection & Information Officer (MPIO). Our current Member Protection & Information Officer, Gavin Lee, is an accredited MPIO by the Sports Institute of NSW, and is trained in dealing with complaints relating to sports.

The MPIO role is not intended to 'resolve' the dispute, rather to document it and facilitate the resolution. Complaints will be handled in accordance with the Section 8 Member protection policy.

Complaints should be made via email to mpio@hornetsfc.com.au, or you may leave your contact phone details at the canteen or with any committee member to have Gavin Lee call you.

This email box is monitored on a weekly basis during the playing season, and fortnightly during non-playing season.