

# MT ALEXANDER WOMEN'S SPORTS CLUB



## *Club Code of Conduct*

### **MANDATORY & ENFORCEABLE CODES OF CONDUCT FOR COACHES, PLAYERS, PARENTS, SUPPORTERS AND OFFICIALS**

#### **Purpose**

The Mt Alexander Women's Sports Club ("the "Club") is committed to providing a safe, respectful, inclusive, child safe and welcoming environment for all players, officials, volunteers and supporters (club members) as well as the broader community. The objective of the Code of Conduct is to ensure that all associated with the Club uphold the principles of fair play and conduct themselves in a fair and generous manner, respecting members of the Club, opposition players, umpires, officials and supporters. Child safe principles embedded in this code of conduct reflect the Club's commitment to embedding child safe practices as a core commitment. The Club Code of Conduct applies to all sports played by members of the Club. Each sport played by members of the Club are herein referred to as 'the game.'

The Code of Conduct applies to all Mt Alexander Women's Sports Club (the "Club") officials, volunteers, players, members and supporters, and is in place for all activities of the club including but not limited to training, club events, match days, social events and social media/online. All staff, players and volunteers are responsible for promoting the safety, wellbeing and empowerment of children involved with the Club. The Club Code of Conduct should be read in conjunction with the AFL Central Victoria Rules and Regulations.

In addition to this Code of Conduct, all players, coaches, parents, supporters and officials must abide by the Club's policies, as found on the Club's [website](#).

In completing registration for the club, players agree to be bound by both the Club Code of Conduct and all Club policies.

### **PRINCIPALS OF CONDUCT**

- We respect people's cultural, ethnic, religious and racial identities and their right to express their gender and sexual identity.
- We respect the right of all people to feel physically safe.
- We respect people's right to be free from harassment, unwelcome advances, inappropriate comments, unwanted touching or physical closeness, and sustained unwanted social contact.
- We recognise that consent is not merely the absence of 'no'; it is an enthusiastic 'yes'.
- We acknowledge the particular vulnerability of children and young people and commit to protecting their equal rights to be safe and free from inappropriate behaviour.
- We have a zero-tolerance policy towards violence of any kind, and club members are responsible for upholding that value.
- Being under the influence of drugs or alcohol will not be considered a mitigating factor in any incident of a breach of this Code.

The Mt Alexander Women's Sports Club believes that the standard you walk past is the standard you accept. As such, club members are encouraged to report conduct which does not align with these principles, as per the reporting guidelines, even if they are not directly impacted by the inappropriate conduct.

### **ALL CLUB MEMBERS**

Club members must, at all times and while in public, behave in a manner which upholds and promotes the highest standards of integrity and dignity. MAWSC members must not behave in any way so as to bring their sport or the MAWSC into disrepute.

Public behaviour includes, without limitation, behaviour during travel to or from matches, participation in authorised matches, Club Functions (including pre-season camps and end-of-season trips) and other public venues and social media forums where the MAWSC member is participating in authorised activities.

All Club members are not only a representative of their team but also of the MAWSC. Behaviour, both positive and negative, reflects on all members of MAWSC. Think carefully about how your actions, words and behaviour will impact upon others around you, your teammates and other club members.

The Club is a member of the Mt Alexander Community and as such is respectful of all members of the broader community.

To ensure that the Club is an inclusive and safe space, and maintains a positive relationship with the broader Mt Alexander community, all Club members are expected to observe the following:

- Do not drive in or out of the Club grounds at excessive speed.

- Do not use abusive language when in a public space.
- Do not abuse the Club's facilities including, but not limited to damage or theft.
- Do not engage in at risk or illegal behaviours including, driving under the influence of drugs/alcohol and bringing illicit drugs onto the club's property.
- Do not use discriminatory remarks that target, for example, race, religion, gender, sexual orientation or ability.
- When bringing a dog to any Club event or game day either at home or away, dog owners are responsible for maintaining effective control of their pet. This includes ensuring your dog is secured, on leash and supervised by a responsible adult during training sessions, games and other club events. Dog owners must also ensure they clean up after their pets.

### **COACHES**

All coaches are required to adhere to the Coaches' Codes of Conduct of their specific leagues and the Club, as well as Club policies. These include the AFL coaches' Code of Conduct (requirement for Level 1 Accreditation).

At all times, coaches are required to:

- Place the safety and welfare of the athletes above all else.
- Help each person (athlete, official, etc.) to reach their potential.
- Respect the talent, developmental stage and goals of each person and encourage them with positive and constructive feedback.
- Be familiar with Club policy and language guidelines, and to the greatest extent possible respect the diversity of all Club Members.
- 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.

### **PLAYERS**

- Play by the rules – the rules of the Club and the laws of the game.
- Never argue with an umpire, an official, your teammates or opponents. Control your temper.
- Be a team player. If your sport is a team game, treat it that way.
- Treat all players as you would like to be treated – fairly.
- Co-operate with your coach, officials, the umpires and teammates.

### **PARENTS, SUPPORTERS & OFFICIALS**

Remember that you are there to ensure that participants enjoy the game as well as enjoying the game yourself.

- Encourage participation, but don't force it.
- Teach that enjoyment is more important than winning. Never ridicule mistakes or losses.
- Lead by example and respect all players, coaches, umpires and spectators – physical or verbal abuse will not be tolerated.
- Be consistent, impartial and objective when making decisions.
- Recognise all volunteers who are giving up their valuable time.
- Never publicly criticise umpires – raise personal concerns with club officials in private.
- Ensure all players are included and can participate, regardless of their race, gender, ability, cultural background, sexuality or religion.
- Do not use discriminatory remarks that target, for example, race, religion, gender, sexual orientation or ability.

### CHILD SAFE COMMITMENTS

This part of the Code of Conduct sets expectations for how adults in our club should behave around children and young people. This is important to help prevent children from being harmed. Child abuse takes many forms and can include physical, sexual and psychological abuse, ill-treatment and neglect. Our Child Safe Policy provides more information about these different types of abuse.

Every person involved with the Club must observe the following commitments:

- Treat all children and young people with respect.
- Listen to and value children and young people's ideas and opinions and respond to them appropriately.
- Welcome all children and their families and carers by being inclusive.
- Actively promote cultural safety and inclusion.
- Welcome parents and carers to participate in decisions about any matters relevant to their child's safety.
- Report any conflicts of interest (such as an outside relationship with a child).
- Adhere to all relevant Australian and Victorian legislation and our child safe policies and procedures.
- Work within a team to ensure that the needs of the child (and their family) remain the paramount focus.
- Participate in all compulsory training.
- Raise concerns with management if risks to child safety are identified, including cultural, environmental and operational risks.
- Report and act on any concerns or observed breaches of this Code of Conduct.
- Take all reasonable steps to protect children from abuse.
- Respect the privacy of children and their families by keeping all information about child protection concerns confidential.
- Inform parents and carers if there are situations that need to be safely managed but are outside the boundaries of this Code of Conduct.
- Take a child seriously if they disclose harm or abuse.

- Ensure breaches of this Code are reported immediately.
- Uphold the rights of the child and always prioritise their needs.

**All people involved with the club understand that the following behaviours are unacceptable, dangerous to children and will not be tolerated:**

- Showing favour to one child over others.
- Using hurtful, discriminatory or offensive behaviour or language with children.
- Persistently criticising and/or denigrating a child.
- Verbally assaulting a child or creating a climate of fear.
- Ignoring or disregarding any concerns, suspicions or disclosures of child abuse.
- Exaggerating or trivialising child abuse issues.
- Failing to report information to police if you know a child has been abused.
- Engaging in unwarranted and inappropriate touching involving a child.
- Using sexual language or gestures in the presence of children
- Offering children and young people alcohol, cigarettes or other drugs.
- Showing children pornographic images.
- Condoning or participating in illegal, unsafe or abusive behaviour towards children, including physical, sexual or psychological abuse, ill-treatment, neglect or grooming.

### REPORTING GUIDELINES

Club members are encouraged to report conduct which does not align with these principles to any of the following people at the club:

- Player Leaders or Coaches
- Executive Members of the Committee
- The Child Safety Officer

If you wish to make an anonymous report, a submission can be made via the club website.

In addition, if any person forms significant concern for a child's wellbeing, they can make a referral to [the Orange Door](#). Further, all adults must report to Victoria Police if they form a reasonable belief that a sexual offence has been committed by an adult against a child under the age of 16. It is an offence *not* to report ('[failure to disclose](#)'). It is also an offence for a person in a position of authority in an organisation not to take reasonable steps to remove or reduce an identified substantial risk of sexual offences being committed against a child under 16 ('[failure to protect](#)').

### SANCTIONS

The MAWSC Committee may apply the following sanctions to any member, player, parent, coach, club official or supporter found to be in breach of the Code of Conduct based on the seriousness and frequency of their behaviour:

1. Caution
2. Direction to leave the club event

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3. Attendance at a meeting with members of the Committee of Management to discuss the breach and appropriate sanction/s
4. Additional club duties
5. Participation in personal development
6. Suspension from club activities (including games)
7. Expulsion from the Mt Alexander Women's Sports Club.

In the event that the breach requires attendance at a meeting with the Committee, the committee will be comprised of at minimum, the Club President, Club Vice President and Club Secretary.

Any club person who is alleged to have breached the code of conduct will always be given a "right of reply." They will also be offered the opportunity to bring a support person to any official discussions regarding the alleged breach. In the case of a dispute with the Committee, an independent mediator may be retained to mediate the dispute.

The Mt Alexander Women's Sports Club will at all times ensure that any person undergoing any of the above procedures will be dealt with in a sensitive and confidential manner, irrespective of the alleged breach of the Rule or Code of Conduct.

***Please retain a copy of the Code of Conduct for your own reference.***