

Riverside Golf Club (Essendon) Inc. Member Protection Policy

By-Law: BL/MP1

1. Introduction

Riverside Golf Club (Essendon) Inc. {the Club} is committed to providing an open and inclusive environment which ensures the safety, welfare and well-being of all our members. To this end we have developed a Members Protection Policy (MPP)

This Policy has been endorsed by the Committee of Management (CoM) on 22nd December 2020 and is effective from that date forward.

2. Purpose of this Policy

The objective of this MPP is to ensure every person involved in golf is treated with respect, dignity and is protected from discrimination, harassment and abuse. It also seeks to ensure that all members are aware of their legal and ethical rights and responsibilities, as well as the standards of behaviour expected of them.

3. Extent of this Policy

This policy covers all matters directly and indirectly related to the Club and its activities; it also covers private behaviour where that behaviour brings the Club into disrepute.

This Policy does not apply to breaches against the rules of golf.

4. To whom this Policy applies

This Policy applies to all persons involved in the Club including:

- Members appointed or elected to boards, committees and sub-committees
- volunteers and/or paid employees
- all Members, regardless of their membership-category
- any other person involved in golf including but not limited to visiting participants, parents, guardians, and spectators.

This Policy will continue to apply to a person, even after they have stopped their association or employment, if disciplinary action against that person has commenced.

Membership of the Club is conditional upon:

- accepting the requirements specified in this document
- abiding by the requirements specified in this document in dealings with other members and/or visitors to the Club
- accepting responsibility to safeguard the rights of all Members.

5. Commitment

- (a) Club Members undertake to:
 - (i) provide a safe environment for everyone involved in golf
 - (ii) take an inclusive approach in its activities
 - (iii) ensure the safety and wellbeing of all Members
 - (iv) protect each other from any form of abuse, including grooming
 - (v) create and maintain a culture of inclusion and safety that is understood, endorsed and put into action by all.

- (b) The CoM undertakes to:
 - (i) ensure the equitable enforcement of the Club Rules / Constitution, and By-Laws
 - (ii) publish, distribute and promote this Policy
 - (iii) promote and model appropriate standards of behaviour at all times
 - (iv) deal with any formal complaints in a sensitive, fair, timely and confidential manner
 - (v) apply this Policy consistently
 - (vi) enforce any penalty imposed under this Policy, the Club Rules, and/or any other By-Laws
 - (vii) monitor and review this Policy by seeking Members' feedback on the effectiveness of this Policy from time to time. Members can, of course, recommend improvements or enhancements to the CoM for consideration at any time.

- (c) All Members must:
 - (i) make themselves aware of the contents of this policy and adopt the practices and behaviour when carrying out their roles,
 - (ii) comply with all relevant provisions of the policy,
 - (iii) consent to a Working with Children Check (WWCC) **if** they hold or apply for a role that involves regular unsupervised contact with a child or young person under the age of 18,
 - (iv) be accountable for their behaviour, and
 - (v) comply with any decisions and/or disciplinary measures imposed under this Policy.

6. Breaches of Policy or Rules

Failure to comply with this Policy may be considered a breach and result in disciplinary action in accordance with this Policy and/or other Club Rules / Constitution or by-Laws.

A breach will occur where any person who is bound by this Policy does anything which is contrary to this Policy, whether the behaviour occurs on a single occasion or is repeated.

Examples include but are not limited to:

- (a) breaching the General conduct & behavioural expectations (refer Item 8 below)
- (b) bringing the Club into disrepute, or acting in a manner likely to bring the Club into disrepute
- (c) failing to follow the conduct & behavioural expectations in dealing with children or younger members (refer Item 9 below)
- (d) discriminating against, harassing or bullying (including cyber-bullying) any person,
- (e) victimising another person for making or supporting a complaint
- (f) victimising or discriminating against a person on the basis of religion, race, pregnancy, sexual orientation, marital status, gender identity, or physical attributes
- (g) verbally or physically assaulting another person, intimidating another person, ostracising, excluding or isolating a person, or creating a hostile environment within the Club
- (h) disclosing to any unauthorised person or organisation any information that is of a private, confidential or privileged nature
- (i) making a complaint that they know to be untrue, vexatious, malicious, improper or unfounded
- (j) failing to comply with a penalty imposed after a finding that the individual has breached this Policy
- (k) failing to comply with a direction given to the individual as part of a disciplinary process.

7. The Club's commitment to protecting children or young people

The Club:

- (a) is committed to the safety and wellbeing of children and younger members who access its facilities, activities, programs, events or services
- (b) is committed to providing children and younger members with positive experiences
- (c) will strive to ensure children and younger members are protected and not exploited, abused or harmed during their involvement in Club activities, programs, events or services
- (d) will listen to children and younger members & address any concerns that they raise
- (e) will not, without consent from the person and/or their parent, guardian or carer provide information about them to any other individuals or organisation.
- (f) will work to create an environment in which children and younger members are safe and feel safe in any golf programs, activities or events

- (g) will aim to understand and appropriately respond to the special needs of children or younger members with developmental delays or disabilities; this will include working alongside the parent, guardian or carers of such children or younger members
- (h) will act on any concerns raised by children or younger members and/or their parents, guardians or carers
- (i) will report any alleged crimes against children or younger members to Victoria Police.

8. General conduct & behavioural expectations

All Members and visitors must:

- (a) respect the rights, dignity and worth of others; treat others as you would like to be treated yourself
- (b) be ethical, considerate, fair, courteous and honest in all dealings with other people and organisations
- (c) operate within the rules and spirit of the sport, including the national and international guidelines that govern Golf
- (d) understand breaching the Club's rules and/or this policy may result in suspension or expulsion from the Club
- (e) report any breaches of the Club rules and/or this Policy to the CoM in a timely manner
- (f) refrain from any form of abuse, harassment, discrimination and victimisation towards others
- (g) ensure any physical contact with others is appropriate to the situation and/or necessary for the person's skill development
- (h) ensure that whilst participating in any competition, event, or while on Club premises they:
 - (i) do not use, possess or be under the influence of an illegal or illicit drug
 - (ii) are not incapacitated by alcohol or any other legal drug, such as prescription or 'over the counter' drugs
 - (iii) do not supply alcohol or drugs (including tobacco) to children or younger members.

9. Conduct & behavioural expectations in dealing with children or younger members

- 9.1 Club members should not, unless authorised by a parent, guardian, or carer:
- (a) provide unauthorised transportation
 - (b) engage in activities with children or younger members outside of authorised services, programs or activities
 - (c) seek contact with children or younger members outside authorised services, programs or activities
 - (d) accept an invitation to attend any private social function at the request of a child or younger member who has participated, or is participating, in authorised services, programs or activities
 - (e) take photographs of a child or younger member.
- 9.2 A member who has been authorised to deliver services, programs or activities to children or younger members must wear an identification tag while doing so.
- 9.3 Language and tone of voice used in the presence of children or younger members should:
- (a) provide clear direction and be encouraging
 - (b) not be harmful discriminatory, racist, sexist, derogatory, belittling, negative, threatening, profane or sexual.
- 9.4 Children and younger members may only be transported to or from a golf event or activity where the prior authorisation from their parent, guardian or carer has been provided.
- 9.5 At no time may a Member provide or supply alcohol or drugs of any sort (including tobacco) to a child or younger member.

10. Complaints initiated under this Policy

Formal complaints should be raised to the CoM in the manner described under:

- (a) Rules 19-20; refer existing RGCE Club Rules approved 27-11-2009, or
- (b) Rules 19-29; refer draft RGCE Constitution, proposed for acceptance at AGM scheduled for 12th February 2021.

A Member who is lodging a complaint should provide whatever evidence they can to assist the CoM in assessing the matter. If the complaint relates to criminal conduct, such as physical abuse or a sexual offence, the Member should immediately refer the matter to the police.

11. Determining the outcome of a complaint

The CoM will review complaints or grievances, as described in the Club Rules / Constitution. Each case will be assessed on an individual basis and where it is determined a member's actions have been contrary to the Club Rules / Constitution or this Policy, the CoM will determine a sanction which may include:

- (a) the requirement for an apology
- (b) a written warning or reprimand
- (c) suspension of membership for a prescribed period of time
- (d) suspension from specified events or competitions
- (e) cancellation of membership / expulsion from the Club; in these cases the Member will have no right to remission or reimbursement of any prepaid membership fees.

The sanction will take into account:

- (a) whether the respondent has any prior breaches
- (b) the nature and gravity of the prior breach/es
- (c) the nature and gravity of the matter under consideration and how it has impacted:
 - i. the complainant,
 - ii. other members,
 - iii. the club's reputation
- (d) any other consideration/s which apply in the circumstances, including but not limited to property damage, legal liability, or financial loss.

The sanction applied may be suspended, i.e. it would not be invoked unless another breach occurs in a specified timeframe. If a subsequent breach occurred, the suspended sanction would be applied in addition to any sanction determined relative to the subsequent matter.

The sanction may be specified on an accept or appeal basis, i.e.:

- (a) Sanction "A", reflecting a lesser imposition, would apply if the Member chose to accept the outcome, or
- (b) Sanction "B", reflecting a more significant imposition, would apply if the Member chose to appeal the decision and their appeal was unsuccessful.