



Water Polo Australia

Code of Conduct

June 2022

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1. Background

- 1.1. WPA is committed to promoting and strengthening the positive image of the Sport and its Participants in Australia and to ensuring that everyone involved with the Sport is treated with respect and dignity.
- 1.2. This Code of Conduct:
 - (a) Aims to ensure that everyone involved in the Sport is aware of the standards of behaviour expected of them and the mechanism for dealing with any conduct that is alleged to breach the Code of Conduct;
 - (b) Establishes a binding code of appropriate and ethical behaviour designed to reinforce the values of WPA and to create and maintain an environment within our Sport that is appropriate for all; and
 - (c) Forms an essential part of WPA's proactive and preventative approach to tackling inappropriate behaviour.
- 1.3. This Code of Conduct:
 - (a) Sets out the standards of behaviour that are expected of all Relevant Persons and relevant Organisations in relation to any Activity;
 - (b) Sets out additional standards of behaviour that are expected of Participant groups;
 - (c) Prescribes Prohibited Conduct;
 - (d) Can be adopted at the WPA, State Member and Affiliate Member level without amendment; and
 - (e) Does not cover conduct and disciplinary matters arising under policies that form part of the SIA-WPA National Integrity Framework.
- 1.4. The WPA National Integrity and Policy Framework (Annexure A) includes this Code of Conduct and the SIA-WPA National Integrity Framework. Where a provision is inconsistent with the WPA National Integrity and Policy Framework, the SIA-WPA National Integrity Framework will apply to the extent of that inconsistency.

2. Definitions

In this Code of Conduct the following words have the corresponding meaning:

Activity means a Sport contest, match, competition, event, or activity (including training), whether on a one-off basis or as part of a series, league, or competition, sanctioned or organised by WPA or a Sport Organisation.

Affiliate Member means a member of a State Member including (as applicable) clubs, leagues, districts, regions and zones.

Authorised Provider means any non-Sport Organisation authorised to conduct an Activity.

Children means persons under the age of 18 years.

Code of Conduct means this Code of Conduct.

Participant means:

- (a) Athletes who are registered with a Sport Organisation;
- (b) A person who participates in, and or attends, an Activity of a Sport Organisation, including people who may not be a member;
- (c) Coaches appointed to train an athlete or team in an Activity;
- (d) Administrators who have a role in the administration or operation of a Sport Organisation, including owners, directors, committee members or other persons;
- (e) Officials including referees, umpires, technical officials, or other officials appointed by a Sport Organisation or any league, competition, series, club or team sanctioned by a Sport Organisation;
- (f) Support personnel who are appointed in a professional or voluntary capacity by a Sport Organisation or any league, competition, series, club or team sanctioned by a Sport Organisation including sports science sport medicine personnel, team managers, agents, selectors, and team staff members; and
- (g) Parents/carers and spectators who are subject to registration conditions or venue conditions of entry that requires compliance with this Code of Conduct.

Prohibited Conduct means the conduct proscribed at clause 5 of this Code of Conduct.

Relevant Organisation means any of the following organisations:

- (a) A Sport Organisation;
- (b) An Authorised Provider;
- (c) A team, which means any collection or squad of athletes who compete and/or train in the Sport; and
- (d) Any other organisation that has agreed to be bound by this Policy.

Relevant Person means any of the following individuals:

- (a) An individual registered as a member of a Sport Organisation;
- (b) A Participant;
- (c) An employee employed by a Sport Organisation or an Authorised Provider;
- (d) A contractor engaged directly or via an organisation to provide services for or on behalf of a Sport Organisation or an Authorised Provider;
- (e) A volunteer engaged by a Sport Organisation or an Authorised Provider in any capacity who is not otherwise an employee or contractor, including directors and office holders, officials, administrators and team and support personnel; and
- (f) Any other individual who has agreed to be bound by this Policy.

SIA-WPA National Integrity Framework means the set of “National Integrity Framework” integrity policies produced by Sport Integrity Australia from time to time as adopted by WPA.

Sport means the sport of water polo as recognised and regulated by Fédération Internationale de Natation from time to time and includes:

- (a) Water polo for athletes with disabilities; and
 - (b) Modified forms of the sport developed for junior development and other purposes,
- and a reference to Sport means collectively WPA, State Members and Affiliate Members.

Sport Organisation means WPA and each State Member or Affiliate Member that has adopted this Code of Conduct.

State Member means the legal entity recognised by WPA as the controlling body representing an Australian state or territory and responsible for ensuring the efficient administration of the Sport in the whole of that state or territory.

WPA means Water Polo Australia Limited (ACN 159 573 403).

WPA National Integrity and Policy Framework (NIPF) means the full suite of policy documents relevant to all Relevant Persons and Relevant Organisations, including but not limited to the SIA-WPA National Integrity Framework. The NIPF can be found on Water Polo Australia website. ([Annexure A](#))

3. Jurisdiction

3.1 To whom the Code of Conduct applies

The Code of Conduct applies to:

- (a) Relevant Persons; and
- (b) Relevant Organisations.

3.2 When the Code of Conduct applies

- (a) All Relevant Persons and Relevant Organisations to which this Code of Conduct applies must comply with this Code of Conduct (while they are a Relevant Person or Relevant Organisation):
 - (i) In relation to any dealings, they have with Relevant Organisations or their staff, contractors and representatives;
 - (ii) Wherever there is a recognised Sport or Relevant Organisation connection, including participation in Activities and on social media where there is such a connection;
 - (iii) When dealing with other Relevant Persons or Relevant Organisations in their capacity as a Relevant Person or Relevant Organisation; and
 - (iv) In relation to their membership or standing as a Relevant Person or Relevant Organisation in general.
- (b) Where there is no direct or indirect link other than the fact that one or more parties are Relevant Persons or Relevant Organisations, interactions (including social media interactions) involving one or more Relevant Persons or Relevant Organisations are not within the scope of this Code of Conduct.

- (c) Where the Relevant Organisation determines, in its absolute discretion, that the alleged Prohibited Conduct would be more appropriately dealt with under a different policy, it may refer the alleged Prohibited Conduct for determination under that other policy. If the alleged Prohibited Conduct may also constitute Prohibited Conduct as defined under a National Integrity Framework policy, the Relevant Organisation will manage that alleged Prohibited Conduct under that policy unless and until it is determined that the matter should be managed as Prohibited Conduct under this Code of Conduct.

4. Expected Behaviours

Relevant Persons and Relevant Organisations must:

- (a) Comply with any relevant stakeholder group expected behaviours set out in [Schedule 1](#);
- (a) Act and operate within the rules and spirit of the Sport including national and state guidelines, constitutions and policies which govern Relevant Persons, Relevant Organisations and Activities;
- (b) Comply with all relevant Australian laws (Federal and State);
- (c) Be ethical, considerate, fair and honest in all dealings with other people and organisations;
- (d) Act with honesty, integrity and objectivity and be accountable for their own behaviour and actions;
- (e) Maintain appropriate, professional relationships with other Relevant Persons at all times;
- (f) Always place the safety and welfare of Children above other considerations;
- (g) Follow best practice child safe practices when interacting with Children (refer to the WPA Child Safeguarding Policy);
- (h) Accept and respect the authority of Officials and not use offensive language or behaviour, show unnecessary dissension, displeasure or disapproval towards an Official, whether in or out of the water;
- (i) Treat all persons with courtesy, respect, dignity and have proper regard for their rights and obligations;
- (j) Use appropriate channels to raise any issues relating to the opinion or decision of any Relevant Organisation, referee, coach or official, rather than question their judgement and honesty in public;
- (k) Not use their involvement with the Sport to promote their own beliefs, behaviours or practices where these are inconsistent with those adopted or supported by WPA and other Sport Organisations;
- (l) Disclose any conflicts of interest that relate to your role(s) in water polo, in accordance with the WPA Conflict of Interest Policy as amended from time to time;

- (m) Act with care and diligence to safeguard the health and safety of themselves and others and ensure their decisions and actions contribute to a safe environment and provide a safe environment for the conduct of Activities;
- (n) Not engage in conduct that is defined as Prohibited Conduct under any policy of the WPA National Integrity Framework, namely:
 - (i) The WPA National Integrity Framework document;
 - (ii) The WPA Member Protection Policy;
 - (iii) The WPA Child Safeguarding Policy;
 - (iv) The WPA Competition Manipulation and Sport Wagering Policy; and
 - (v) The WPA Improper Use of Drugs and Medicine Policy;

Prohibited Conduct under the WPA National Integrity Framework includes, without limitation:

- Abuse, bullying, harassment, sexual misconduct, unlawful discrimination, victimisation or vilification;
- Child abuse, grooming, misconduct with a child, failure to comply with child safe practices or with relevant obligations under child protection legislation including obligations relating to reporting, recruitment/screening and working with children checks;
- Improper manipulation of the result or course of a Sport activity or betting on a Sport activity;
- Inappropriate disclosure of inside information;
- Use, possession or trafficking of illegal drugs; and
- Non-compliance with certain requirements relating to medications, injections and supplements.

Relevant Persons and Relevant Organisations should refer to the WPA National Integrity Framework policies for details of Prohibited Conduct captured by the WPA National Integrity Framework and descriptions of such Prohibited Conduct.

- (o) Respect and protect confidential information obtained through Activities, whether regarding individuals or organisational information;
- (p) Not engage in behaviour that is:
 - (i) drunk and disorderly;
 - (ii) public or domestic violence;
 - (iii) continued or unreasonable disruption of Relevant Organisation representatives performing their duties; or
 - (iv) unlawful or unsafe;
- (q) Not undertake any behaviour prohibited by a venue's ticketing or entry conditions, at, in or around that venue at which an Activity is taking place;

- (r) Not behave in a manner that creates a public nuisance and/or disturbance within or around a venue at which an Activity is taking place;
- (s) Comply with all reasonable directions of, and accept all decisions of, Relevant Organisation representatives; and
- (t) Not be in the possession or under the influence of an illegal drug, at, in or around a venue at which an Activity is taking place.

5. Prohibited Conduct

A Relevant Person commits a breach of this Code of Conduct when they:

- (a) Conduct themselves in any manner, or engage in any activity whether before, during or after an Activity that would impair public confidence in the safe and orderly conduct of the Activity;
- (b) Engage in any conduct or activity including, without limitation, making public comment (including on social media) which:
 - (i) brings a Relevant Organisation, a Relevant Person or the Sport into disrepute; or
 - (ii) is or could be harmful to the interests of a Relevant Organisation or the Sport;
- (c) Make improper use of information acquired by virtue of their position in a Relevant Organisation or in any team selected by a Relevant Organisation or their relationship with a Relevant Organisation to gain, directly or indirectly, an advantage for themselves or for any other person or to cause detriment to a Relevant Organisation; or
- (d) Do not comply with any of clauses 4(o) through 4(t), inclusive.

6. Conduct and Disciplinary Policy

Subject to clause 3.2(c), the WPA Conduct and Disciplinary Policy applies to any alleged Prohibited Conduct under this Code of Conduct.

SCHEDULE 1: Participant Expected Behaviours

The values of Water Polo in Australia are:

1. We have **FUN**: we love our sport and enjoy the camaraderie of our community
2. We are continually in **PURSUIT of EXCELLENCE**: we inspire people to be their best and do their best
3. We are **INCLUSIVE**: we are a welcoming community for everyone
4. We embrace **TEAMWORK**: we collaborate and act with a unity of purpose in the best interest of the sport
5. We act with **RESPECT**: we play fair, ensuring what we do is ethical, transparent, and honest

The behaviours listed below support these values and are those that as a sport, collectively we wish to see consistently applied across all levels of the sport.

Athletes

1. Abide by the [Think.Act.Play](#) Guidelines at all times;
2. Play by the competition rules and enjoy the opportunities that playing water polo presents;
3. Be a positive role model and display sportsmanship both in and out of the water. This includes being inclusive and supportive of your teammates and other members;
4. It is appropriate to celebrate success but remember to be humble in victory and gracious in defeat. Inevitably you will be on both sides of the equation in your sporting journey;
5. Demonstrate respect at all times for yourself, teammates, opponents, coaches and officials, treating others as you wish to be treated.
6. When you leave a room, venue, pool or seating area, there should be no trace that you were there. As a sport, we are challenged to find pool space, so the better impression we leave when we hire venues, the more chance we have of being able to use that venue again.
7. Water Polo is a team sport, so to be successful you must value and respect teamwork and the contribution of everyone involved;
8. The pursuit of excellence is admirable, work hard, do your best and encourage your team mates to do the same. Your team's performance will benefit and so will you;
9. Participate for your own enjoyment and benefit, not just to please others;
10. Selection decisions are very difficult and the harder they are the better it reflects the depth of talent to choose from. There is and always will be a high degree of subjectivity when it comes to selecting teams in open skill sports. There are times when you will be on either side of difficult selection decisions. Often players will be evenly matched in terms of their contribution in the pool and your contribution outside of the pool may be the difference. Give the coaches and selectors reasons to want to select you again and avoid giving them any reasons not to select you.
11. Do not advocate, prescribe, recommend, support, administer or participate in the use of drugs, stimulants, or doping practices in respect of any athlete and abide by any relevant WPA or other Sport Organisation Policy.

Coaches

- (a) Abide by the [Think.Act.Play](#) Guidelines at all times;
- (b) Be a positive role model for water polo and your athletes. Remember players, parents and supporters are watching and will often following your lead;
- (c) Coaches will always have an impact, ensure you have a positive impact on your athletes, regardless of their level of talent or the standard of competition;
- (d) It is appropriate to celebrate success but remember to be humble in victory and gracious in defeat. Inevitably you will be on both sides of the equation in your sporting journey;
- (e) Demonstrate respect at all times for yourself, teammates, opponents, coaches and officials, treating others as you wish to be treated.
- (f) When you leave a room, venue, pool or seating area, there should be no trace that you were there. As a sport, we are challenged to find pool space, so the better impression we leave when we hire venues, the more chance we have of being able to use that venue again.
- (g) The pursuit of excellence is an admirable value, work hard, do you your best and encourage your team mates to do the same. Your team's performance will benefit so will you;
- (h) Be genuine, transparent and communicate well. Treat all athletes fairly, which at times may not also mean equally. Each athlete is an individual and as coach you must navigate the balance between team and individual needs;
- (i) Measure your success by how many of your team keep playing, and return to your Club year after year, not just the games you win. How many of your players become coaches, referees or administrators and stay involved in the sport;
- (j) Appreciate that people play sport for different reasons, ensure you understand the motivations of your athletes and set expectations accordingly. This will also include the use of age-appropriate development activities and modified rules from time to time;
- (k) Provide a safe environment for persons involved in your organisation. Adhere to the child safety and member protection practices as described in the WPA National Integrity and Policy Framework.
- (l) Any physical contact with athletes should be appropriate to the situation and necessary for the athlete's skill development;
- (m) Refrain from inappropriate behaviour towards officials, parents and administrators;
- (n) Set the example for continuous improvement by spending time on your own development as a coach and share this with your athletes;
- (o) Provide a drug free environment. Do not advocate, prescribe, recommend, support, administer or participate in the use of drugs, stimulants, or doping practices in respect of any athlete and abide by any relevant WPA or other Sport Organisation Policy; and
- (p) Follow the advice of a physician (or other medically qualified specialist) in determining when an injured or ill (including mentally ill) athlete is ready to recommence training or competition.

Officials

- (a) Abide by the [Think.Act.Play](#) Guidelines at all times;
- (b) Be a positive role model for other referees and officials;
- (c) Encourage inclusivity and access to all areas of officiating;
- (d) Be impartial at all times;
- (e) Demonstrate respect at all times for yourself, teammates, opponents, coaches and officials, treating others as you wish to be treated.
- (f) When you leave a room, venue, pool or seating area, there should be no trace that you were there. As a sport, we are challenged to find pool space, so the better impression we leave when we hire venues, the more chance we have of being able to use that venue again.
- (g) Be professional in your appearance, manner, behaviour and ensure your preparation to undertake your role allows you to be at your best, when officiating;
- (h) Set an example to other officials by seeking continual improvement in your officiating knowledge and skill through study, performance appraisal and regular updating of competencies;
- (i) Provide a drug free environment. Do not advocate, prescribe, recommend, support, administer or participate in the use of drugs, stimulants, or doping practices in respect of any athlete and abide by any relevant WPA or other Sport Organisation Policy; and

Administrators and Committee Members

- (a) Abide by the [Think.Act.Play](#) Guidelines at all times;
- (b) You set the tone for your organisation. Your behaviour and comments should be positive, supportive and one that others should follow; and
- (c) Actively involve people from a variety of ages in planning, leadership, evaluation and decision making related to the Activity;
- (d) Actively seek to give all people equal opportunities to participate, regardless of gender, race, background or age;
- (e) It is appropriate to celebrate success but remember to be humble in victory and gracious in defeat. Inevitably you will be on both sides of the equation in your sporting journey;
- (f) Demonstrate respect at all times for yourself, teammates, opponents, coaches and officials, treating others as you wish to be treated.
- (g) When you leave a room, venue, pool or seating area, there should be no trace that you were there. As a sport, we are challenged to find pool space, so the better impression we leave when we hire venues, the more chance we have of being able to use that venue again.
- (h) Actively create opportunities for people to participate in our Sport not just as a player but as a coach, referee, administrator to reduce the burden on a small few;
- (i) Where appropriate ensure that rules, equipment, length of games and training schedules are modified to suit the age, ability, motivations and maturity level of players;
- (j) Provide a safe environment for persons involved in your organisation. Adhere to the child safety and member protection practices as described in the WPA National Integrity and Policy Framework.
- (k) Remember that people participate for their enjoyment and benefit. Focus on developing their intrinsic motivation.
- (l) While competition is healthy, as a leader ensure your members and teams are focussed on performing well but not at the expense of their behaviour or well-being;
- (m) Recognise the coaches in your organisation for the environment they create around their teams, not just for the games they win. Encourage and support coaches to become continuous learners.
- (n) Make it clear through your own actions, that abusing people in any way is unacceptable and will result in disciplinary action.

Parents/Guardians

- (a) Abide by the [Think.Act.Play](#) Guidelines at all times
- (b) Remember that children and young people participate in sport for their enjoyment, not yours;
- (c) Demonstrate respect at all times for yourself, teammates, opponents, coaches and officials, treating others as you wish to be treated.
- (d) When you leave a room, venue, pool or seating area, there should be no trace that you were there. As a sport, we are challenged to find pool space, so the better impression we leave when we hire venues, the more chance we have of being able to use that venue again.
- (e) Encourage your child to participate and train, do not force them. The world is littered with talented, but burned-out athletes who stop playing too early, ensure you don't produce another one;
- (f) Water Polo is a late maturing sport, players peak in their late 20's and early 30's, so part of your role as a parent is to ensure if you have a talented child they are still playing beyond their teen years, by helping them navigate the challenges along the way;
- (g) It is ok to celebrate success but remember to be humble in victory and gracious in defeat. Inevitably the team you are supporting will be on both sides of the equation in your sporting journey;
- (h) Resilience and perseverance are essential characteristics for any successful athlete, and you must help your child develop those characteristics rather than clearing a path or fighting their battles for them. Success is not linear, there will be bumps along the way;
- (i) Be prepared to give your child some space so that he/she can grow and develop as an independent person;
- (j) Evidence indicates that early specialization in sport, leads to injury and burn out, encourage your child to play a variety of sports, often with transferable skills before specializing when time or opportunity requires it;
- (k) Focus on your child's efforts and performance rather than winning or losing;
- (l) Encourage children always to play according to the rules and to settle disagreements without resorting to hostility, abuse or violence;
- (m) Be there when your child performs poorly. Be an understanding listener rather than a critic, judge and/or fixer;
- (n) Make an effort to learn about the physical requirements of the sport so that your children train regularly to a level which will help them avoid unnecessary injury and so they can enjoy the game;
- (o) If you have not played the sport, seek out information about the rules and general tactics of the game so you can become more knowledgeable about the sport;
- (p) Refrain from offering advice to your child especially immediately after the game. Instead, win or lose tell them that you just love watching them play and have fun;
- (q) Never ridicule or yell at your child for making a mistake or losing a competition;
- (r) Support all efforts to remove verbal and physical abuse from sporting activities;
- (s) Respect officials' decisions and teach children to do likewise;

- (t) Let the coach do the coaching and the manager, manage the team;
- (u) When it comes to selection, remember that team sport selection is not a perfect science and has a high degree of subjectivity to it. What a player does after a non-selection is critical and will often determine their progression from there. Encourage your child to think about the feedback they have been given by the club, state or national coaches and to work on those areas in readiness for their next opportunity;
- (v) Show appreciation for volunteer coaches, officials and administrators. Without them, your child could not participate; and
- (w) Remember that children learn best by example. Appreciate good performances and skilful plays by all participants and respect officials' decisions.

Spectators

- (a) Abide by the [Think.Act.Play](#) Guidelines at all times
- (b) Remember that people participate in sport for their enjoyment, not yours;
- (c) Show respect for your team's opponents. Without them there would be no game;
- (d) Applaud good performance and efforts from all individuals and teams. Congratulate all participants on their performance regardless of the game's outcome;
- (e) Respect the decisions of officials and set an example for others to do the same, without officials we don't have a sport;
- (f) Never ridicule or scold a child for making a mistake, they are human and doing their best;
- (g) Demonstrate respect at all times for yourself, teammates, opponents, coaches and officials, treating others as you wish to be treated.
- (h) When you leave a room, venue, pool or seating area, there should be no trace that you were there. As a sport, we are challenged to find pool space, so the better impression we leave when we hire venues, the more chance we have of being able to use that venue again.
- (i) Condemn the use of violence in any form, whether it is by spectators, coaches, officials or players;
- (j) Encourage players to follow the rules and the officials' decisions; and
- (k) Do not use foul language, sledge or harass players, coaches or officials.

Directors

The Directors consider there are certain fundamental ethical values that underpin their role as Directors of WPA and as members of the Board and its Committees. Directors will therefore:

- (a) Abide by the Think.Act.Play Guidelines at all times
- (b) Always act with integrity and good faith;
- (c) Be honest and open with each other at all times;
- (d) Treat each other with professionalism, courtesy and respect allowing reasonable opportunity for others to put forward their views;
- (e) Do not improperly influence other Board members or management;
- (f) Declare to the President and the Board material interests including any conflicts of interest, both actual and potential;
- (g) Work co-operatively among themselves and with management in the best interests of WPA;
- (h) Recognise the separate roles and responsibilities of the Board and management, including any concurrent or exclusive delegations;
- (i) Develop an understanding of the role and functions of WPA;
- (j) Be diligent and continuously strive to improve the Board's operation;
- (k) Observe the spirit as well as the letter of the laws under which WPA operates;
- (l) Use information received as a Director for the purposes of WPA;
- (m) Not allow personal interests or the interests of associated persons to conflict with the interests of WPA;
- (n) Avoid any behaviour that is likely to reflect badly on the Board or WPA; and
- (o) Make reasonable enquiries to ensure that WPA is operating efficiently and towards its objectives and devote sufficient time to the organisation and fully preparing for Board meetings.

ANNEXURE A

WPA National Integrity and Policy Framework

SIA-WPA NATIONAL INTEGRITY FRAMEWORK

(Policies developed by Sport Integrity Australia and standardised across sports)

1. National Integrity Framework
2. Competition, Manipulation and Sports Wagering Policy
3. Member Protection Policy
4. Child Safeguarding Policy
5. Improper use of drugs and Medicine Policy
6. Anti-Doping Policy
7. Complaints and Disputes Policy

WPA POLICIES

8. Code of Conduct
9. Think.Act.Play Guidelines
10. Personal Grievances Policy
11. Conduct and Disciplinary Policy
12. Review and Appeals Policy
13. Selection Appeals Policy
15. National Selection Policy
16. National Age Group Selection Policy
17. Water Polo Membership and Registration Policy
12. Concussion Policy
13. Sports Supplements Policy
15. Conflict of Interest Policy
16. Privacy Policy
17. Membership & Registration Policy
18. Competition and Technical Rules *
19. Governance Policy
20. Whistle-blower Policy
21. Social Media Policy
22. Privacy Policy
23. Travel Policy
24. Refunds Policy
25. Alcohol, Drugs and Other Substances Policy
26. Sun Protection Policy
27. WPA Technical Rules *
28. Tournament Eligibility Rules
29. WPA Referee and Technical Delegate Selection Guidelines *
30. Coach Selection Policy *
31. Breath Holding Training Position Statement

* Currently under review

