

SOUTH AFRICAN ORIENTEERING FEDERATION



Safeguarding Policy of the South African Orienteering Federation (“SAOF”)

Approved by the SAOF Management Committee with effect from 1 December 2020.

INTRODUCTION

The SAOF commits to an atmosphere in which everybody who participates in Orienteering will have a safe, rewarding and positive experience without physical or emotional harassment or abuse.

SAOF notes the following statutory responsibilities:

- National Sport and Recreation Act, 1998 (Act No.110 of 1998) as amended, clause 6.1 reads “National Sports Federations must assume full responsibility for safety issues within their sport and recreation disciplines.”
- Clause 4.4.3 of the SASCOG Constitution 2018 requires member organisations “to take action against any form of discrimination and violence in sport”.
- The Children's Act 38 of 2005 as amended requires a person who has no parental responsibilities and rights in respect of a child but who voluntarily cares for the child either indefinitely, temporarily or partially, including a care-giver who otherwise has no parental responsibilities and rights in respect of a child, must, whilst the child is in that person's care - safeguard the child's health, well-being and development; and protect the child from maltreatment, abuse, neglect, degradation, discrimination, exploitation, and any other physical, emotional or mental harm or hazards.

POLICY

This policy covers harassment or abuse against any vulnerable individual, notably children, that may occur during or connected to participation in any SAOF-sanctioned activities or connected to any activities where the participant is representing the SAOF. It is the responsibility of SAOF Management Committee, affiliated club management committees, event organisers, participating schools, volunteers, paid attendees such as

medical personnel, and all participants and attendees at events (referred to as “Parties”), to safeguard vulnerable individuals against harassment or abuse. The SAOF Management Committee will apply SASCOC policy prior to involving Parties in any position to prevent unsuitable individuals from working with vulnerable individuals if it considers there is a high risk of an arrangement sanctioned by SAOF may lead to harassment or abuse of vulnerable individuals. Where this policy is silent, then the SASCOC Safeguarding policy will apply *mutatis mutandis* to SAOF.

PURPOSE

The purpose of the SAOF Safeguarding Policy is to ensure that athletes and others taking part in sport and attendees at events can do so without fear of harassment or abuse. The key objectives of the policy are to:

1. Ensure everyone in Orienteering understands that all forms of harassment and abuse are unacceptable and will not be tolerated.
2. Enable anyone who has witnessed or experienced harassment or abuse within Orienteering to report the incident without fear of victimisation or retaliation.
3. Ensure an appropriate and co-ordinated response to any incidents of harassment or abuse within or connected to participation in Orienteering.
4. Implement effective measures that minimise the likelihood of incidents of harassment and abuse arising.
5. Ensure all reasonable steps are taken during the recruitment of volunteers to prevent unsuitable individuals from working in Orienteering.

DEFINITIONS

The following definitions apply:

Harassment is as defined in the Protection from Harassment Act 2010

Policy: means this SAOF Safeguarding Policy.

Volunteers means people working or assisting SAOF or Clubs or Schools or Event Organisers during preparation for and holding of Orienteering events.

All other terms have their normal meanings or as dictated by the context.

REPORTING PROCEDURE

SAOF strongly encourages the reporting of any incident of suspected harassment or abuse to any member of the SAOF Management Committee. If preferred, anyone may instead report any incident or concerns to the SASCOC Safeguarding Officer who is the only appropriate person in SASCOC for such a report.

A safeguarding incident or series of incidents (“Incident”) will be considered by SAOF if reported to SAOF within 12 months of its most recent occurrence. Any non-recent incident exceeding this 12 month stipulation must be reported directly to SASCOC.

The Incident will be considered by an Incident Investigation Committee established by the SAOF Management Committee, selected by members of the SAOF Management Committee who are not connected to, or have no conflict of interest in, the Incident.

The Incident Investigation Committee will operate independently of the SAOF Management Committee and report its findings to the SAOF Management Committee.

In the event that the Incident has been or is subsequently referred to SASCOC whether on appeal or otherwise, then the Incident Investigation Committee will also report as required by rules and policies of SASCOC.

The Incident Investigation Committee will set its own investigation procedures which must be aligned to SASCOC policy.

DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURE

In the event of a finding of harassment or abuse the Incident Investigation Committee must recommend a sanction ("Sanction") which the SAOF Management Committee is obliged to implement immediately on expiry of the appeal time limit, if no appeal is made to SASCO, for any Party subject to the Constitution of SAOF or in any future arrangements as applicable.

The SAOF Management Committee and/or any Party associated with the Incident may appeal a finding of the Incident Investigation Committee to SASCO within twenty-one (21) days of receipt of notice of such finding in which case the Sanction will be withdrawn and superseded by any finding or sanction decided by SASCO.

CONFIDENTIALITY

The Incident Investigation Committee, SAOF and its officers will maintain confidentiality of all information received in connection with an Incident subject to requirements of law or SASCO's Safeguarding Policy.

SAOF will endeavour to provide appropriate support to any person affected by a contravention of this policy.

Any attempt to inappropriately undermine the operation of this policy will be a contravention of this policy and will be treated as an Incident if reported to SAOF Management Committee.

RETENTION OF RECORDS

Any information relating to an Incident will be stored securely and be compliant with the requirements of the Protection of Personal Information Act.

Any information on an Incident that may indicate that a Party in a position of trust is unsuitable to work or volunteer in Orienteering will be retained for as long as the Party remains active in the sport or for 10 years, whichever is longer, even if no formal investigation is instigated.

Any other records relating to other Incidents will be retained for a period of 3 years unless a similar Incident arises within that period.

Any records relating to disciplinary action taken by SAOF in terms of this Policy should be retained in accordance with the retention periods set out in the SASCO Code of Ethics and Disciplinary Procedure.