
WATER POLO QUEENSLAND CODE OF CONDUCT POLICY

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REVIEW HISTORY

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1	2020/01	N/A		Updated policy to align with WPA & SA

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1. POLICY STATEMENT & COVERAGE

1.1 Policy Statement

Water Polo Queensland Incorporated (WPQ) is committed to ensuring the safety, development and well-being of each person involved in our sport. We are committed to providing the best possible support for all participants and whom they work with to ensure a positive team culture that fosters co-operation and develops team spirit.

WPQ seek to provide a safe, fair and inclusive environment for everyone involved in our organisation. To achieve this, we require certain standards of behaviour of players/athletes, coaches, officials, administrators, parents/guardians (of child participants) and spectators.

The WPQ codes of behaviour are underpinned by the following core principles:

- To act within the rules and spirit of our sport.
- To display respect and courtesy towards everyone involved in our sport and prevent discrimination and harassment.
- To prioritise the safety and well-being of children and young people involved in our sport.
- To encourage and support opportunities for participation in all aspects of our sport.

These Codes of Conduct address the major areas where interactions occur with all participants whom take part in WPQ and/or Water Polo Australia Limited (WPA) activities, programs, competitions and events.

1.2 Underlying Principles

This policy complements Water Polo Queensland's core values:

To become the home of Water Polo in Australia by taking the game to more people and more communities across Queensland. Water Polo Queensland will be recognised as a leading State Sporting Organisation by creating an environment where:

- our associations and clubs are thriving,
- our volunteers are valued and fulfilled,
- participation is at an all-time high, and
- our athletes are being nurtured and striving for excellence and maximising their potential.

The WPQ CEO is responsible for all matters related to this policy.

1.3 Policy Coverage

This policy applies to all persons who are involved with the activities of WPQ, whether they are in a paid, unpaid or voluntary capacity, including but not limited to:

- Members, including life members of WPQ
- Persons appointed or elected to the WPQ Board and sub-committees;
- Employees of WPQ;
- Coaches and assistant coaches;
- Athletes;
- Referees and other officials;
- Parents, family members and supporters
- Support personnel, including managers, physiotherapists, sport trainers and others;
- Affiliated Associations, Clubs and Teams.

2. PLAYER/ATHLETE CODE OF CONDUCT

- a) Adhere to and maintain the principles of “Think. Act. Play.” and “Play by the Rules” programs endorsed by WPQ.
- b) Play by the rules at the direction of your coach, referees and the laws of the game.
- c) Never argue with an official. If you disagree, have your coach or manager organise a time to discuss with the official for clarification after the game.
- d) Control your temper. Verbal abuse or disrespect of officials and sledging or deliberately distracting or provoking opponents are not acceptable.
- e) Work equally hard for yourself and/or your team. Your team’s performance will benefit so will your own performance.
- f) Be a good sport. Acknowledge good play when possible.
- g) Treat all participants as you would like to be treated. Do not bully or take unfair advantage of another competitor.
- h) Participate for your enjoyment and benefit not just to please coaches or family members.
- i) Do not use foul language, sledge or harass any persons.
- j) Respect the rights, dignity and worth of all participants regardless of their age, gender, ability, ethnic origin, cultural background or religion.
- k) Do not take or use non-prescription drugs or stimulants prohibited by WPQ or Water Polo Australia Limited (WPA).
- l) Accept and be available for random or selective drug testing in accordance with WPQ, WPA and the Australian Sports Anti-Doping Authority (ASADA) policy and regulations.
- m) Refrain from inappropriate behaviour towards participants. This includes inappropriate communication, actions or gestures towards others including touching or grabbing. Refer “Harassment- Free Sport guidelines” available from Sport Australia.
- n) Do not knowingly, recklessly or carelessly do, write or say anything or omit to do anything which in the sole opinion of WPQ is likely to bring WPQ or the sport of water polo into disrepute or cause damage to WPQ or its officers or employees or any Official.
- o) Whilst participating in any WPQ sanctioned training programs, events or activities:
 - I. Be prompt when schedules are set
 - II. Follow instructions from team coaches, managers and/or chaperones
 - III. Ensure that team coaches, managers and/or other officials are aware of your whereabouts at all times
 - IV. Always obtain permission to leave a designated team area for any reason
 - V. Attend all team training sessions, games and meetings unless excused by the team coach and/or other officials. This includes attending any games or finals involving other WPQ teams, team meetings and any official functions
 - VI. Wear the official WPQ State Team uniform when travelling, at training, at competition venues and at official functions or when directed by an official
 - VII. Notify the team coach and/or manager of any injury or illness
 - VIII. Do not smoke, take non-prescription drugs or consume alcoholic beverages
 - IX. Act responsibly, politely and respectfully

3. COACH CODE OF CONDUCT

- a) Adhere to and encourage all athletes and other team personnel to maintain the principles of “Think. Act. Play.” and “Play by the Rules” programs endorsed by WPQ.
- b) At all times be a positive role model for your sport and athletes under your care. This includes refraining from any form of misconduct or inappropriate behaviour towards any persons.
- c) Provide a safe environment for the conduct of any activity under your direction. Be aware of your responsibilities under the Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000 and report any matters as required under the mandatory reporting requirements of the Act.
- d) Operate within the rules of the sport. The guidelines of the National and International bodies governing the sport should be followed. Contact WPQ for a rule book and any relevant policies.
- e) Treat the team or squad under your care with respect. Treat each athlete as an individual. Respect the talent, development stage and goals of each athlete, help each athlete reach their potential.
- f) Provide a safe environment for training and competition. Ensure equipment and facilities meet safety standards and equipment, rules, training and the environment are appropriate to the age of the athletes.
- g) Provide a planned and sequential training program. Maintain appropriate records where necessary or required.
- h) Provide a quality service to your athletes. Maintain or improve your current accreditation. Seek continual improvement through skill development, assessment and ongoing coach education.
- i) Be fair, considerate and honest. Ensure that the athlete’s time spent at your direction is positive. All athletes are deserving of attention and opportunities within the team unit.
- j) Encourage team-work, spirit and harmony amongst all players and place emphasis on fair play and sportsmanship at all times.
- k) Have a professional manner and accept responsibility for your actions. Language, manner, punctuality, preparation and presentation should display the highest of standards.
- l) Display control, respect, dignity and professionalism to all persons – including opponents, coaches, officials, administrators, parents, family members of athletes, spectators and the media.
- m) Any physical contact with athletes should be appropriate to the situation and necessary for skill development.
- n) Refrain from any form of personal abuse (physical or verbal) to any person. Be alert to any forms of abuse from indirect sources to any person whilst under your care.
- o) Show concern and caution towards sick and injured athletes. Encourage medical advice to be sought when required. Provide a modified training program where appropriate.
- p) Provide a drug free environment - do not advocate, prescribe, recommend, support, administer or participate in the use of drugs, stimulates, or doping practices in respect of any athlete under your care or direction. Abide by the Anti-Doping Policy of WPA as endorsed by WPQ. Coaches should assist educate athletes on drugs in sport issues as per ASADA guidelines.
- q) Respect the rights, dignity and worth of all participants regardless of their age, gender, ability, ethnic origin, cultural background or religion.
- r) Refrain from inappropriate behaviour towards athlete, spectators, family members of athletes and any other persons involved or connected with the game. Refer “Harassment- Free Sport guidelines” available from Sport Australia.
- s) Do not knowingly, recklessly or carelessly do, write or say anything or omit to do anything which in the sole opinion of WPQ is likely to bring WPQ or the sport of water polo into disrepute or cause damage to WPQ or its officers or employees or any Official.

4. REFEREE/OFFICIAL CODE OF CONDUCT

- a) Adhere to and encourage all participants to maintain the principles of “Think. Act. Play.” and “Play by the Rules” programs endorsed by WPQ.
- b) At all times be a positive role model for your sport and for refereeing/officiating. This includes refraining from any form of misconduct or inappropriate behaviour towards any persons.
- c) Operate within the rules and spirit of water polo. The guidelines of the National and International bodies governing the sport should be followed.
- d) Maintain current knowledge of the rules of the sport. Be consistent, courteous, impartial and respectable in calling all infractions.
- e) Display control, respect dignity and professionalism to all persons involved with water polo and encourage other referees/officials to demonstrate these qualities.
- f) Set a good example and display the utmost honesty and integrity in all dealings and decisions.
- g) Encourage inclusivity and access to all areas of referring and officiating.
- h) Be honest in your assessment of situations. Be open to feedback, discussion and interaction.
- i) Maintain or improve your current accreditation. Seek continual improvement through skill development, assessment, updating and ongoing referee/official education.
- j) Have a professional manner and accept responsibility for your actions. Language, manner, punctuality, preparation and presentation should display the highest of standards.
- k) Display respect, dignity and professionalism to all persons – including opponents, coaches, officials, administrators and family members of athletes.
- l) Refrain from any form of personal abuse (physical or verbal) to any person. Be alert to any forms of abuse from indirect sources to any person whilst under your care of control.
- m) Show concern and caution towards sick and injured athletes. Encourage medical advice to be sought when required.
- n) Place the safety and welfare of the participants above all else. Ensure that equipment and facilities meet rule requirements and safety standards.
- o) Show concern and caution towards sick and injured athletes. Encourage medical advice to be sought when required.
- p) Respect the rights, dignity and worth of all participants regardless of their age, gender, ability, ethnic origin, cultural background or religion.
- q) Refrain from inappropriate behaviour towards athlete, spectators, family members of athletes and any other persons involved or connected with the game. Refer “Harassment-Free Sport guidelines” available from Sport Australia.
- r) Avoid any situation which may lead to a conflict of interest.
- s) Do not knowingly, recklessly or carelessly do, write or say anything or omit to do anything which in the sole opinion of WPQ is likely to bring WPQ or the sport of water polo into disrepute or cause damage to WPQ or its officers or employees or any Official

5. ADMINISTRATOR CODE OF CONDUCT

This Code of Conduct applies to a WPQ Management Committee member, sub-committee member, employee, contractor and/or appointed officers of WPQ, Member Associations and Affiliated Clubs:

- a) Adhere to and encourage all participants to maintain the principles of “Think. Act. Play.” and “Play by the Rules” programs endorsed by WPQ.
- b) Ensure all WPQ members and participants are aware of and receive adequate education and training regarding the WPQ Codes of Conduct and relevant rules, policies and procedures.
- c) Create pathways for people to participate and develop through the sport not just as players/athletes but also as coaches, referees/officials and administrators.
- d) Establish that qualified and competent coaches, referees and officials are capable of developing appropriate sports behaviour, specific skill techniques and provide adequate supervision.
- e) Assist all participants to know and understand the rules.
- f) Remember, you set an example. Your behaviour and comments should be positive and supportive.
- g) Remember that young people participate for their enjoyment and benefit. Do not over emphasise awards.
- h) Ensure that everyone involved in junior sport emphasises fair play and sportsmanship.
- i) Make it abundantly clear that abusing people in any way is unacceptable and will result in disciplinary action.
- j) Have a professional manner and accept responsibility for your actions. Language, manner, punctuality, preparation and presentation should display the highest of standards.
- k) Display respect, dignity and professionalism to all persons – including opponents, coaches, officials, administrators and family members of athletes.
- l) Refrain from any form of personal abuse (physical or verbal) to any person. Be alert to any forms of abuse from indirect sources to any person.
- m) Refrain from any inappropriate behavior towards athlete, spectators, family members of athletes and any other persons involved or connected with the game.
- n) Respect the rights, dignity and worth of all participants regardless of their age, gender, ability, ethnic origin, cultural background or religion.
- o) Do not knowingly, recklessly or carelessly do, write or say anything or omit to do anything which in the sole opinion of WPQ is likely to bring WPQ or the sport of water polo into disrepute or cause damage to WPQ or its officers or employees or any Official.
- p) For any WPQ sanctioned training programs, events, tours or activities ensure that:
 - I. Regular and effective communication is provided to all athletes/families, coaches and officials
 - II. Appropriate contact information, medical forms and written authorisation is obtained from parents or guardian of young people involved
 - III. A minimum of two adults to supervise any overnight stay
 - IV. Current WPA accreditations and Working with Children Checks are held by all officials
 - V. Adequate supervision, instruction and protection of young people at all times
 - VI. Appropriate presentation, dress and behaviour of all athletes and officials
 - VII. Suitable accommodation and transport arrangements are provided
 - VIII. Rules, equipment, facilities, length of games and training schedules are modified to suit the age, ability and maturity level of young players.

6. PARENT/SPECTATOR CODE OF BEHAVIOUR

- a) Adhere to and maintain the principles of “Think. Act. Play.” and “Play by the Rules” programs endorsed by WPQ.
- b) At all times be a positive role model for child, your sport and your family and friends. This includes refraining from any form of misconduct or inappropriate behaviour towards any persons.
- c) Remember children participate for their enjoyment and benefit, not yours. Encourage children to participate but do not force them.
- d) Applaud good performances, effort and sportsmanship from all individuals and teams rather than winning or losing.
- e) Congratulate participants and officials on their performance regardless of the game’s outcome.
- f) Encourage children always to play according to the rules and to settle disagreements without resorting to hostility or violence.
- g) Remember that children learn best by example. Appreciate good performances and skillful play by all participants.
- h) Respect the decisions of all officials and teach children to do the same. Parochial support is encouraged but disrespect of officials, players and other spectators is not acceptable.
- i) Show appreciation for volunteer coaches, officials and administrators. Without them, your child could not participate. Recognise all volunteers who give up their valuable time.
- j) Never ridicule any players or officials or spectators. Remember that positive comments motivate improved performances.
- k) Support all efforts to remove verbal and physical abuse from all water polo activities.
- l) Respect the facilities and equipment.
- m) Condemn the use of violence in any form and by any person. Do not use foul language, sledge or harass any persons.
- n) Show respect for your team’s opponents and without them there would be no game.
- o) Notify officials if you wish to visit or remove your child from training, events, competitions or team accommodation/venue etc
- p) Refrain from any inappropriate behaviour towards athlete, spectators, family members of athletes and any other persons involved or connected with the game
- q) Respect the rights, dignity and worth of all participants regardless of their age, gender, ability, ethnic origin, cultural background or religion.
- r) Refrain from inappropriate behaviour towards athlete, spectators, family members of athletes and any other persons involved or connected with the game. Refer “Harassment- Free Sport guidelines” available from Sport Australia.
- s) Do not knowingly, recklessly or carelessly do, write or say anything or omit to do anything which in the sole opinion of WPQ is likely to bring WPQ or the sport of water polo into disrepute or cause damage to WPQ or its officers or employees or any Official.

7. POLICY BREACHES

These Codes of Conduct were not conceived to address every possible behavioural circumstance, however, it shall serve as Water Polo Queensland's standard for behavioural evaluation. These policies should also be read in conjunction with the WPQ Member Protection Policy and the WPQ Social Media and Cyber Bullying Policy.

Breach of Code of Conduct

Penalties may be initially imposed at the discretion of the team coaches and officials and/or the WPQ Management Committee and/or WPQ CEO and may include, but not be limited to, suspension from playing or participating in Water Polo Queensland activities.

It is a breach of this policy for any person or organisation bound by this policy to do anything contrary to this policy, including but not limited to:

- a) breaching these codes of behaviour
- b) bringing the Water Polo Queensland or the sport of water polo into disrepute, or acting in a manner likely to bring Water Polo Queensland or the sport of water polo into disrepute.
- c) failing to follow Water Polo Queensland policies (including this policy) and our procedures for the protection, safety and well-being of children.
- d) discriminating against, harassing or bullying (including cyber-bullying) any person.
- e) victimising another person for making or supporting a complaint.
- f) engaging in an inappropriate intimate relationship with a person that he or she supervises, or has influence, authority or power over
- g) verbally or physically abusing or assaulting another person, intimidating another person or creating a hostile environment within the sport.
- h) disclosing to any unauthorised person or organisation any Water Polo Queensland information that is of a private, confidential or privileged nature.
- i) making a complaint that they know to be untrue, vexatious, malicious or improper.
- j) failing to comply with a direction given to the individual or organisation as part of a disciplinary process.

Disciplinary Measures

WPQ may impose disciplinary measures on an individual or organisation for a breach of this policy.

Any disciplinary measure imposed will be:

- fair and reasonable
- applied consistent with any contractual and employment rules and requirements
- be based on the evidence and information presented and the seriousness of the breach; and
- be determined in accordance with the WPQ Constitution, By-laws, this policy and/or the rules of the sport.

Individuals

Subject to contractual and employment requirements, if a finding is made by a WPQ Tribunal that an individual has breached this policy, one or more of the following forms of discipline may be imposed:

- a) a direction that the individual make a verbal and/or written apology;
- b) a written warning;
- c) a direction that the individual attend counselling to address their behaviour;
- d) a withdrawal of any awards, scholarships, placings, records, achievements bestowed in any tournaments, activities or events held or sanctioned by WPQ;
- e) a demotion or transfer of the individual to another location, role or activity;
- f) a suspension of the individual's membership or participation or engagement in a role or activity;
- g) termination of the individual's membership, appointment or engagement;
- h) a recommendation that WPQ terminate the individual's membership, appointment or engagement;
- i) in the case of a coach or official, a direction that the relevant organisation de-register the accreditation of the coach or official for a period of time or permanently;
- j) a fine;
- k) In the event of a serious breach, it may be necessary for the offending person to be sent home at his/her own/parent's expense. Players may also have to show cause why further disciplinary action should not be taken by the WPQ Management Committee.
- l) any other form of discipline that the WPQ Tribunal considers appropriate.

Factors to Consider

The form of discipline to be imposed on an individual or organisation will depend on factors, including without limitation:

- the nature and seriousness of the breach
- if the person knew, or should have known, that the behaviour was a breach of this policy
- the person's level of contrition
- the effect of the proposed disciplinary measures on the person, including any personal, professional or financial consequences
- If there have been any relevant prior warnings or disciplinary action
- the ability to enforce disciplinary measures if the person is a parent or spectator (even if they are bound by the policy)
- any other mitigating circumstances.

8. USEFUL RESOURCES AND LINKS

‘Play by the Rules’ provides information, resources, tools and free online training to increase the capacity and capability of administrators, coaches, officials, players and spectators to assist them in preventing and dealing with discrimination, harassment and child safety issues in sport,
<https://www.playbytherules.net.au/conduct-and-behaviour>

Sports Australia is strongly committed to Australian sport environments that are safe, supportive and friendly for children and young people.
https://www.sportaus.gov.au/integrity_in_sport/child_safe_sport/toolkit#step_2_code_of_conduct

Queensland Government – Recreation, Sport and the Arts website. This website provides information and links to provide a safe, fair and inclusive environment for everyone involved in sporting organisations.
<https://www.qld.gov.au/recreation/sports/club-support/rules-regulations>