

Response & Reporting Guide

#WeRideTogether, a nonprofit organization dedicated to eliminating abuse in sports, creates tangible resources to support sporting federations, organizations, and members internationally. This guide can help individuals and systems respond to safeguarding issues, complaints, and concerns.

An issue of misconduct or suspected abuse has been brought to my attention...

What do I do?

These three simple steps apply to any stakeholder or member of a sporting federation: coaches, safeguarding officers, board members, staff, athletes, parents, etc.

1

RESPOND

- Assess immediate risk, address safety, and get help if needed.
- Focus on the person disclosing or experiencing the abuse – how we respond interpersonally matters. Use empathetic and validating language, respect boundaries, and set your feelings aside. Do not make false promises or ask invasive questions. It is your job to listen, not ask for details about what happened.
- This interaction can help lead the survivor to supportive resources and healing. A poor or absent response can cause and contribute to more harm. We must remember to believe survivors, as very few allegations are false.

2

REPORT

- Follow local documentation and reporting laws and mandatory reporting procedures, as well as your federation's and organization's documentation and reporting procedures.
- You can find this information through local law enforcement and your organizational policies.
- Reporting may be your legal duty, part of your job description, or an ethical practice to combat abuse. Reporting must happen promptly, confidentially, and with cultural competence. Prevention, reporting, investigation, and disciplinary proceedings serve as a wrap-around process to create safe and healthy sporting environments that protect athletes and all members of sporting communities.

3

FOLLOW UP

- Depending on the nature of the incident, next steps will occur within your organization, and/or with a larger governing body, local services, and/or law enforcement. These proceedings should include and be led by your organization's safeguarding officer or team.
- Make appropriate temporary accommodations and measures based on risk to ensure the safety and comfort of the survivor, the athletic team, and other employees. Offer resources and support to all parties.
- Apply consistent, fair, and efficient investigatory and disciplinary measures that sustainably protect all stakeholders and the sport at large. Provide transparency in outcomes and decisions. Review data to learn and improve preventative practices.

For advice on applying the steps discussed above and integrating nuances into your local agency, please access the resources below or reach out to info@weridetgether.today.

When not in an acute response or crisis, take a moment to reevaluate and strengthen your organization's safeguarding practices, policies, and structures. Here is a list of what you can do during calm times to establish a strong safeguarding foundation for your organization.

The goal is to make safeguarding prevention and response policies easier, more transparent, efficient, athlete-informed, trauma-informed, and evidence-based to better protect your members, coaches, staff, and your sport.

- Create, rewrite, or audit your safeguarding policies and procedures. Consult with your legal counsel, #WeRideTogether, and the International Safeguards for Children in Sport (even if you serve adults, the safeguarding framework still applies!).
- Connect with partners, your local government, and care and support agencies to bolster relationships and guidance on best practices for prevention and stakeholder support and engagement.
- Improve and enhance your data management systems. These must be easy to use, confidential, and secure to track, measure, analyze, and report safeguarding data.
- Implement, assess, and ensure that safeguarding best practices for proactive prevention are easy to use and understand. Safeguarding initiatives must be actively in place at every level and in every medium of your programming. Dually implement, assess, and ensure that support for individuals who experience abuse is readily available and accessible.

For reference:

- [IOC toolkit: Safeguarding athletes from harassment and abuse in sport for IFs and NOCs](#)
- [International Safeguards for Children in Sport](#)
- [Vocabulary – Types of Abuse and General Safeguarding Terminology](#)
- [Safeguarding and Prevention 101](#)
- [Coach Athlete Pledge](#)

Find Resources & Tools • Learn more

www.WeRideTogether.today

All Sports, One Goal.

#WeRideTogether



weridetgether.today

