



# CHILD SAFEGUARDING

Children's safety matters – putting all the pieces together

## Frequently Asked Questions

### 1. Why do we need Child Safeguarding and what is it?

All children have a right to remain safe and flourish in an environment which protects and promotes their interests, wellbeing and safety. The Queensland Rugby League (QRL) is committed to providing such environments for all children who participate in our great game. One way for us to do this is to implement effective child safeguarding measures. Child safeguarding is...*the action that an organisation or group takes to promote the welfare of children who spend time, participate in or are impacted by their organisation or group – and protect them from harm.* Furthermore, Queensland law directs us to have a strategy and update this annually or if a significant incident occurs. We have created the [QRL Child & Youth Risk Management Strategy \(C&YRMS\)](#).

### 2. What is the QRL Child & Youth Risk Management Strategy (CYRMS)?

The QRL C&YRMS has considered risks to children within our rugby league environment and developed measures which can enhance their safety and wellbeing.

The document includes our Code of Conduct, policies, procedures and general behavioural and attitude expectations for working with children. It also details information on harm, complaints management and reporting processes.

### 3. Who is a child?

A child is considered as anyone under 18 years of age.

### 4. What is harm?

Harm is '*any detrimental effect of a significant nature on the child's physical, psychological or emotional wellbeing*' Child Protection Act 1999 (QLD). Significant harm is '*harm that is not minor or trivial and may reasonably be expected to cause a substantial, negative impact on the child's safety, welfare or wellbeing*' (Queensland Family and Child Commission, 2017).

Harm can include what is currently occurring, what may occur in the future, or what you suspect has or may occur.

## **5. What do I need to report?**

### ***Sexual abuse***

Reporting: Under Queensland law, every adult in Queensland must make a report if they reasonably believe a child has been or may be harmed by sexual abuse.

Protecting: Any adult (first adult) within the QRL, is required to take active steps to reduce or remove risks of sexual harm to a child, whereby another adult within QRL may cause such harm to a child, and it is within the first adult's power to do so.

### ***Physical abuse, neglect and other types of harm***

Any person may make a report if they reasonably suspect that a child may be in need of protection. Where harm has been identified, the QRL requires it's staff and volunteers to report it.

## **6. Who do I report to?**

If a child is in immediate danger call 000, if not then notify the relevant Club Chair/President immediately.

## **7. What should I do if I think the QRL is *not* acting in the best interests of the child?**

If you are not satisfied the QRL has adequately reported your concerns for a child, you are encouraged to make a report yourself. You are not required to consult with any member of the QRL or gain their support prior to making a report.

## **8. Will I get in trouble if I let people know about my concerns?**

QRL staff and volunteers should be aware that a person who, acting honestly, gives information under their requirements under the *Child Protection Act 1999 (QLD)* or *Criminal Code Act 1899 (QLD)*, will not be liable for giving the information.

## **9. What happens if there a breaches to the C&YRMS, including code of conduct?**

Breaches of the C&YRMS and/or any other QRL policies are treated seriously, and may attract consequences such as disciplinary action, termination of employment or voluntary service and reporting on to relevant authorities. Breaches and complaints are to be reported as per the Complaints Management Policy.

## **10. What are Blue Card requirements?**

According to Blue Card Services and Queensland's *Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000* the following rules apply for Blue Cards and Exemption Cards:

- No Card, No Start!
- It is compulsory for all club members working with children to hold a current Blue Card or Exemption Card in accordance with Blue Card Services and our Queensland legislation.
- If a card expires then the individual cannot continue in child related activities until it is renewed – don't let it expire! Please allow 10 weeks for processing.
- Volunteer Blue Cards are free, and applications or renewals can be completed online.
- It is an offence for people to apply for a Blue Card if they are a 'Restricted Person', have already received a negative notice or could receive a negative notice.

## **11. Who needs Blue Card or Exemption Card?**

- An employee or volunteer who provides services, activities, supervision or training to children i.e., coach, assistant coach, manager, first responder or sports trainer
- A member of a board / committee including president, treasurer or secretary

## **12. Who doesn't need a Blue Card?**

- Parents can volunteer without a Blue Card or Exemption Card – as long as they aren't a 'Restricted Person' and are only volunteering in activity with their child.
- Visitors may help without a Blue Card – but only 7 times per calendar year and they aren't a 'Restricted Person'
- Under 18 and volunteering

### **13. Can spectators' film or photograph children playing rugby league?**

- The general rule is that where a sport or sporting activity is taking place on public property (council owned) it is legal for anyone (including parents and guardians) to take pictures of sporting activities, without permission.
- For private property the general rule is permission is required to take photographs of people on the site and restrictions on photography can be imposed (for sporting grounds for example which are freehold)

### **14. Filming/photography at QRL / NRL programs or events?**

- Children and Young People to whom we deliver a program, activity, service or facility are to be photographed while involved in an NRL/QRL program only where:
  - The program or event convener has obtained written permission from parents, carer's or guardians;
  - The context is directly related to participation in the NRL/QRL program/activity;

### **15. Posting images of children in Annual Reports, websites or other publications**

- Images are not to be exhibited on Club, League, QRL websites or in publications such as the League, Regional or QRL Annual Report without parental or guardian knowledge and approval (through a signed image consent form the parent, carer's or guardians or their school)
- or the image is presented in a manner that de-identifies the Child or Young Person. Any caption or accompanying text must be checked so that it does not identify a Child or Young Person if identifying the Child or Young Person is potentially detrimental

*For further information please refer to the [NRL Child Safe Code of Behaviour - Child Safe Conduct to keep our Children and Young People Safe](#)*

## **IMPORTANT INFORMATION**

If a person is exempt from needing a Blue Card, you must take reasonable steps to verify their suitability i.e., they cannot be a 'Restricted Person'.

A 'Restricted Person' cannot volunteer or work with children in any capacity and is considered someone who:

- Has been issued a negative notice
- Has a suspended Blue Card
- Is a disqualified person
- Has been charged with a disqualifying offence that has not been finalised

### **16. What does someone need to start working with children?**

The individual must hold a Blue Card/Exemption Card (if required) and present this to the club/league prior to starting.

The individual must complete the [Play by the Rules: Child Safeguarding in Sport Induction](#) online training or similar and have read and understood our [QRL C&YRMS](#).

The club must conduct due diligence to ensure the individual is right for the role and tasks.

### **17. What is a high risk activity?**

Any activity outside of general training and games requires a risk management plan endorsed by a club/league president.

### **18. What type of record keeping is required?**

Record keeping is likely to be carried out by either the secretary or registrar and the following must be kept:

- Blue Cards/Exemption Cards
- Visitors, volunteers, parents etc
- Recruitment and appointment of staff and volunteers
- Training
- High risk or special events
- Instances of harm or alleged harm and breaches of the QRL C&YRMS

### **19. Where can I get more information?**

- We have created a number of fact sheets for different roles and responsibilities which can be accessed on [Clubhouse](#).
- Please read and understand the [QRL Child & Youth Risk Management Strategy](#)
- [Complaints Reporting Form](#)

#### **Handy Links and Documents:**

[Blue Card Online Application](#)

[Renew your Blue Card](#)

[Rights and Obligations of Blue Card holders](#)

