**Volunteers Policy**

**PURPOSE**

To outline the processes the Ballarat Football Netball League (BFNL) will follow to recruit, screen, supervise and manage volunteers to provide a child safe environment, and to explain the responsibilities and legal rights of BFNL volunteers.

**SCOPE**

This policy applies to the recruitment, screening, supervision and management of all volunteers engaged in any BFNL-sanctioned activities, including but not limited to match day roles, training, events, and committee responsibilities.

**DEFINITIONS**

* **Child-connected work**: Work that is authorised by the BFNL and performed by an adult in an environment where children are present or reasonably expected to be present.
* **Child-related work**: As defined by the *Worker Screening Act 2020 (Vic)*, child-related work usually involves direct contact with a child (including face-to-face, phone, written or online communication) that is a central part of a person's duties.
* **Volunteer**: Any individual who provides unpaid assistance or services to the BFNL or its member clubs.
* **BFNL Work**: Any tasks carried out to support the operation, governance, or promotion of the BFNL or its member clubs, including:
	+ Coaching or team support roles
	+ Umpiring and officiating
	+ Assisting at events and game days
	+ Administrative and committee duties
	+ Engaging in community or development programs

**POLICY**

The BFNL values the critical role volunteers play in supporting local football and netball across the region. We are committed to ensuring that all volunteers contribute to a safe, inclusive, and respectful environment for children and young people, consistent with the **Child Safe Standards** and relevant legislation.

**Becoming a Volunteer**

Prospective volunteers must review and acknowledge the BFNL's:

* Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
* Code of Conduct
* Online Safety and Social Media Policy
* Reporting and Responding to Child Safety Concerns Policy

These are available on the BFNL website or upon request.

**Suitability Checks Including Working with Children Clearances**

To comply with legal obligations and ensure the safety of children in community sport:

**WWC Clearance is required for:**

* All volunteers engaged in child-related work.
* All coaches, team managers, umpires, and trainers involved with junior teams (U18 and below), regardless of relationship to the child.
* All committee members and officials who may have contact with junior players.
* Club-based Child Safety Officers.

**Additional suitability checks may include:**

* Police checks
* Reference checks
* Proof of identity
* Previous experience in child-related roles

Failure to provide or maintain a valid WWC Clearance may result in suspension or termination of volunteer involvement.

**Non-Child-Related Roles**

Volunteers in non-child-related roles (e.g. canteen helpers, grounds maintenance during adult matches) may not require a WWC Clearance. However, BFNL reserves the right to request identification or reference checks for any volunteer as deemed necessary.

**Induction and Training**

All volunteers must complete an induction that includes:

* BFNL's commitment to child safety
* Obligations under the Child Safe Standards
* How to recognise and report inappropriate behaviour or harm
* Acceptable communication and conduct around children

Training may be completed through:

* Online BFNL training modules
* Club-led sessions
* AFL Victoria or Netball Victoria webinars

**Management and Supervision**

Volunteers must comply with all directions provided by BFNL staff, officials, and club-appointed representatives, including:

* Adhering to BFNL and club policies
* Maintaining appropriate conduct at all times
* Reporting any concerns or breaches of policy immediately

The BFNL reserves the right to review and revoke a person’s volunteer status if there are concerns regarding their suitability or conduct.

**Privacy and Information Sharing**

Volunteers must respect the confidentiality of any personal or sensitive information accessed through their role. Information may only be shared in accordance with the:

* *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 (Vic)*
* BFNL Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
* Mandatory Reporting obligations (where relevant)

Volunteers must immediately report any child safety concern to the Club Child Safety Officer or the BFNL Integrity Officer.

**Records Management**

Volunteer documentation (WWC checks, training completion, etc.) will be maintained securely by BFNL administration or respective club officials and reviewed regularly.

**Compensation**

* **Personal Injury**: Volunteers are covered by the BFNL’s insurance policy if injured while performing approved volunteer duties.
* **Property Damage**: Claims for property damage may be considered under BFNL's public liability policy. Volunteers must report incidents immediately to their club and the BFNL.
* **Public Liability**: The BFNL carries public liability insurance to cover volunteers for claims arising from personal injury to third parties or damage to third-party property.

**COMMUNICATION**

This policy is available:

* On the BFNL website
* Via club onboarding materials
* Through volunteer induction sessions

Clubs must ensure that all volunteers receive a copy or access to this policy before commencing their role.

**RELATED POLICIES AND RESOURCES**

* BFNL Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
* BFNL Code of Conduct
* BFNL Online Safety and Social Media Policy
* BFNL Mandatory Reporting & Responding to Child Safety Concerns Policy
* AFL Victoria and Netball Victoria Child Safe Standards Guidelines

 **POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL**

**Policy last reviewed**: May 2025
**Approved by**: BFNL Board of Management
**Next scheduled review**: May 2027

**Volunteer Declaration**

I, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (print name), have read and agree to comply with the terms and conditions set out in this BFNL Volunteers Policy.

**Signature**: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
**Date**: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_