



## IMMAF Safeguarding Reporting Procedure

It is important to always remember that safeguarding children is everyone's responsibility. This means that everyone in MMA has a responsibility to respond to any concerns that they or others may have about a child or the behaviour of an adult. This is related to concerns which arise both within the MMA environment and outside of the MMA environment.

Any concerns identified must always be reported according to the procedures outside herein. It is not the responsibility of the individuals to determine whether abuse has taken place, but it is their responsibility to follow the procedures outlined to report concerns.

Concerns regarding a child's or vulnerable person's safety can come from numerous sources, such as, but not limited to: personal observations of changes in behaviour, observation of an incident, reports from the children or vulnerable person themselves or someone else about a concern or allegations made about staff, volunteers, parent/guardians or other athletes/youth athletes.

The IMMAF Safeguarding Reporting Procedure shall commence in the event that an allegation of breach of any principle contained in this policy is breached under the control, custody and / or supervision of the IMMAF or its employees and / or volunteers.

Disclosure of the incident to the parent / guardian of the child should be done upon consideration of the child's consent to do so and the presence of their mental capacity. Should it be determined that the child lacks the mental capacity to make an informed decision regarding disclosure to their parent/guardian, the parent/guardian must be informed of the incident. The presence of such mental capacity must be determined by the person to whom the concern is being raised to the best of their ability.

In an emergency situation, when the child is believed to have been seriously harmed or may be at immediate risk or harm, immediate contact should be made with the police, social services, available helplines and/or other appropriate agencies. The Safeguarding Officer must be informed of the incident as soon as possible.

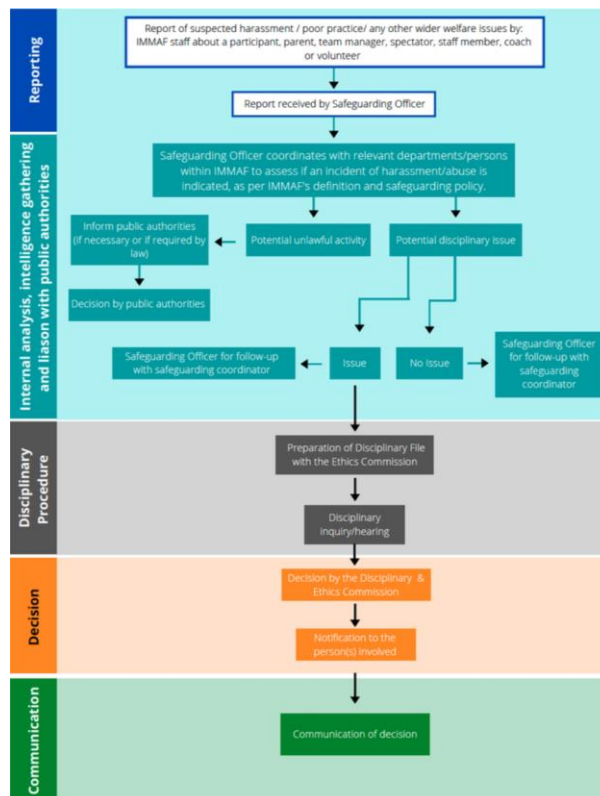
In urgent and serious cases, if you do not want and / or you are barred from reporting to IMMAF, you shall contact the police, the children's social care services and / or other relevant statutory authorities. All these agencies are experienced in such matters and you can be confident that the concerns will be addressed in a professional way.

## Reporting Procedure Flowchart

The IMMAF reporting procedure flowchart outlines the different areas involved and the steps taken depending on the safeguarding incident/situation/concern reported.

When a safeguarding incident becomes a potential disciplinary issue, the findings of the safeguarding investigation will be handed over to the disciplinary committee for further sanctions. In the case of an incident happening at an IMMAF event, the safeguarding investigation findings may be handed over to the compliance officers of the event.

The disciplinary procedures are outlined in the Disciplinary Regulations and in the Evidential and Triage process, which can be found on the IMMAF website.



## IMMAF Safeguarding Investigation Procedure



A safeguarding investigation procedure is a structured process designed to address allegations or concerns about the safety and well-being of vulnerable individuals, such as children or adults at risk. The procedure ensures that these concerns are handled appropriately, fairly, and in a manner that prioritizes the safety of those involved. Below is an outline of the steps involved in an IMMAF safeguarding investigation procedure:

## 1. Initial Response

- **Receipt of Concern:** A safeguarding concern is reported, either through a formal complaint, disclosure, or observation.
- **Immediate Safety Assessment:** Assess whether the individual is at immediate risk. If necessary, take urgent action to ensure their safety, such as removing them from harm, taking away accreditation, immediate suspension or contacting emergency services.
- **Record Keeping:** Document the concern, including details of the individual(s) involved, the nature of the concern, and any immediate actions taken.

## 2. Referral

- **Internal Notification:** Notify the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) or officer responsible for safeguarding within the organization or the DSL of the event.
- **External Referral (if required):** If the concern involves serious harm or criminal activity, refer the case to external authorities, such as social services, the police, or other relevant agencies.
- **Confidentiality:** Ensure that information is shared on a need-to-know basis, maintaining confidentiality throughout the process.

## 3. The Investigation

- **Investigators:** The IMMAF Safeguarding Team will be responsible for investigating and handling the case during an IMMAF event. If a concern comes in outside of an IMMAF event, the Lead Safeguarding Officer and the IMMAF Safeguarding Liaison will investigate and handle the case with the support of the IMMAF Safeguarding Commission and IMMAF Safeguarding Chair.
- **Risk Assessment:** A risk assessment is conducted to determine any ongoing risks to the individual and to others. Implement measures to mitigate these risks during the investigation.

## 4. Conducting the Investigation

- **Gathering Evidence:** Evidence is collected relevant to the case, such as witness statements, documents, and any physical evidence.
- **Interviews:** Interviews with the individual(s) involved, witnesses, and any other relevant parties/ IMMAF Departments. Interviews are conducted sensitively, respecting the rights and well-being of all participants. If a minor needs to be interviewed, it will be in the presence of the coach/parents with consent and only if the minor is comfortable speaking. The investigation could involve following up with IMMAF departments if there is a need for clarification. If an incident occurred inside the cage, then the Cage Leader or the Head of Regulatory Affairs should be contacted for further information.
- **Documenting Findings:** Record all findings in detail, including timelines, statements, and any supporting evidence.

## 5. Decision-Making

- **Analysis of Evidence:** The evidence collected is reviewed to determine whether the safeguarding concern is substantiated.
- **Outcome Determination:** The outcome of the investigation is decided. Possible outcomes include substantiating the concern, finding it unsubstantiated, or determining that further investigation is needed.
- **Recommendations:** Recommendations are provided based on the findings, which may include disciplinary action, additional training, changes to policies, or other measures to prevent future incidents.

## 6. Reporting

- **Internal Reporting:** A detailed report of the incidents, investigation findings, conclusions, and recommendations is completed and submitted to the appropriate internal bodies, such as the IMMAF management team, the safeguarding commission and the disciplinary committee.
- **External Reporting (if required):** If the case was referred to external authorities, a summary of the investigation and its outcomes is provided.

## 7. Follow-Up

- **Implementing Recommendations:** Ensure that any recommendations from the investigation are implemented promptly.
- **Support for Affected Individuals:** IMMAF will provide ongoing support to the individual(s) affected, which may include counseling, legal advice, or other forms of assistance.
- **Monitoring:** The situations are monitored to ensure that the safeguarding measures are effective and that no further issues arise.

## 8. Review

- **Review of Procedures:** After the investigation, the safeguarding procedures are reviewed to identify any lessons learned or areas for improvement.
- **Feedback:** Feedback is gathered from those involved in the investigation to refine and improve the IMMAF safeguarding processes.

## 9. Confidentiality and Data Protection

- **Confidential Records:** All records related to the investigation are kept in a digital archive by the lead Safeguarding Officer and the Safeguarding Liaison. The records are kept in a secure and confidential manner, and in compliance with data protection regulations such as GDPR. The IMMAF Safeguarding Reports from an IMMAF event will keep the names of the minors out, when it is shared with the IMMAF management team or any other IMMAF departments.
- **Access Control:** Only authorized personnel have access to the investigation records.

## 10. Closure

- **Case Closure:** Once all actions have been taken and the situation is resolved, the case will formally be closed.
- **Record Keeping:** The investigation records will be retained for a specified period, as required by law or IMMAF policy.

The safeguarding investigation procedure will be conducted with the highest degree of professionalism, sensitivity, and respect for all parties involved, ensuring that the rights and safety of vulnerable individuals are always the top priority.

# IMMAF