



Brisbane Lions Safeguarding Children and Young People Complaints & Reporting Procedure

1. Purpose

This Safeguarding Children and Young People Complaints and Reporting Procedure (**Complaints and Reporting Procedure**) sets out the steps that all Brisbane Lions People must follow to meet their responsibilities in relation to identifying, reporting, and responding to any concerns about, or incidents of, Child Abuse or other inappropriate behaviour towards Children or Young People at our Club.

The Complaints and Reporting Procedure was issued in connection with the Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy (**Policy**). The definitions set out in the Policy apply to this Complaints and Reporting Procedure.

2. Immediate response

Overriding any practical requirements outlined through this procedure, if a Child or Young Person is at imminent risk of Harm or in immediate danger, all Brisbane Lions People are required to report the situation directly to the Police - CALL '000' (within Australia).

3. What is to be reported

The following types of behaviours, in relation to any Child or Young Person involved in Brisbane Lions activities, programs or services must be reported in the manner described in this Complaints and Reporting Procedure:

- Child Abuse, Harm, Neglect or exploitation or any other form of inappropriate behaviour such as Grooming or Bullying to a Child or Young Person (emotional or psychological, physical or sexual, racial or religious);
- potential or suspected Abuse, Harm or Neglect;
- any disclosure or allegation of Abuse, Harm or Neglect (including by a Child or Young Person); and
- any breaches of the Policy or Code of Conduct

3.1 Accessible reporting for children and young people

The Brisbane Lions are committed to ensuring Children and Young People can raise concerns safely and easily. Children and Young People will be provided with age-appropriate information about:

- their right to feel safe;
- how to raise a concern or complaint; and
- who they can talk to if something makes them feel uncomfortable or unsafe.

Children and Young People may raise concerns with:

- a trusted Club Person or coach;

- a Designated Child Safety Officer;
- their parent or guardian; or
- through the Club's reporting channels.

4. Minimum requirements when responding to disclosures of child abuse

When a disclosure of (suspected) Child Abuse or Harm is made, the following points should be considered and utilised –

LISTEN		REASSURE		ACT
DO		DO NOT		
✓	Actively listen to the Child or Young Person and be aware of your surroundings.	X	Ask leading questions.	
✓	Reassure the Child or Young Person that they have done the correct thing by reporting. Thank them for telling you.	X	Make your own judgement or assessment.	
✓	Respect the Child or Young Person may only reveal some details.	X	Press for detail, a minimal account will suffice.	
✓	Let the Child or Young Person use their own words in their own time - be patient.	X	Make promises you cannot keep.	
✓	Ask open ended questions – try and avoid yes / no questions.	X	Make your own enquiries / investigations in relation to the allegations made.	
✓	Explain to the Child or Young Person that other people may need to be told.	X	Share information with others (excluding police, child protection, or designated Brisbane Lions Manager or Designated Child Safety Officer).	

5. How to make a report & obligations

a) Overview

Club People must report Child abuse and other inappropriate behaviour in relation to a Child or Young Person that they are informed of, observe or suspect.

A report may be made verbally or in writing.

A summary of the Incident Reporting Process that all Club People must follow is set out at Appendix 1 to this Complaints and Reporting Procedure.

Immediate action will be taken in relation to any matter reported to the Brisbane Lions or the AFL. The Brisbane Lions will act with integrity, provide strong leadership and make decisions that are Child centred, trauma focused, legal, ethical, accountable and transparent whilst meeting national legislative requirements.

b) Reporting Person's Obligations

- **Step 1:** If the Child or Young Person is in imminent risk of Harm or immediate danger, the reporting person is required to report the situation directly to the police - CALL '000'.
- **Step 2:** Regardless of whether the matter is reported to the police, it is imperative that the reporting person immediately contacts their Manager or a Club Designated Child Safety Officer.
- **Step 3:** If unable to report the matter to their Manager or Club Designated Child Safety Officer, the matter can be reported via the AFL's online reporting platform accessed via the AFL website or below link:

<https://eafl.austfoot.com.au/afl-makeareport/#/landing>

OR by reporting via the Brisbane Lions Whistleblowing email address whistleblowers@lions.com.au or via mail addressed to:

"Private and Confidential"
Whistleblower Protection Officer
Brisbane Lions AFC
16 Eden Station Drive
Springfield Central QLD 4300

(For further information refer *Brisbane Lions Football Club Whistleblower Policy and Procedure*).

All Club People retain the right to report directly to relevant authorities, such as police or child protection, any concerns they may have in relation to the safety and welfare of a Child or Young Person, regardless of whether or not they have also reported the matter internally.

Brisbane Lions will support any person who makes a report in good faith.

The Club strictly prohibits victimisation, retaliation or adverse treatment against any person who raises a Child safety concern or participates in an investigation.

c) Designated Child Safety Officers

The Brisbane Lions Designated Child Safety Officers as at the date of this document are the:

- Brisbane Lions Academy Manager;
- Brisbane Lions GM People and Culture;
- Brisbane Lions AFLW Player Development Manager;
- Brisbane Lions Indigenous Player Manager;
- Brisbane Lions Academy Regional Managers.

Where the Report is about a Designated Child Safety Officer, the Report should be made directly to the Chief Executive Officer.

Current contact details for each of these individuals can be obtained by contacting the Club at:

Telephone: (07) 3335 1777
Email: club@lions.com.au

d) Brisbane Lions People Reporting Obligations

When a Brisbane Lions Manager or a Brisbane Lions Designated Child Safety Officer is notified by a reporting person of an incident, they must;

- a) communicate the report to the Chief Executive Officer;
- b) provide advice and guidance of the reporting and handling process to the reporting person, being mindful of requirements set out in section 4 of how to respond to a disclosure; and
- c) provide general advice and guidance on 'what' to report and the Policy's purpose.

In taking a report or disclosure of an incident from others, the reporting person or Brisbane Lions Manager or Designated Child Safety Officer is not to assess the validity of such allegations or concerns, but to report all allegations as described in the step-by step process outlined in section 5 b).

Reports can also be made directly to relevant authorities including:

- Queensland Police Service;
- the Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services; and / or
- the Blue Card Services unit, where relevant.

Individuals are not required to seek approval from the Club before making a report to external authorities.

6. Reporting timeframes

Reports and notifications must be made as soon as practicable and no later than before ending that person's shift or session of work.

7. What happens to a report

a) Club Obligations

The Chief Executive Officer (or their nominated person) will:

- receive the report and contact the reporting person;
- nominate a Designated Child Safety Officer or other suitable Brisbane Lions employee to assist in conducting an initial assessment of the disclosed information;
- ensure adequate support services are provided to all relevant persons;
- notify the relevant Law Enforcement agencies if criminality has been identified, pursuant to mandatory reporting compliance;
- notify the Brisbane Lions Integrity & Risk Committee; and
- if the incident involves a registered Club Official/Player or has the potential to bring the Club or AFL into disrepute, then report the matter to the AFL Integrity & Security Department.

In responding to reports, the Club will adopt a child-centred and trauma-informed approach that prioritises the safety, wellbeing and dignity of the Child or Young Person.

b) Mandatory Reporting Provisions

In Australia, each state and territory have Child safety laws that set out mandatory reporting responsibilities and timelines for both organisations and individuals who work or have contact with Children and Young People.

The following link will direct you to the responsibilities associated with each state and territory:

[Mandatory reporting of child abuse and neglect](#)

8. Who investigates the report

Complying with legislative and policy requirements, the Brisbane Lions are bound to ensure that one or more of the following entities will investigate the report or disclosure.

- State or Federal Law Enforcement Agency (i.e., Police) **Where Required.*
- Child Protections Services or State equivalent **Where Required.*
- AFL Integrity & Security Department if the incident involves a registered Club Official/Player.
- An internal or external independent investigator nominated by the Chairperson of the Brisbane Lions Integrity & Risk Committee.
- Relevant regulatory/oversight bodies in states and territories that administer mandatory reporting schemes.

NOTE: At no stage will the Brisbane Lions investigate in parallel to a State or Federal Law Enforcement Agency (i.e. Police) investigation or an investigation performed by AFL Integrity. The Brisbane Lions will only investigate once they have received confirmation and permission in writing from the relevant Law Enforcement Agency (i.e., Police) that their investigation is completed.

The investigation reporting process is set out in Appendix 2 to this Complaints and Reporting Procedure.

9. Investigation

If an appropriate Child protection service, the police, the AFL Integrity & Security Department or the Club investigate a report made on the AFL's online reporting platform or to them directly or commence an investigation or inquiry in connection with the Club's Safeguarding Children and Young People Framework or other policies, all Club People must co-operate fully with the investigation .

The Club may stand down any Club Person subject to an inquiry, investigation, or charge in connection with the Club's Safeguarding Children and Young People Framework or other policies, from participation or involvement in Club activities, programs, services and facilities involving Children and Young People.

This power shall only be exercisable where in the opinion of the Club CEO or Ethics and Integrity Committee there is a reasonable suspicion that a breach of the Framework may have occurred and the exercise of the power would be a reasonable response.

10. Confidentiality & privacy

The Brisbane Lions maintains the confidentiality and privacy of all concerned (including the alleged perpetrator), except if doing so would compromise the welfare of the Child or Young Person and/or investigation of the allegation.

The Chief Executive Officer will be responsible for the authorisation of the disclosure and sharing of any information relating to any incident reported pursuant to this procedure (subject to mandatory reporting requirements and Club obligations in clause 7).

Any breach of confidentiality by a Club Person will be a breach of the Brisbane Lions Football Club Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy, in itself.

11. Monitoring

All reports recorded by the Brisbane Lions will be reviewed by the Brisbane Lions Integrity & Risk Committee. As part of the Club's commitment to continuous improvement in child safety practices, incident data will be reviewed on a regular basis to identify any trends and act accordingly.

The Chief Executive Officer (or a nominated delegate) is the only person authorised to close a case and will ensure all relevant persons have been informed of the outcome.

All reports, complaints and actions taken in response to Child safety concerns will be documented and stored securely.

Records will be maintained in accordance with privacy legislation and organisational record management practices to support safeguarding, monitoring and continuous improvement.

The Brisbane Lions will review complaint handling processes periodically to ensure they remain effective, accessible and consistent with the Queensland Child Safe Standards.

12. Debrief support for Brisbane Lions people

It is acknowledged that disclosures of harm and/or abuse can be traumatic for every person involved. If a Brisbane Lions person requires assistance or support to debrief about an incident, allegation and/or disclosure they are encouraged to discuss this confidentially with their manager and/or access the Employee Assistance Program (Converge) to speak with a counsellor (EAP Tel: 1300 687 327).

13. Commencement of this procedure

This version of the policy will commence from June 2026 and it replaces all other bullying and harassment policies (if any and whether written or not).

14. Monitoring and review

GM People and Culture

15. Authority to change

The CEO and GM People and Culture of the Club reserves the right to vary, replace or terminate this policy from time to time.

APPENDIX 1 – INCIDENT REPORTING PROCESS

WHAT to report

- Observed abuse, harm or neglect (Emotional, Physical, Sexual).
- Potential abuse, harm or neglect (Emotional, Physical, Sexual).
- Any suspicion of abuse, harm or neglect (Emotional, Physical, Sexual).
- Breaches of the Brisbane Lions Safeguarding Children & Young Policy and /or Code of Conduct.
- Note – under legislation, all adults MUST report sexual offending against a child by another adult to the police.



HOW to make a report

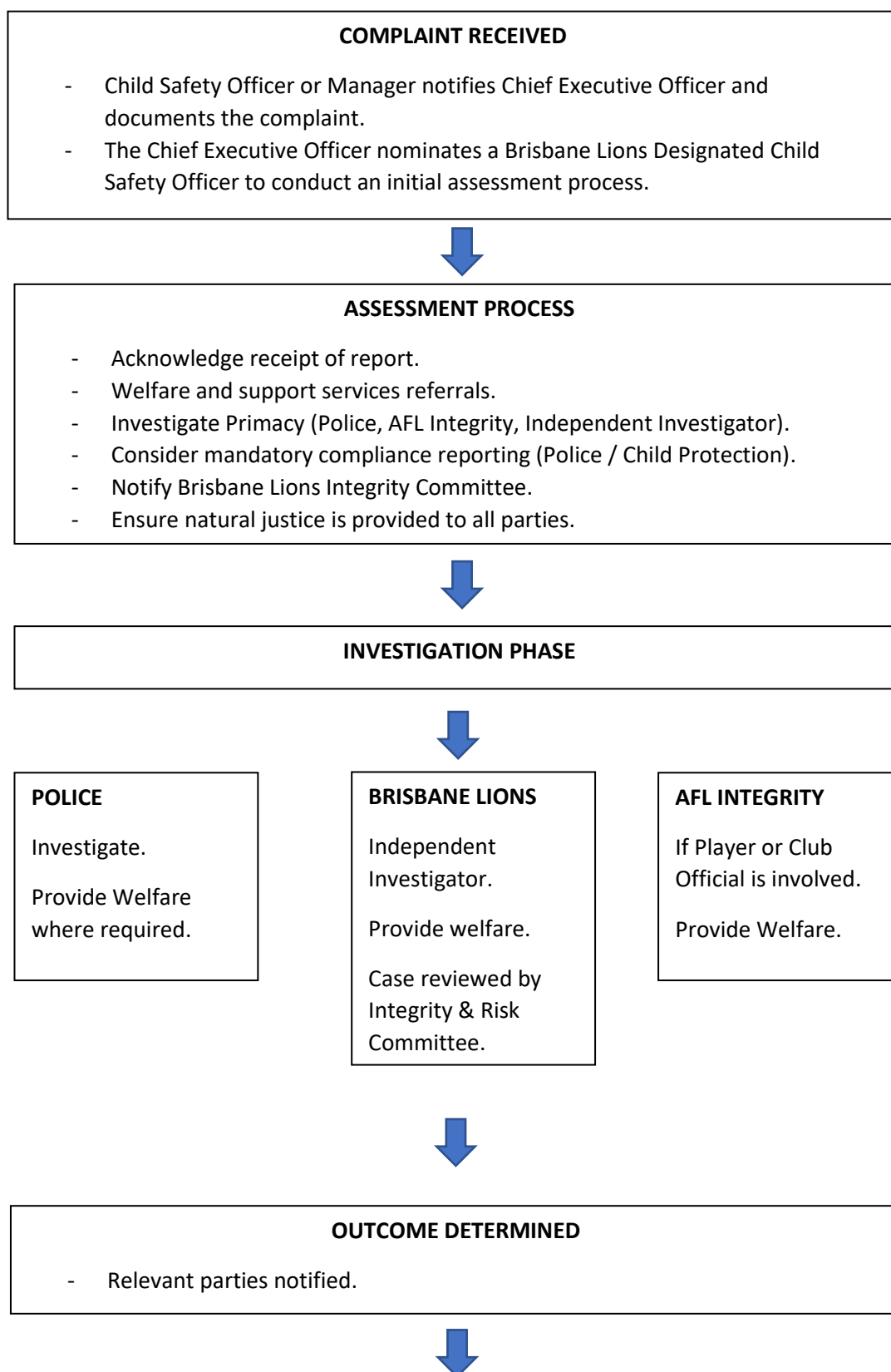
- STEP 1 – If a Child or a Young Person is in any imminent risk of harm or in immediate danger – call '000'.
- STEP 2 – Immediately consult a Brisbane Lions Manager or Designated Child Safety Officer.
- STEP 3 – If unable to report via these people for whatever reason, use the AFL's online reporting platform:
<https://eafl.austfoot.com.au/afl-makeareport/#/landing>



WHAT HAPPENS to the report

- Conduct an assessment of the report for investigation allocation (Police, Independent Investigator, AFL Integrity Team).
- Provide welfare and support service referrals.
- Consider mandatory reporting requirements (Police, DFFH, other) **Where required.*
- *Consider club reporting obligations (Club Integrity & Risk Committee, AFL Integrity etc)*

APPENDIX 2 – INCIDENT INVESTIGATION REPORTING PROCEDURE



REVIEW PROCESS

- Chief Executive Officer, Designated Child Safety Officer and Brisbane Lions Integrity & Risk Committee.
- Recommended amendments to process / policies / procedures implemented.
- Review welfare and support requirements of impacted people.

- ***Internal Note - This Brisbane Lions policy is based on the AFL Safeguarding Children and Young People Complaints & Reporting Procedure.***