



ORIENTEERING AUSTRALIA

CHILD SAFE SPORT FRAMEWORK– CODE OF CONDUCT

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1. Purpose

Orienteering Australia (OA) has developed this Code of Conduct (this Code) to ensure that children and young people participating in Orienteering activities are provided with a safe, fair, and inclusive environment.

2. Relevant to

Everybody involved in Orienteering. This includes organisers, mappers, controllers, course setters, volunteer officials, coaches, competitors, competitors' family members, and spectators.

3. Principles

Under the guidance of Sport Australia, OA has developed this Code to identify and prevent behaviours that may be harmful to children and young people involved in Orienteering. The guidelines in this Code match those of all Australian national sports organisations. This Code forms part of the OA Child Safe Sport framework. This code operates in conjunction with the [Member Protection Policy](#).

Everyone involved in Orienteering in Australia is expected to comply with the guidelines in this Code.

Additional requirements apply to Personnel charged with the responsibility to care for children. Personnel include both paid staff and volunteers.

OA considers a failure to observe the guidelines in this Code as misconduct and will take appropriate disciplinary action. OA will report all matters that involve, or may involve, a breach of the law to the police.

OA recognises there may be exceptional circumstances, such as an emergency situation, where Personnel may need to breach some of the guidelines in this Code. In such circumstances, either prior to taking action or as soon as possible afterwards, Personnel must notify the Organiser of the Orienteering program, event, or service.

The OA Executive Officer or, for matters relating to a State or a club within that State, the relevant State Member Protection Officer, has the authority to make variations to specific provisions of this code on a case-by-case basis. Such variations may take place only if they pose no risk to the child(ren) or young person(s) involved, have the consent of the affected parent or guardian if they relate to a specific individual, and would be viewed as legitimate by a reasonable person. They must be recorded and reported to OA or the relevant State Board on a regular basis.

The guiding principles that should be observed by Personnel are that:

- personnel should avoid being alone with children and young people
- personnel should conduct themselves in a way that will not give others reason to question their suitability to work with children and young people and that will not create discomfort for children and young people in their relationship with them. Consuming alcohol in these situations may lessen the capacity to judge when a professional boundary is at risk and should be avoided
- any concern personnel have about whether or not a situation may be compromising or breaching a professional relationship should be discussed with the state MPIO officer and an approved plan of action followed. For example, a staff member may want advice about transporting a friend's child to and from an event or how to manage their own child's involvement at an event.

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4. Definitions

Child or young person: A person under the age of 18 who is involved in Orienteering.

Orienteering: All programs (such as coaching programs and school programs), events (such as open competitions, closed competitions and training events) and associated services (such as training courses) conducted under the auspices of OA, or an affiliated state/territory association or club.

Personnel: People responsible for the care and wellbeing of children and young people involved in Orienteering. These include paid staff members and volunteers, such as:

- board members and officers of OA, state/territory associations or clubs
- employees and contractors engaged by OA, state/territory associations or clubs
- volunteers of OA, state/territory associations or clubs, whether that agreement is in writing or not.

Organiser: The designated organiser of the Orienteering program, event or associated service being conducted under the auspices of OA, or an affiliated state/territory association or club.

5. References and related policies

[Orienteering Australia Member Protection Policy](#)

[Sport Australia Child Safe Sport](#)

[Play by the Rules](#)

Play by the Rules is a unique collaboration between the Sport Australia, Australian Human Rights Commission, all state and territory departments of sport and recreation, all state and territory anti-discrimination and human rights agencies, the Office of the Children's Guardian (NSW) and the Anti-Discrimination Board of NSW. These partners promote Play by the Rules through their networks, along with their own child safety, anti-discrimination and inclusion programs.

Play by the Rules provides information, resources, tools and free online training to increase the capacity and capability of administrators, coaches, officials, players, parents and spectators to assist them in preventing and dealing with discrimination, harassment, child safety, inclusion and integrity issues in sport.

6. Responsibilities

OA Board:

- Approves this Code as part of the OA Child Safe Sport Framework.
- Nominates an Organiser for each OA program, event, and service, and supports them to understand and implement this Code.
- Communicates and distributes this Code across OA and to state/territory associations.

OA Child Safe Sport Implementation Team:

- Develops, reviews, and updates this Code and supporting resources in consultation with relevant stakeholders.
- Provides advice on the application of this Code.

State/Territory Association board:

- Endorses this Code as part of their state/territory Child Safe Sport Framework

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- Nominates an Organiser for each state/territory association program, event, and service, and supports them to understand and implement this Code.
- Takes all reasonable steps to ensure it engages suitable and appropriately qualified people in positions that involve working with children.
- Communicates and distributes this Code across their association and to affiliated clubs.

Club:

- Nominates an Organiser for each club program, event, and service, and supports them to understand and implement this Code.
- Communicates and distributes this Code to club members.

Organiser:

- Ensures this Code is followed and implemented for the Orienteering program, event, or associated services where they are the designated Organiser.

Personnel

- Must comply with this Code.

Anyone involved in Orienteering programs, events, and services

- Must comply with this Code.

7. Key requirements

7.1 Sexual misconduct

Under no circumstances is any form of ‘sexual behaviour’ to occur between, with, or in the presence of children or young people in Orienteering. Engaging in sexual behaviour while participating in Orienteering is prohibited even if the young person/s involved may be above the legal age of consent.

‘Sexual behaviour’ is to be interpreted widely, to encompass the entire range of actions that would reasonably be considered to be sexual in nature, including but not limited to:

- ‘contact behaviour’, such as sexual intercourse, kissing, fondling, sexual penetration or exploiting a child through prostitution
- ‘non-contact behaviour’, such as flirting, sexual innuendo, inappropriate text messaging or use of other social media, inappropriate photography or exposure to pornography or nudity.

7.2 Requirements for Personnel working with children

Personnel involved in delivering an authorised OA, state/territory association or club program to children or young people must abide by the requirements for working with children as specified in [the OA Member Protection Policy](#) Section 7 and Attachment C2.

Note: When travelling overseas (see section 7.14 – Representative Squads and Teams with Juniors) the requirements of the Australian child safe legislation cannot be enforced. It is also possible that from time to time Representative Squads or Teams may be accompanied by an overseas based coach to whom the requirements of the Australian Working with Children Check will not be applicable.

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7.3 Positive guidance and discipline

OA strives for children and young people to be aware of the acceptable limits of their behaviour. However, there may be times when Personnel are required to use appropriate behaviour management strategies to ensure:

- an effective and positive environment
- the safety and/or wellbeing of children, young people or Personnel participating in Orienteering.

Personnel must use strategies that are fair, respectful, and appropriate to the developmental stage of the person involved. The child or young person must be provided with clear directions and given an opportunity to redirect their misbehaviour in a positive manner.

Under no circumstances are Personnel to take disciplinary action involving physical punishment or any form of treatment that could reasonably be considered as degrading, cruel, frightening or humiliating.

7.4 Professional role boundaries

Personnel involved in delivering an authorised OA, state/territory association or club program to children or young people (referenced as 'clients/members' of the program) must not act outside the confines of their duties. These Personnel must not, without specific permission of the child or young person's parent or guardian:

- provide unauthorised transportation to a client/member of the program (see clause 7.12 Transporting Children, for further information)
- engage in individual activities with a client/member outside of the authorised program
- seek contact (outside the guidelines in section 7.5) with current clients/members, or past clients/members under the age of 18 including through online and social media
- involve themselves in the client/member's private matters, including family matters, unless the client/member is at risk of harm
- accept an invitation to attend any private social function at the request of a current client/member (or past client/member under the age of 18) with an exception of where the Personnel has a pre-existing relationship with the family.

Where Personnel become aware of a situation in which a client/member requires assistance that is beyond the confines of that person's authorised role, or beyond the sporting environment, they should:

- where possible and/or practical, contact the child or young person's parent or guardian and/or
- if the parent or guardian is not available, seek advice from the Organiser for the program, or alternatively from the club or State Member Protection Information Officer (MPIO).

if a parent/guardian or an MPIO is not available at the time when assistance is required e.g. an overseas tour, the parent/guardian should be contacted at the first available opportunity and made aware of the situation, and at the same time Orienteering Australia should also be informed (by email?).

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7.5 Supervision

General supervision

Personnel responsible for supervising children and young people engaged in Orienteering are to ensure those participants:

- engage positively with Orienteering
- behave appropriately toward one another
- are in a safe environment and are protected from external threats.

Changing facilities

All persons involved in our sport are required to supervise Children and Young People in change rooms while balancing a Child or Young Person's right to privacy.

Changing facilities are not provided at many events. However, where they are provided, all personnel involved in our sport should:

- avoid one-to-one unsupervised situations with a child or young person in a changing facility, other than their own child or young person.
- not dress or undress in the change room while Children and Young People (other than their own Child or Young Person) are present, unless there are other participants or personnel in the change room;
- ensure adequate supervision in 'public' change rooms when they are used, in order to prevent general misbehaviour or abuse by members of the public or other program participants.
- where available, ensure female and males use separate change rooms
- not take photos, videos or other recordings (or allow photos, videos or other recordings to be taken) of Children and Young People in the change room;
- try to have at least one other adult with you when you are in a change room with children;
- not enter a change room of the opposite sex
- not isolate themselves and a Child from others in the change room
- not allow mobile phones to be used in changing rooms

7.6 Use of electronic or online communications

OA acknowledges the enormous value of technology and social media to communicate, promote our sport and celebrate the achievements and success of the people involved in orienteering however we also recognise the risks that social media can pose.

Where interactions are open and transparent on social media that is generally accepted, however private messaging between two individuals is tantamount to a behind closed doors discussion and is not acceptable.

Wherever possible, Personnel should ensure that all email, text messages and other messages sent to a child or young person (who is or has been within their responsibility in their capacity as personnel) is copied to their parent/guardian and/or other personnel, e.g. group chat.

Personnel should:

- restrict communication to issues directly associated with delivering Orienteering or other legitimate business matters. Where such communication is required, an official account should be used where it is reasonably practicable to do so.

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- limit the personal and social content to what is required to convey the service-related message in a polite, friendly manner: in particular, it must not contain anything that a reasonable observer could view as being of a sexual nature
- not promote unauthorised 'social' activity or arrange unauthorised contact, or use inappropriate language
- not request the child or young person to keep a communication a secret from their parent or guardian
- not request 'friends', 'follow' or communicate privately using Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Snapchat, Whatsapp (or other social networking sites), internet chat rooms or similar forums, game sites or instant messaging. Personnel may 'follow' athletes on training applications (e.g. Strava) for coaching purposes with the approval of a parent/guardian.

All Personnel are required to ensure appropriate monitoring of children and young people, whilst they are in the direct responsibility of the Personnel, when they use electronic communication equipment to ensure that they do not inadvertently place themselves at risk of abuse or exploitation via social networking sites, gaming sites or through web searches, or inappropriate email communication.

7.7 Gifts

Personnel may only give gifts to children and young people involved in Orienteering with the consent of their parent or guardian. For the purposes of this clause, prizes which are open to members of a larger group, or items made available to a group as a whole, are not considered to be gifts.

7.8 Photographs

Where a sport or sporting activity takes place in a public place it is legal for anyone to take pictures of sporting activities without permission.

Personnel should only take photographs of children and young people if:

- the context is directly related to participation in Orienteering
- the child is appropriately dressed and posed
- the photo is taken in the presence of other Personnel.

Personnel are not to distribute images of children (including as an attachment to an email) to anyone outside the Orienteering organisation or the school of the children or young people, other than to the child photographed or their parent, without the knowledge and approval of either the OA Executive Officer or the state/territory association Member Protection Officer (or their delegate).

Personnel must not exhibit images on websites or in publications (such as the annual report) without parental knowledge and approval (which can be a signed form, an email) or if possible or practical, such images must be presented in a manner that de-identifies the child or young person.

OA or the relevant state or territory association should retain a copy of these approvals.

Personnel should share images of children and young people posted on official social media accounts rather than post through their own accounts.

The taking of, and publishing, photographs of children is also covered in Orienteering Australia's [Member Protection Policy](#) section 7.2. If personnel use an image of a child, it will not name or identify him/her or use both the first name and surname of the child unless it has first obtained consent to do so from the parent/guardian. [\[Contents\]](#)

7.9 Physical contact

Personnel must ensure that any physical contact with children and young people is appropriate to the delivery of Orienteering and based on the needs of the child or young person.

Under no circumstances should Personnel have contact with children or young people participating in our sport that:

- involves touching:
 - of genitals
 - of buttocks
 - of the breast area
- that is other than as part of delivering medical or allied health services
- would appear to a reasonable observer to have a sexual connotation
- is intended to cause pain or distress to the child or young person – for example corporal punishment
- is overly physical (for example, wrestling, horseplay, tickling or other roughhousing)
- is unnecessary
- is initiated against the wishes of the child or young person, except if such contact may be necessary to prevent injury to the child/young person or to others, in which case:
 - physical restraint should be a last resort
 - the level of force used must be appropriate to the specific circumstances, and aimed solely at restraining the child or young person to prevent harm to themselves or others; and
 - the incident must be reported to the Organiser as soon as possible.

Personnel are required to report to the Organiser any physical contact initiated by a child or young person that is sexual and/or inappropriate, for example, acts of physical aggression, as soon as possible, to enable the situation to be managed in the interests of the safety of the child or young person, our Personnel and any other participants.

7.10 Injuries and illness

Personnel administering first aid or treating sports injuries should, where possible:

- be qualified in first aid
- treat injuries in sight of others.

Other considerations include:

- the safety and wellbeing, comfort level and privacy of the child or young person is the priority
- uncover and treat only the injured area, ensuring the privacy of the child or young person at all times
- report injuries and any treatment provided to the child or young person's parent or guardian and document the incident notifying the Organiser if necessary, seek medical attention as soon as possible, or recommend that the child or young person's parent or guardian seeks medical attention.

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7.11 Overnight stays and sleeping arrangements

Tours and overnight stays for children and young people unaccompanied by their parents are supported by OA only when they are arranged by OA or a state/territory association and are led by authorised Personnel.

They may occur only with the prior written approval of the OA Executive Officer or the state/territory Member Protection Information Officer (or their delegate) and the prior written approval of the parents/guardians of the children or young people involved. National team tours such as JWOC, EYOC and junior Bushranger teams, have OA's standing approval, and specific approval for these tours is not required. Approvals may be given through electronic messaging formats such as email or SMS.

The behaviour of all persons involved during tours and overnight stays must be consistent with the practices and behaviour expected during delivery of Orienteering at other times. These standards include:

- providing children and young people with privacy when bathing and dressing
- observing appropriate dress standards when children and young people are present – such as no exposure to adult nudity
- not allowing children or young people to be exposed to pornographic material, for example, through movies, television, the Internet, or magazines
- not leaving children under the supervision or protection of unauthorised persons such as hotel staff or friends
- attending Personnel must not consume alcohol or other substances that may affect their judgment
- ensuring that sleeping arrangements do not compromise the safety of children and young people by:
 - observing adequate adult to child ratios
 - ensuring that accommodation includes separate beds for all persons attending the overnight stay
 - ensuring children or young people are accommodated with adequate supervision
 - the right of children to contact their parents, or others, if they feel unsafe, uncomfortable, or distressed during the stay
 - parents expecting that their children can, if they wish, make contact.

7.12 Alcohol or drugs

While on duty, Personnel must not:

- use, possess or be under the influence of an illegal drug
- use or be under the influence of alcohol
- be incapacitated by any other legal drug such as prescription or over-the-counter drugs
- supply alcohol or drugs (including tobacco) to children and young people participating in our sport.

Personnel may use legal drugs, provided such use does not impair their ability to care for the children involved.

7.13 Transporting children

Children and young people are to be transported by Personnel only in circumstances that are directly related to the delivery of Orienteering – for example, they should not be given casual lifts outside transport to and from orienteering related activity.

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Private transport

OA acknowledges that from time to time, Personnel will have valid reasons for transporting children and young people. Personnel may transport children and young people who are, or have been, within their responsibility in their role as Personnel, only:

- in circumstances that are directly related to the delivery of Orienteering, unless with the specific consent of the child or young person's parent or guardian
- with the prior written consent from the child or young person's parent or guardian (written consent may be given through electronic messaging formats such as email or SMS)
- after receiving an acknowledgment of the parent or guardian's consent.

As far as is practical and possible, parents or guardians should be provided with information about the proposed journey, including:

- the form of transport proposed, such as private car, self-drive bus, plane, or boat
- the reason for the journey
- the route to be followed, including any stops or side trips. Parents/guardians should be made aware of any major changes to proposed routes as and when they arise, and the reason for the change(s).
- details of anyone who will be present during the journey, other than our Personnel who are involved in delivering Orienteering
- vehicle and registration information, including insurance and full license held by drivers.

In the event that it is not practicable to obtain the prior written consent from a parent or guardian, Personnel must notify their immediate Supervisor in writing about the details of the travel as soon as practicable following completion of the itinerary.

OA understands that in some smaller communities it may be appropriate for personnel to provide Children with transport to and from orienteering. OA recommends that where possible this be avoided, however, where it cannot be avoided personnel must follow the points above and:

- ensure that you are not left alone, unsupervised with a Child;
- ensure that the Child sits in the back seat, appropriately secured; and
- do not make any unnecessary stops

Note that for team transport, within Australia, the driver of a bus hired for transporting teams will be required to have a valid Working with Children check and will have had to provide evidence of driving licence to the bus company and the bus has to be insured.

Note that all States and Territories have different requirements for checks for individuals that work with Children and Young People (for example, Working with Children Checks and Blue Cards). Compliance with these legislative requirements by Orienteering Australia personnel is mandatory.

7.14 Principles for Representative Squads and Teams with Juniors

From time to time Orienteering Australia selects young persons to represent Australia. Such representation might take place domestically or overseas, as part of a training squad or as part of a representative team.

In such situations it is possible that the squad/team will consist mainly of adults, and as a result different and/or additional consideration to this policy framework will need to be applied in such circumstances. [\[Contents\]](#)

First and foremost, in such cases should a young person be selected to represent Orienteering Australia, the parent of the child should be made aware of that the child will be in the minority, and travelling with other adults. There will also be representative teams who are predominantly (or wholly) under 18.

Formal approval should be obtained from the parent(s) for any child that is selected to represent Orienteering Australia, such that the parent understands and accepts that there may be circumstances when some of the foregoing key requirements (clauses 7.2 ~ 7.13) cannot be observed. {Note: Clauses 7.1 and 7.12 shall both still apply in any and all circumstances}.

Parents of young persons travelling with adults in a squad/team situation will need to formally accept that the squad/team manager and/or coach are taking on parent responsibilities, and that differences in time zones or difficulty in 'local' communications, could cause difficulty in the observing the provisions of clauses 7.2 ~ 7.13 above.

The following considerations will need to be taken into consideration by Orienteering Australia and its nominated Team Manager(s) and Coach(es). This list is not meant to be exhaustive and should be added to when circumstances change.

- Orienteering Australia should brief prospective and selected Team managers and Coaches of the requirements of this policy.
- Whenever and wherever possible Orienteering Australia will select a male and female manager/coach combination.
- Formal guidelines should be developed for Team managers and Coaches when young persons travel with a senior representative squad/team.
- Further to the penultimate bullet point in clause 7.4, when a young person is overseas as part of a JWOC or other team and the parent is not overseas with the team there may be situations where the team manager and/or coach take on responsibilities or provide assistance that would normally be a parents responsibility as it might not be practical or possible to contact the parent at the time the situation occurs.
- Further to the first bullet point of clause 7.6, when a team is overseas text messages are frequently used to communicate to team members as phone calls tend to be expensive, and time differences with Australia might make it impractical to include a parent/guardian. Group communications to **all** athletes in a team should be low risk if these guidelines are followed. Personal communications to just one or two team members should be avoided wherever possible. Prior to a squad/team departing for the competition the Team Manager and/or Coach should consider if parent permission is required for text and social media contacts with child members.
- In consideration of clause 7.8, it is common to publish photographs on the OA website or OA Facebook page of team members competing for Australia or doing other team activities. This is expected by the wider orienteering community who are interested in in what the team is experiencing while overseas. Formal permission should be obtained in advance from parents of young persons for such practices to continue.
- As required by clause 7.11, written approval will be required for all national teams that include young persons prior to travelling. This would include all EYOC, JWOC and travelling Bushranger teams.
- In consideration of clause 7.11 and as noted above, Team Managers and coaches will need to be made aware of the requirement that attending personnel must not consume alcohol or other substances that may affect their judgement while travelling with young persons as part of a squad/team tour.
- In consideration of clause 7.12, prior written approval from parents of young persons will be required for transportation requirements.
- As part of any pre-tour information, an itinerary should be provided to parents of young persons. However, it should be recognised that some flexibility will be required for travelling teams, such that exact routes and stops might change due to local circumstances. Likewise, vehicle and registration information will not be known in advance of hiring vehicle(s). [\[Contents\]](#)

- In consideration of clause 7.12, parents will need to be made aware that the Australian legislative requirements for bus drivers of teams including any young persons to have a valid Working with Children Check do not apply in overseas countries.

Team Managers and Coaches responsible for young persons travelling with squads/teams shall ensure that all matters requiring parental approval be obtained and formally approved prior to any travel and accommodation requirements being confirmed to ensure that there are no unexpected short-notice withdrawals from the squad/team.

All permissions (and if required waivers) should be arranged in advance. The minimum arrangements to be notified to parents once initial travel and accommodation plans are confirmed, and their formal approvals, will include –

- Acceptance of proposed transport arrangements
- Acceptance of proposed accommodation arrangements
- Acceptance of proposed itinerary
- Acceptance of proposed communications arrangements
- Acceptance of arrangements concerning the taking of photographs
- Acceptance of any specific details, especially for overseas tours

8 Development, monitoring and review

This Code of Conduct was developed by the OA Child Safe Sport Implementation Team, which comprises:

- OA Executive Officer
- an OA Board member
- the Member Protection Officer from each state/territory association.

The OA Child Safe Sport Implementation Team will review this document annually, in consultation with stakeholders. Some circumstances may trigger an early review. This may include but is not limited to legislative changes, organisational changes, incident outcomes and other matters deemed appropriate by OA.

OA will retain records of each review undertaken. Such records may include minutes of meetings and documentation of changes to policies and procedures that result from a review.

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Initial Release: May 2020

First Update (Second Release): October 2020 {clarified clauses 3, 7.5 ~ 7.8 and 7.13, added links}