

# MPIO AND CSR INFOSHEET

## Member Protection

Member Protection is a term that is used to describe policies, practices and procedures that are put in place to protect members against harassment, discrimination and other forms of inappropriate behaviour, ensuring that they have an enjoyable and safe experience whilst involved in the sport of Gymnastics.

Member Protection involves:

- Adopting and implementing measures to ensure that the right people are involved in gymnastics
- Providing education and guidance
- Promoting positive and safe behaviours

Gymnastics Australia and each State Association Members all have Member Protection policies and procedures in place and the obligation flows through to all affiliated clubs.

## Member Protection Information Officer (MPIO)

Member Protection Information Officers (MPIO's) are people who have completed a state or territory MPIO course. The MPIO is responsible for providing information about a person's rights, responsibilities and options to an individual making a complaint or raising a concern, as well as support during the process.

MPIO's provide confidential, impartial and timely information and support. They are not the person who investigates matters, advises, or advocates for the complainant, but they may elect to accompany complainants, if requested, to talk with someone else.

The role of an MPIO is to:

- Listen
- Act as an impartial support person
- Take notes about the complaint (which will then be kept in a secure and confidential place)
- Ask what outcome/how the complainant wants to resolve the problem and if they need support
- Provide possible options for the individual to resolve the problem
- Explain how the complaints procedure works at your club
- Refer the individual to an appropriate person to help resolve the problem, if necessary; inform the relevant government authorities and/or police if required by law to do so

- Maintain strict confidentiality

## MPIO Videos

MPIO's perform an instrumental role in sporting across NSW. The Office of Sport has captured the experiences of three different sporting clubs/associations, sharing the importance and positive effect that an MPIO can have.

1. [Maitland Netball:](#)
2. [Mona Vale SLSC:](#)
3. [Central Coast Table Tennis Association:](#)

## Importance of an MPIO

A designated MPIO is the central contact for any concerns or information about harassment, discrimination or inappropriate behaviour within the club. By making members aware of the designated MPIO as someone who they can trust and go to with concerns, it promotes a safe environment for people to discuss their concerns.

It is vital to promote and create awareness of your club MPIO using avenues that are familiar to each individual you are trying to reach (i.e. young athletes & social media).

**Having a Fully Trained MPIO is a Gymnastics Australia affiliation requirement.**

## Becoming an MPIO – A two-step process

### Online Course

To become an **Informed MPIO**, an individual must complete the [Play by the Rules](#) online course.

The online course is made up of seven modules that takes a total of four hours to complete (it can be completed all at once or in parts).

The online modules can be accessed [here](#).

Once completed, the individual will receive a certificate of completion (listing their online certification number) which must be presented to their club.

The club is then able to appoint/list them as the MPIO Informed member.

### MPIO Workshop

To become a **Fully Trained MPIO**, an individual must then complete a face-to-face workshop, run by the NSW Office of Sport.

Upcoming workshops can be found [here](#).

The workshop consolidates what's been learnt online and focuses on developing the

skills needed to fulfill the MPIO role.

On completion, the individual will be given a link to register as a nationally recognized MPIO and they will receive a certificate of recognition as an MPIO.

**Benefits of being an MPIO include:**

- Joining a national network of MPIOs who have access to information and resources to assist you in your role
- Access to a special MPIO area of the Play by the Rules (PBTR) website
- Receiving regular PBTR e-Bulletin, providing the latest news and activity around safe, fair and inclusive sport
- Access to further opportunities to develop professional skills and knowledge in the area of member protection

## Member Protection in the Club

The MPIO is an important part of an effective Member Protection policy and ideally every club would have a **Fully Trained MPIO** operating within its organisation. Having an MPIO should be the aim of every club and GA has an expectation that clubs will work to this end.

However, it is understood that this process will take time to implement within all clubs across the state and that smaller clubs may not find it viable in the long-term.

Nonetheless, every club is required to have an understanding and to be aware of Member Protection within its ranks and every club must have at least **one Informed MPIO within the club**.

In the case where a club doesn't have access to a **Fully Trained MPIO**, its members must still have access to a fully trained MPIO external to the club. The club may make arrangements with another club's MPIO or any fully trained MPIO from any sport within the region within which the club is located. If such an arrangement is not possible, GNSW may provide an MPIO if a dispute or concern arises.

Given that a significant portion of intra-club disputes around member protection issues involve a club's hierarchy or club policies and procedures, the role of the MPIO is one which requires a level of independence from senior management.

**Accordingly, the MPIO/Complaints Officer should not be an Owner or Operator, or a person who otherwise holds a senior management role or ownership of the Club.**

## Exemptions

There is provision for ongoing and temporary exemptions from the MPIO requirement.

Gymnastics NSW may grant exemptions.

Reasons for ongoing exemptions from the requirement for a Fully Trained MPIO are:

- The club has less than 100 registered gymnastics members;
- The club has less than 200 registered gymnastics members and is located in a rural or isolated area;
- The club is less than one year old (from establishment).
- The State/Territory Government Departments are not providing Face to Face courses.

A club may also have temporary exemption from the requirement for a Fully Trained MPIO when the club's previous MPIO has left the club and there are no MPIO courses available in the short term. Where a club is exempt from the requirement for a Fully Trained MPIO it must still ensure that:

- There is at least one MPIO informed person within the club; and
- It has made arrangements for an external person to act as an MPIO if a dispute or concern arises.

There is no exemption from any other provision of the GA Member Protection Policy.

## Child Safety

Gymnastics NSW considers that the health, safety and well being of children takes priority over all other competing considerations. Gymnastics NSW supports the rights of children and will act immediately to ensure an environment is maintained where children and all participants feel safe, respected, valued and empowered at all times.

As a leading child-safe organisation, it is about more than having the right policies and procedures in place. It requires conscious and proactive behaviours to protect children from harm. It means creating a culture of safety that extends from participation and education through to ensuring all members feel safe and secure in reporting inappropriate behaviour.

## Child Safe Representative

A **Child Safe Representative (CSR)** handles all child safety matters for a club. Due to the sensitive and serious nature of the role, a CSR must be a Club Administrator (i.e. Owner or Manager or is on the committee).

## Becoming a CSR

### Gymnastics Australia Online Course

To become a compliant CSR, the individual must complete the Gymnastics Australia Child Safety online training. The online Child Safety course is a mandatory requirement and must be undertaken on an annual basis for both CSRs and Technical Members. Currently the courses are: The Athletes Voice and Everybody is Unique.

The course can be accessed via **FLEX (LMS)**.

It is recommended that you take a photo of your completion certificate in the case of any technical issues with the system.

**Please note – the appointment of a Child Safe Representative is an affiliation requirement.**