



## **New Zealand International Optimist Dinghy Association (NZIODA) Policy on Staff, Contractors, 3<sup>rd</sup> Parties and Volunteers Safeguarding Policy**

### **Introduction**

Safeguarding is the responsibility that NZIODA must ensure that their employees, contractors and third parties that they work with as well as volunteers are protected from harassment, exploitation, discrimination, abuse, unwanted behaviours, and actions whilst carrying out NZIODA related work. Further, should such behaviours occur, that the NZIODA acts quickly to stop or minimise to avoid further damage or harm to the employees, contractors, third parties and volunteers.

NZIODA recognises it has an obligation to put in place all reasonable safeguarding measures to ensure, as far as possible, the safety and protection of its employees, contractors, third parties and volunteers when undertaking NZIODA activities.

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this Policy is to provide clarity to ALL involved with NZIODA activity, and to help NZIODA make sure that employees, contractors, volunteers, and other representatives are protected.

Any breach of this Policy will be treated as a disciplinary matter, which may result in such action as termination of membership for sailor and family, or withdrawal of volunteer status, or work related to NZIODA and reporting to the police/relevant regulatory authority or other body.

### **Scope**

This Policy is mandatory for all parties dealing with NZIODA. For the purposes of this Policy, 'employee' is defined as anyone who works for or on behalf of NZIODA, either in a paid or unpaid capacity. This, therefore, includes directly employed staff, trustees, contractors, employees and volunteers of sub-contractors.

It also covers our partners, who we expect to work with, as a condition of their involvement with NZIODA.

This Policy demonstrates how NZIODA will meet its legal obligations and reassure, employees, contractors partners, and members of the public:

- a) On what they can expect NZIODA to do to protect and safeguard them;
- b) That they can safely voice any concerns through an established procedure;
- c) That all reports of abuse or potential abuse are dealt with in a serious and effective manner;
- d) That there is an efficient recording and monitoring system in place.

### **Safeguarding Officer**

The NZIODAs designated Safeguarding Officer is the NZIODA President who is responsible for the development and ongoing review of the organisation's Safeguarding Policy to ensure that it is up to standard and reflects current legislation and organisation policy. The Safeguarding Officer is the organisation's first port of call to report safeguarding incidents. This report can be made in confidence, verbally or in writing. Safeguarding concerns should be reported in a timely basis, as soon as possible after the incident. In circumstances where the Safeguarding Officer may not be accessible, for whatever reason, then such report of a safeguarding concern should be made, where practicable, to a member of the NZIODA Committee.

### **Policy Statement**

NZIODA has zero tolerance against abuse and exploitation of its employees. NZIODA also recognises that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and that it has an obligation to put in place reasonable measures to ensure, as far as possible, the safety and wellbeing of all its employees.

NZIODA works to the following key principles to protect its employees:

- Everyone has an equal right to protection from harassment, exploitation, abuse and unwanted behaviour regardless of age, race, sex, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy or having a child, gender reassignment, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status.
- The best interests of its employees are paramount and shall be the primary consideration in our decision making.
- NZIODA will take responsibility to meet our obligations regarding our duty of care towards all employees and volunteers.
- NZIODA will ensure that employees and volunteers are informed of our safeguarding standards.
- NZIODA will ensure that all partners are informed and committed to work in compliance with our safeguarding standards.
- When working with or through partners or sub contracted agencies, NZIODA will ensure that their safeguarding procedures are consistent and in line with the principles and approaches set out in this Policy.
- NZIODA recognises that an element of risk exists, and while we may never be able to totally remove this, we need to do all we can to reduce it or limit its impact.
- NZIODA respects confidentiality and has a responsibility to protect sensitive personal data in line with Data Protection principles. Information should only be shared and handled on a need to know basis, that is, access to the information must be necessary for the conduct of one's official duties. Only individuals who have legitimate reasons to access the information are allowed to receive it.

- NZIODA commits to monitoring the implementation of the Safeguarding Policy. This Policy will be reviewed annually.

### **Cultural Sensitivity**

NZIODA seeks always to work in ways which are culturally sensitive and respect and celebrate the diverse nature of the people we work with. However, whilst we recognise that there may be a range of views which exist in respect of the best way to take care of our employees and making sure they are protected, the principles and responsibilities outlined in this Policy must always be abided by.

### **Responsibilities**

All employees, volunteers, consultants, agency staff, sub-contractors, partner are obliged to follow this Policy and maintain an environment that prevents harassment, unwanted behaviour, and abuse, and which encourages reporting of breaches of this Policy using the appropriate procedures.

All people working or associated with NZIODA will:

- Read, understand, and adhere to the NZIODA Staff Safeguarding Policy
- Strive to promote a zero-tolerance approach to discrimination, sexual harassment, and abuse in all working environments.
- Strive to develop relationships with all stakeholders which are based on equality, trust, respect, transparency, and honesty.
- Report any concerns they may have about inappropriate behaviour to a member of the NZIODA Committee - whoever they feel most comfortable reporting to.
- Be always alert and check that colleagues are not put in a vulnerable situation which may expose them to unwanted behaviour or harassment
  - On hearing something in an informal discussion or chat that they think is a safeguarding concern, they should report this to a member of the NZIODA Committee. All people working with the NZIODA will not:
    - Sexually harass, assault, or abuse another person
    - Physically harass, assault or abuse another person
    - Emotionally abuse another person, such as engaging in behaviour intended to shame, humiliate, belittle or degrade
    - Condone, or participate in behaviour, which is abusive, discriminatory, illegal, or unsafe
    - Act in ways that may be violent, inappropriate, or sexually provocative

### **NZIODA Committee Members**

NZIODA Committee Members have specific responsibilities for ensuring employees, volunteers, contractors, 3<sup>rd</sup> parties and partner organisations are aware of the Policy and are supported to implement and work in accordance with it, as well as creating a culture that encourages a focus on safeguarding.

On being made aware of a safeguarding concern, they must ensure that they are responsive, acting immediately as soon as they become aware of any safeguarding concerns, and supportive towards employees or volunteers who complain about breaches in this Policy. If a safeguarding concern is disclosed:

NZIODA Committee Members will:

- Listen and empathise with the person.
- Inform the President of NZIODA of the incident.
- Make a full report of the incident and gather all the facts.
- Provide appropriate support to the receiver of safeguarding incident.
- Exercise our duty of care towards the receiver by providing protection or security assistance (for example being moved to a safe location away from the alleged perpetrator).
- Due to the sensitive nature of safeguarding concerns, maintain confidentiality at all times and only reveal information on a 'need to know' basis.
  - In liaison with the NZIODA President, ensure that a full investigation is carried out and decision made on next steps including referral to relevant authorities.

### **NZIODA Committee**

The NZIODA Committee is responsible for ensuring the effective implementation of this Policy and ensuring that everyone linked with NZIODA is equipped and supported to meet their responsibilities.

### **Process for Dealing with Parents Exhibiting Inappropriate Behaviour Towards NZIODA Staff**

NZIODA is committed to fostering a safe, respectful, and supportive environment for sailors, parents, volunteers, and staff. Inappropriate behaviour by parents towards NZIODA staff undermines this environment and will be addressed with care, professionalism, and fairness.

#### **1. Initial Observation or Report**

- Inappropriate behaviour may be observed directly by NZIODA staff or reported by another individual (e.g., coach, volunteer, or another parent).
- Examples of inappropriate behaviour may include:
  - Verbal abuse or aggressive language
  - Intimidation or harassment (in person, via phone, or electronic communication)
  - Disrespectful conduct during regattas, training sessions, or meetings
  - Repeated undermining of staff decisions or roles
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#### **2. Documentation**

- The incident is documented in detail, including:
  - Date, time, and location of the incident
  - Names of individuals involved
  - Description of behaviour
  - Witness statements (if applicable)

- Copies/screenshots of written or electronic communications (if applicable)
- All documentation is treated as confidential and stored securely.

### **3. Internal Review**

- The NZIODA Committee (or designated safeguarding officer) reviews the incident and assesses the severity of the behaviour.
- The review determines whether the behaviour constitutes a breach of NZIODA's **Code of Conduct, Child Protection Policy**, or other organisational policies.

### **4. Initial Communication with Parent**

- The parent involved is contacted for a discussion. This is typically done via phone or email to:
  - Provide them with an opportunity to respond
  - Explain why the behaviour was deemed inappropriate
  - Reiterate NZIODA's expectations for respectful conduct
- This communication is professional, non-confrontational, and focused on resolution.

### **5. Formal Warning or Disciplinary Action**

Depending on the nature and severity of the behaviour:

- **First-time or low-level incidents:**  
A **verbal or written warning** may be issued, reminding the parent of expected conduct and outlining consequences of further issues.
- **Repeated or serious breaches:**  
NZIODA may impose one or more of the following:
  - Formal written warning
  - Suspension of the parent from attending NZIODA events
  - Restriction of communication to official channels only
  - In extreme cases, exclusion of the sailor or family from NZIODA-supported programmes

### **6. Mediation or Restorative Process (if appropriate)**

- Where relationships have been damaged but are deemed salvageable, NZIODA may offer a mediated discussion or restorative conversation facilitated by a neutral party to rebuild trust and ensure mutual respect moving forward.

### **7. Follow-Up and Monitoring**

- Staff involved are supported following the incident.
- NZIODA monitors the situation to ensure no ongoing issues occur.
- Any further incidents will trigger an escalation in the disciplinary process.

### **8. Reporting (if required)**

- If the behaviour crosses legal thresholds (e.g. threats, harassment, or safety risks), NZIODA may involve relevant authorities such as:
  - Police
  - Safeguarding agencies
  - Yachting New Zealand (for breaches of broader sailing community conduct codes)

### **Strategies for Parents:**

**Practice Self-Awareness:**

Reflect on your behavior and be mindful of how your actions may impact your child and the team. Recognize the importance of fostering a positive and supportive environment.

**Communicate Constructively:**

If you have concerns or feedback, communicate with coaches and NZIODA contacts constructively and respectfully. Approach discussions with the best interests of the team and individual sailors in mind.

**Model Good Sportsmanship:**

Demonstrate good sportsmanship by cheering for all sailors, respecting officials' decisions, and acknowledging opponents' efforts. Be a positive role model for your child and others.

**Give Space to Coaches:**

Trust the coaching staff to do their job. Avoid coaching on the water or on land or undermining the authority of the coaching staff. Allow them to guide and mentor the sailors without interference.

**The Impact on Sailors:****Performance Pressure:**

Overly demanding or critical parents can subject their children to intense performance pressure, hindering their ability to enjoy the sport and undermining the positive benefits of participation. The implication here is that it takes the fun out of the sport and puts unneeded stress on the sailor.

**Burnout and Dropout Rates:**

Excessive parental pressure and negative interactions can contribute to burnout and higher dropout rates among young sailors. The emotional toll may lead sailors to disengage from sports altogether.

**Stress and Anxiety:**

Children may experience heightened stress and anxiety when faced with the expectations and reactions of their parents. This can adversely affect their mental well-being and overall enjoyment of the sport.

**Impact on Team Dynamics:**

Negative parental behaviour can spill over into the team dynamic, creating a divisive atmosphere among parents and detracting from the collective enjoyment of the sport.

-ENDS-

**Appendix 1****Definitions**

**Abuse** - a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person or persons. It can take the form of physical, psychological, or sexual abuse. Abuse can be a single act or repeated acts and can be unintentional or deliberate. Abuse often involves criminal acts.

**Sexual abuse** - involves forcing, enticing, or coercing someone to take part in sexual activities, whether the vulnerable person is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, or non-contact activities, such as involving a person in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities.

**Discriminatory abuse** – abuse motivated by a person’s age, race, nationality, sex, sexual orientation, disability, or other personal characteristic.

**Harassment** - is unwanted conduct, which has the purpose or effect of violating an individual’s dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that individual.

**Bullying - (including cyber bullying)** - unwanted behaviour or misuse of power that undermines, causes.

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