

## Officials – Code of Conduct

Officiating (refereeing, umpiring, team managing etc) can be a thoroughly enjoyable and rewarding experience. Officials/referees/team managers have enormous influence over athletes/members, coaches and other in a game or event. Performing the duties of an 'official' can be a way of remaining actively involved in volleyball as a non-player and further develop personal skills and technical knowledge.

The role of officiating has changed considerably over the years. Increasingly, officials are facing ethical issues, particularly responding to harassment in sport. As officials are often placed in the unenviable position of alienating 50% of the players and spectators at any given time, they can be subject to criticism, abuse and harassment.

Therefore it is essential that officials operate professionally and with integrity in their relationships with those who participate in or associate with the sport of volleyball.

In addition to Volleyball Victoria's General Code of Conduct, as an official, referee or team manager in any activity held by or under the auspices of Australian Volleyball Federation, Volleyball Victoria, an Affiliated Association or an Affiliated Club you must meet the following requirements in regard to your conduct during any such activity or event.

It is important that there is a balance between the rights due to an official and the responsibilities an official is required to fulfill. This document will assist officials to meet the legal obligations and community expectations, ensure the safety of participants and enjoy the work they perform as an official/team manager.

### **From an ethical perspective, every official has the right to:**

- A safe environment free from discrimination, harassment and abuse.
- Be treated fairly and with respect and dignity by players and participants (including parents, managers, other officials, referees, club members and supporters) in carrying out the duties required of an official.
- Guidance and support from club board/committee and staff members.
- Encouragement and courtesy from the volleyball community.
- A fair process and principles of natural justice being consistently applied, should the official become the subject of or involved in a complaint, allegation or investigation within volleyball.
- Access to clearly articulated legal and moral standards and requirements through codes, policies, rules, regulations, guidelines and procedures manuals as defined by Volleyball Victoria or an Association or Club.
- Training, development and educational opportunities, so that the officials' techniques, methods and skills remain current and effective.

**From an ethical perspective, every official is responsible for:**

- Providing a safe environment for players and participants (including coaches, parents, managers, opponents, administrators and support personnel) that is free of discrimination, harassment and abuse.
- Treating all players and participants fairly, with respect and dignity regardless of gender, race, place of origin, athletic potential, colour, sexual orientation, religion, political beliefs, socio-economic status and other conditions.
- Refraining from any behaviour that may bring volleyball or state, association or club into disrepute.
- Being acutely aware of the power they have as an official over the game and the trust the players place in them. Avoiding any situations with players that could be construed as compromising, inappropriate or intimate.
- Conducting yourself with integrity and honour both on and off the court and being a positive role model for others.
- Assisting in the development of volleyball's standards, rules, regulations, codes, by-laws and policies encouraging players and participants knowledge of them. Officials must promote both the letter and spirit of the rules.
- Not using their involvement with the sport, a member association or club to promote their own beliefs, behaviours or practices where these are inconsistent with those of volleyball.
- Understanding and complying with Victoria's child protection requirements.
- Providing feedback to players, coaches and other participants in a professional manner that is sensitive to their needs.
- Maintaining and improving skills and qualifications through development, training and education opportunities.

**From an ethical perspective, every 'Official' is also responsible for:**

- Being consistent, impartial, objective and courteous in applying all infractions.
- Using common sense to ensure the 'spirit of the game' is not lost by overcalling violations.

### In summary:

1. Treat all player/participants with respect at all times. Be honest and consistent with them. Honour all promises and commitments, both verbal and written.
2. Accept responsibility for all actions taken. Exercise reasonable care to prevent injury by ensuring player play within the rules.
3. Respect the rights, dignity and worth of players, fellow coaches, referees, officials, parents/guardians and spectators regardless of their gender, ability, cultural background, religion, political beliefs, socio-economic status and other conditions.
4. Refrain from any form of harassment, abuse or discrimination towards others.
5. Be impartial and maintain integrity in your relationship with other officials, players and coaches.
6. Avoid situations that may lead to a conflict of interest.
7. Not be in a position of individual and unsupervised contact with players under 18 years of age.
8. Be a positive role model that promotes the positive aspects of sport and of volleyball by maintaining the highest standards of personal conduct and projecting a favourable image of the sport of volleyball and of officiating at all times.
9. Be courteous, respectful and open to discussion and interaction. Involve the player or participant in decisions that affect them.
10. Show concern and caution towards ill and injured athletes. Enforce the blood rule and apply procedures regarding ill or injured players according to the rules.
11. Be aware of the FIVB Rules of the Game, AVF and Volleyball Victoria, affiliated Associations and Clubs rules, policies and guidelines. Understand your responsibility if you breach, or are aware of any breaches of their Codes of Behaviour.
12. Conduct yourself in a responsible manner relating to language, temper and punctuality.
13. Adhere to the Volleyball Victoria Anti-Doping Policy, Alcohol Policy and Smoke Free Policy. Actively discourage the use of performance enhancing drugs, the use of alcohol and tobacco and illegal substances. Abstain from the use of tobacco and the consumption of alcoholic beverages when officiating or whilst in uniform.
14. Make no public comments or media announcements without prior approval from your Tournament Director or Event Coordinator.
15. Refrain from using obscene, offensive or insulting language and/or making obscene gestures which may insult players, coaches, other officials or spectators.
16. Respect other officials and always act in a manner characterised by courtesy and good faith.
17. Do not do anything which adversely affects or reflects on or discredits the game of volleyball, Volleyball Victoria, the AVF, or any team, competition, tournament, sponsor, official supplier or licensee, including but not limited to, any illegal act or any act of dishonesty or fraud.

### Related Documents:

Please reference and observe the principles of the **Child Safe Code of Conduct**