

# **Volunteers and Officials Code of Ethics Guidelines**

## **Integrity, Equality and Dignity**

Athletics Ireland values the contribution, commitment and skills of all its volunteers and officials. It is committed to ensuring a safe and fair environment for all. This is accomplished by adherence to the World Athletics & AAI Code of Ethics.

A volunteer and official is defined as a person engaged in voluntary activities on behalf of the Athletic Association of Ireland, its regions, counties and clubs. Volunteers and officials participate in coaching and administration at club, county, regional and national level. It is acknowledged that volunteers and officials give freely of their time and are required to follow the guidelines set out in this Code of Ethics.

Athletics Ireland is committed to the principles of non-discrimination on the following grounds; Gender, Civil Status, Family Status, Sexual Orientation, Religious Belief, Age, Disability, Race, Ethnicity and Membership of the Traveller Community.

Athletics Ireland recognises that each volunteer and official has a unique contribution to make and seeks to develop the full potential of all its volunteers and officials. Athletics Ireland is committed to a policy of treating all volunteers and officials with dignity and respect and providing a safe environment which is free from harm including all forms of bullying, harassment.

Bullying and all forms of harassment are unacceptable forms of behaviour which:

- Can be illegal
- Will be regarded as gross misconduct

All complaints of bullying and harassment will be taken seriously, dealt with promptly, sensitively and in a confidential manner, consistent with ensuring fairness and the principles of natural justice. A complaint of bullying, harassment or sexual harassment may, following investigation, lead to disciplinary action and/or referral to the statutory authorities.

## **Complaints Procedure**

Bullying and harassment are unacceptable forms of behaviour which can seriously affect the well-being of volunteers and officials. They will not be tolerated, whether they are aimed at other employee's / clients / customers / associates / volunteers of Athletics Ireland or members of the public. Complaints about such behaviour will be dealt with under Athletics Ireland's complaints and disciplinary procedures.

There is both an informal and formal approach to dealing with complaints.

### **Informal Procedure**

It is often preferable for all concerned that complaints of harassment or bullying are dealt with informally whenever possible. This is likely to produce solutions, which are speedy, effective and minimise embarrassment and risk of breaching confidentiality.

- Thus, in the first instance, a person who believes that they are the subject of harassment or bullying should ask the person responsible to stop the offensive behaviour. When the action does not result in a cessation of the harassment or bullying, or where a more serious incident has arisen, formal procedure should be followed.
- It is recognised that it may not always be practical to use the informal procedure particularly where the harassment or bullying is serious or where the people involved are at a different level in the association. In such instances the person should use the formal mechanisms set out below.

## **Volunteers and Officials Code of Ethics Guidelines**

### **Formal Procedure**

Where the formal complaints have been made, the party should contact people listed below as soon as possible. If this is inappropriate, then the party should contact a senior member of management. The person making the complaint will be required to put their allegation in writing. The Athletics Ireland Complaints and Disciplinary process will apply.

The persons who should be contacted are:

- a) CEO
- b) Complaints & Disciplinary Officer

- In the interests of natural justice, the alleged harasser will be made aware of the nature of the complaint, his or her right to representation, will be given at every opportunity to respond to the allegations made.
- Whilst it is desirable to maintain the utmost confidentiality, once the investigations of an issue begins it may be necessary to interview other individuals.
- When the investigation has been completed both parties will be informed as to whether or not the complaint has been upheld.
- From the findings of the investigation, disciplinary procedures may be invoked.
- All complaints received will be treated seriously, confidentially and dealt with as soon as is practicable. Strict confidentiality and proper discretion will be maintained as far as possible, in any necessary consultation to safeguard both parties from innuendo and harmful gossip.
- The person to whom the complaint is made will maintain a record of all relevant discussions, which take place during the course of the investigation.

### **Appeals Mechanism**

On receipt of the investigators report either party may appeal the investigation process and/or outcome. The appeal should be made in writing within 10 days of the issue of the report, outlining the reasons for the appeal. The Athletics Ireland appeals process as part of the Complaints and Disciplinary dispute resolution process will apply.

# Volunteers and Officials Code of Ethics Guidelines

## Definitions

### **Racism**

Demonstrating prejudice, discrimination, or antagonism directed against a person or people on the basis of their membership of a particular racial or ethnic group, typically one that is a minority or marginalized.

### **Bullying**

Bullying in the workplace is defined as 'repeated inappropriate behaviour, direct or indirect, whether verbal, physical or otherwise, conducted by one or more persons against another or others, at the place of work and/or in the course of employment, which could reasonably be regarded as undermining the individual's right to dignity at work'.

An isolated incident of the behaviour in this definition may be an affront to dignity but as a once-off incident is not considered to be bullying.

Bullying may take subtle or insidious forms, which gradually wear a person down over a period of time. Bullying often takes place where there are no witnesses and the victim is afraid to make a complaint because they fear they may not be believed or that the bullying may get worse. In some cases, witnesses to incidents of bullying may be afraid to come forward.

A pattern of the following behaviours are examples of types of bullying;

- Exclusion with negative consequences
- Verbal abuse/insults
- Being treated less favourably
- Intrusion- pestering, spying or stalking
- Menacing behaviour
- Intimidation
- Aggression
- Undermining behaviour
- Excessive monitoring
- Humiliation
- Withholding work-related information
- Repeatedly manipulation
- Blame for things beyond the persons control
- Making it difficult to have access to information
- Aggression/Aggressive Behaviour
- Not giving credit for work contribution
- Intimidation and threats in general
- Use of bad language to colleagues or management

\*Work is defined to include volunteer and officials' activities at competitions/coaching/meetings

## **Volunteers and Officials Code of Ethics Guidelines**

### **Definitions**

#### **Harassment**

Harassment is defined as any form of unwanted conduct related to any of the discriminatory grounds which has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity and creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for the person.

#### **A single incident may constitute harassment.**

The harassment has to be based on the relevant characteristic of the person, as outlined in the Equality Act 2004. The nine grounds are; Gender, Civil status, Family Status, Sexual Orientation, Religious Belief, Age, Disability, Race and Membership of the Traveller Community.

Harassment in this instance means harassing someone because of belonging to or perceived as belonging to any one or a number of these grounds. The following are some examples of harassment, which may occur and specifically relate to one of the grounds mentioned above;

- Verbal harassment- jokes, comments, ridicule
- Written harassment- including faxes, text messages, email/notices/written offensive articles/social media
- Physical harassment- threatening, pushing, or any form of assault
- Visual displays- posters emblems, or badges
- Isolation or exclusion from social activities

#### **Sexual Harassment**

Sexual harassment is defined as any form of unwanted verbal, non-verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature which has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity and creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for the person.

#### **A single incident may constitute sexual harassment.**

Examples of this type of harassment include:

- Sexual gestures.
- Displaying sexual suggestive objects, pictures, and calendars or sending suggestive and pornographic correspondence.
- Unwelcome sexual comments and jokes.
- Unwelcome physical conduct such as pinching, unnecessary touching, etc.
- Leering or sexual suggestive gestures

#### **Victimisation**

Victimisation as a result of reporting harassment or bullying or for those who cooperate with procedures of an investigation will also be regarded as a serious breach of discipline.

## Volunteers and Officials Code of Ethics Guidelines

### Athletics Ireland Volunteers and Officials Code of Conduct

Volunteers and officials are obliged to:

- Act fairly, honestly and without malice and with dignity towards all participants and stakeholders.
- Consider the wellbeing and safety of participants before the development of performance.
- Develop an appropriate working relationship with participants, based on mutual trust and respect.
- Make sure all activities are appropriate to the age, ability and the experience of those taking part.
- Promote the positive aspects of the sport (e.g. fair play)
- Display consistently high standards of behaviour.
- Follow all guidelines laid down by the national governing body and the club.
- Never exert undue influence over participants to gain personal benefit or reward.
- Never condone rule violations, rough play or the use of prohibited substances.
- Encourage participants to value their performances and not just results.
- Encourage and guide participants to accept responsibility for their own performance and behaviour.
- Never use foul or inappropriate language.
- Sports leaders or officials must never abuse their position of authority by engaging in any form of sexual relations with children or vulnerable adults.
- Read, understand and put into practice the Code of Ethics for Athletics.

I have read and accept the above code of conduct for volunteers and officials.

Signed:

---

Name:

---

Date:

---