



Notice: Policy for Safeguarding Participants in Amateur Golf in South Africa from Harassment, Abuse and Poor Practice

Dear Member & Guest

The GolfRSA Safeguarding Policy (“**the Policy**”) is fully in effect as of 26 March 2024 and this Club, its Members and Guests are obliged to comply fully with that Policy. GolfRSA is obliged by bodies such as the Royal and Ancient (“R&A”), the International Golf Federation (“IGF”) and SASCOC to implement and enforce a Safeguarding Policy. As custodian of the amateur game in South Africa, GolfRSA takes this obligation very seriously. A copy the Policy can be downloaded in full at: www.golfrsa.com/safeguarding/

Introduction

1. The Policy applies to all Provincial Unions, Club or events held under the auspices of GolfRSA, as well as the South African Golf Development Board (“SAGDB”) and the South African Disabled Golf Association (“SADGA”).
2. Sadly, abuse is prevalent in society and often it is the most vulnerable people that are commonly victims of abuse. Safeguarding is a vital process that protects children and vulnerable adults from harm, abuse, and neglect. Every person should live their lives without harm, no matter the age, gender, ethnicity or religion. It is vital that every child and vulnerable adult is kept safe.
3. Harassment and abuse can have significant long-term negative impacts on athlete participation and performance as well as general health and well-being, particularly if the athlete has not been able to disclose their experiences or access support. GolfRSA is therefore committed to safeguarding and protecting all who participate in the sport of golf from harassment and abuse and ensuring that all participants are treated with respect and dignity.
4. The purpose of the Policy is to ensure that golfers and others taking part in golf can do so without fear of harassment or abuse. The key objectives of the Policy are to:
 - Ensure everyone in golf understands that all forms of harassment and abuse are unacceptable and will not be tolerated;
 - Enable anyone who has witnessed or experienced harassment or abuse within golf to report the incident without fear of victimisation or retaliation;
 - Ensure an appropriate and coordinated response to any incidents of harassment or abuse within or connected to participation in golf, irrespective of whether they arise at local, national or international level; &

- Implement effective measures that minimise the likelihood of incidents of harassment and abuse arising.

5. Everyone connected to the sport of golf should know how to keep children and vulnerable adults safe. They should have appropriate learning opportunities to develop and maintain the necessary attitudes, skills and knowledge to do this.
6. GolfRSA recognises that whilst any participant can be subjected to harassment and abuse, certain groups may be more vulnerable to harassment and abuse such as:
 - (a) Children;
 - (b) Young Adults;
 - (c) People with a Mental and/or a Physical Disability;
 - (d) Women;
 - (e) Elderly Persons; &
 - (f) Other Vulnerable Adults.

How to Report Harm or Abuse

7. If a complaint of harassment or abuse is perpetrated by or against a child or a vulnerable adult, any action taken must be in accordance with the GolfRSA Safeguarding Policy.
8. Anyone can report an incident of harassment or abuse. Mechanisms for receiving the information are as follows:
 - (a) In writing using the GolfRSA template form;
 - (b) By phone, in person or email to a Provincial Union, Club or event Safeguarding Officers; &
 - (c) It is noted here that GolfRSA will have a confidential reporting landing page on its website [please see www.golfrsa.com/safeguarding/] and this shall go directly to both a male and female National Safeguarding Officer at GolfRSA Head Office.
9. Any complaints pursuant to the Policy received by GolfRSA will be referred to the GolfRSA National Safeguarding Officers, who are the first point of contact for complaints and concerns under this procedure.
10. The GolfRSA Safeguarding Officers will make an initial assessment of the complaint to determine the nature of the concern and whether the matter relates to a participant under GolfRSA jurisdiction. If the complaint is believed to be a criminal offence, the GolfRSA Safeguarding Officers will refer the matter to the Police and other relevant authorities and/or regulatory bodies without delay.
11. If the complaint is not considered to be a matter for the police, the GolfRSA Safeguarding Officers would refer the matter to the GolfRSA Case Management Group for action and the necessary internal sanction or rectification.

