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## **CHILD SAFEGUARDING POLICY AND PROCEDURES OF THE CYPRUS GYMNASTICS FEDERATION (CGF)**

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## Contents

Cyprus Gymnastics Federation (CGF) child safeguarding policy.....	3
1. Child safeguarding statement.....	3
2. General principles.....	4
3. General provisions.....	4
4. Recruitment procedures.....	6
Pre-recruitment.....	6
During recruitment.....	7
Post-recruitment.....	9
5. Case-reporting procedure.....	10
A. Sexual abuse.....	10
Other forms of violence and abuse (including bullying):.....	11
Reporting obligations of the safeguarding officer.....	13
6. General provisions on the CGF Code of Ethics and Conduct.....	14
Code of behaviour of children in gymnastics.....	18
Code of Behaviour for Parents/Legal Guardians and Spectators at Gymnastics.....	19
Code of Conduct for Coaches/Staff in Gymnastics.....	20
7. Legal framework and definitions.....	21
Legal framework.....	21
Definition of child sexual abuse (Cyprus legislation).....	22
The Council of Europe’s definitions of abuse.....	23
Bibliography.....	25
APPENDIX.....	27
Reporting forms.....	27
SEXUAL ABUSE REPORTING FORM (CSA).....	27
SUSPICION OF CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE REPORTING FORM (SCSA).....	28
ANY OTHER CHILD ABUSE REPORTING FORM (CA).....	29

# Cyprus Gymnastics Federation (CGF) child safeguarding policy

The Cyprus Gymnastics Federation (CGF) adopted on [to be filled by the CGF] 2026 the CGF child safeguarding policy, as part of the implementation of the Cyprus Sport Organisation (CSO) Action Plan for Healthy Sports, which includes the CSO's strategy for taking measures within the framework of the principle of good governance, with the aim of: (a) ensuring the well-being, safety, protection, and fair and equal treatment of athletes, (b) preventing and addressing bullying in sports, (c) preventing offences provided in the provisions of the Criminal Code (CyLaw 2016b), the Law on Prevention and Combating of Sexual Abuse, Sexual Exploitation of Children and the Depiction of Child Sexual Abuse Material (CyLaw 2014), the Law on Equal Treatment of Men and Women in Employment and Vocational Training (CyLaw 2002), and the provisions of other relevant laws (hereafter, the Action Plan for Healthy Sports).

This child protection policy consists of:

1. Child safeguarding statement
2. General principles
3. General provisions
4. Specific provisions on safer recruitment
5. Specific provisions on case reporting
6. General provisions on the CGF Code of Ethics and Conduct
7. Legal framework and definitions

All codes, regulations and provisions developed by the CGF in compliance with the CSO Action Plan for Healthy Sports and this document will also form part of the CGF child safeguarding policy.

## 1. Child safeguarding statement

The Cyprus Gymnastics Federation (CGF), hereby recognises that all children (defined as any person under the age of 18), who play or participate in gymnastics (artistic gymnastics, rhythmic gymnastics, gymnastics for all, acrobatic gymnastics, trampoline and aerobics) must have the opportunity to participate in an enjoyable, safe and inclusive environment, free from any form of violence and abuse, including sexual abuse and bullying. This is the responsibility of everyone involved in gymnastics. The CGF acknowledges its responsibility to prevent all forms of violence and abuse, including sexual abuse and bullying, against children in sport, and to protect victims of such behaviours and/or activities. To this end, a comprehensive safeguarding framework is needed.

“Safeguarding children” refers to “the actions we take to ensure all children are safe from harm” (Council of Europe 2024: 12). It is the set of measures, procedures, regulations and actions taken by any organisation to minimise the possibility of abuse. A child is “any person under the age of 18 years” (Council of Europe 2007).

Acknowledging its key role in safeguarding children, the CGF is committed to taking all the necessary measures to eliminate all forms of violence and abuse, including sexual abuse and bullying, against children.

The CGF must ensure the well-being of all children and the existence of a safe, healthy, enjoyable and inclusive environment in gymnastics in which they can participate and reach their full potential, whether at an amateur or professional/competitive level.

The CGF acknowledges the need for reinforced protection for children from vulnerable groups and condemns all forms of discrimination. The CGF also recognises the importance of incorporating children's voices in decisions that affect them.

The provisions of this policy are applicable to all those who are part of the CGF's organisational structure; registered sports clubs; gymnastics athletes; coaches; managers; referees; parents/legal guardians and, in general, all persons and entities that carry out sporting activities at the national level, being federated, as well as any administrator, manager, or person belonging to any CGF group or any other entity obliged to comply with the CGF statutes (hereafter, the relevant stakeholders).

The relevant stakeholders share responsibility for safeguarding children in gymnastics.

This policy covers all children who are involved in, or otherwise impacted by, the CGF's activities in any way.

## 2. General principles

The well-being, safety, protection, fair and equal treatment of children is a priority for our federation. This principle guides our efforts to enhance their enjoyment and performance in gymnastics. The best interest of the child is a priority and will be assessed and considered in all actions or decisions affecting children in the CGF. In applying this principle, the age, gender, background and needs of the child, as well as their views on a given situation and any other relevant characteristics or factors, shall all be taken into consideration.

We acknowledge that all children have a right to be protected from all forms of violence and abuse, including sexual abuse and bullying, regardless of their age, gender, disability, cultural background, language, race, religious beliefs or sexual orientation. They also have the right to participate in gymnastics in an enjoyable and inclusive environment. However, it is acknowledged that children are not the only group at risk. Similar care should be taken for other groups who may be impacted by extreme power differentials such as, but not limited to, people with disabilities, or migrant populations.

Harm to children and young people's mental and physical health or development shall be prevented.

Children have the right to be heard and to participate in those decisions that affect them. In applying this principle, the age, gender, background and needs of the child, as well as their views on a given situation and any other relevant characteristics or factors, shall all be taken into consideration.

In implementing its safeguarding obligations, including the reporting and investigation of cases, the CGF shall co-operate with the CSO, the law enforcement and judicial authorities, and the Social Welfare Services, as well as those relevant national and international sporting bodies.

## 3. General provisions

All suspicions and allegations of violence or abuse, including sexual abuse and bullying, shall be taken seriously and dealt with promptly and handled with the utmost care and diligence. This will be done in accordance with international child safeguarding standards, the legislative and policy framework of the Republic of Cyprus, the provisions of this policy and the statutes, procedures and regulations of the CGF.

All adults in regular contact with children in the CGF are deemed as to be in a position of trust, power or influence over the children. Those adults in the circle of trust of children have a reinforced obligation to protect them against all forms of violence and abuse, including sexual abuse and bullying, either within or outside of gymnastics.

All relevant stakeholders have the obligation to report all cases of bullying, sexual abuse and violence against children to the relevant statutory and/or federative authorities in accordance with the applicable legislation and the procedures established by this policy.

The CGF is committed to taking all necessary steps and action to ensure the well-being and protection of children involved in the CGF. Therefore:

- The CGF will check the background of professionals and volunteers in regular contact with children;
- The CGF will systematically educate all relevant stakeholders and children on safeguarding;
- All disclosures, incidents and concerns of abuse will be taken seriously and dealt with promptly with due care, diligence and confidentiality in accordance with the relevant legislative and policy procedures;
- The CGF will monitor the implementation of the measures it has adopted to ensure the well-being and protection of children and will make all the necessary adjustments based on the legislation or any other changes that may arise;
- The CGF shall designate a safeguarding officer (SO) in respect of every CGF activity or event involving children. The SO is responsible for all children involved in the activity or event and shall ensure that the provisions of the present policy and the child safeguarding measures are in place, in respect of the activity or event in question, and they are communicated to all children involved as well as their parents or legal guardians. The communication with children shall be done in a child sensitive, age-appropriate manner in accordance with the principles set out in this policy.

## 4. Recruitment procedures

Most people wanting to work or volunteer with children are dedicated individuals who want the very best for those in their care (Council of Europe 2025: 7). Safer recruitment aims to ensure children are safe in sport, minimise risks and promote a culture of safety and accountability. It is especially important, therefore, that individuals who have access to children are suitable to work with them. Recruiting individuals who are suitable to work or volunteer with children is a key strand in efforts to meet the best interests of the child and to safeguard children from harm and promote their rights (ibid.)

This recruitment procedure applies to recruiting staff and/or volunteers in regular contact with children. More specifically, this procedure applies to, among others, the recruitment of coaches, assistant coaches, trainers, safeguarding officers, physiotherapists, referees, dieticians, medical and paramedical staff, mentors, and bus and vehicle drivers who regularly transport children.

While this recruitment procedure is aimed at selecting suitable individuals that will interact with children, it should be noted that similar care should be taken in recruiting individuals for other groups who may be impacted by extreme power differentials such as, but not limited to, people with disabilities, or migrant populations (Council of Europe 2025: 5).

In respecting the rights of the candidates our federation is committed to undertaking the safer recruitment process with fairness, transparency, equality and protection of privacy and personal data for all candidates for the role.

### Pre-recruitment

#### Information to be included in the job vacancy

- Clearly describe the role and duties/responsibilities of the post
- State the qualifications, skills and experience required for the post.
- Ask the candidate to provide an application form and/or CV and a covering letter. Candidates shall disclose all previous organisations where they have worked and/or volunteered.
- Mention in the job vacancy that “successful candidates will be requested to provide a certificate of clean criminal record from the Cyprus Police (application for issuance of a certificate of criminal record pursuant to Law 73 (I) of 2004, Article 10 (CyLaw 2004)) and a certificate of non-inclusion on the list of convicted sex offenders (application for issuance of certificate relating to the Prevention and Combating of Sexual Abuse, Sexual Exploitation of Children and Depiction of Child Sexual Abuse Material pursuant to Law 91 (I) of 2014), Article 22(6) (CyLaw 2014).” This information must be submitted before the employment or volunteering relationship with the federation/club begins, as it is a prerequisite for formalising the agreement. If the candidate is a non-Cypriot who lawfully has resided in the Republic of Cyprus for at least six (6) months, Article 10 of Law 73 (I) of 2004 applies regarding the issuance of clean criminal record certificates. However, since Article 22(6) does not include a similar provision regarding non-Cypriots in relation to obtaining a certificate of non-registration on the list of convicted sex offenders they shall contact the police for guidelines on how to obtain these papers. The responsibility for obtaining a criminal record check/criminal record

certificate lies with the individual. The individual shall re-submit the certificates to the CGF annually as part of the safeguarding children policy of the federation.

- Add the following information: all previous employers of the candidate may be contacted as part of the CGF's safer recruitment process. All information sought will be used in accordance with the National Data Protection (2001 Law (Law 125(I)/2018) (CyLaw 2018), as amended and Regulation (EU) 2016/679 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 April 2016, on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data.

#### Information regarding reference letters - to be included in the vacancy announcement

- Request at least two references from people who are not relatives of the candidate.
- Mention that one of these should be from a previous employer in sport, ideally one who carries out professional or volunteer work with children.
- The employment references must be detailed, up-to-date and include information on the candidate's conduct, disciplinary record, suitability and ability to work with children, as well as knowledge and understanding of child protection/ safeguarding (this must go beyond a basic employment verification check).

#### During recruitment

##### Before the interview

- Organise a job interview with candidates before reaching a decision.
- Contact the referee(s) to confirm the information provided in the reference letter. These should be verified with the referee/organisation providing them. If references are not available to cover the full employment period, then at least one character reference should also be obtained and verified. If any concerns arise, contact the federation's safeguarding officer.
- Contact previous employers and organisations where the candidate has previously worked and/or volunteered. Candidates should be informed that all previous employers may be contacted as part of the safer recruitment process, as well as informed about the information that will be sought from these and, why and how this will be used.
- Prepare your questions in advance to ensure you obtain the information you need about the candidate and their professional and/or volunteer experience. Some of these questions should give the candidate an opportunity to explain how they have handled various incidents in the past, as well as how they would handle some hypothetical scenarios.

##### During the interview

- A face-to-face interview should be carried out for all shortlisted applicants to assess their ability to carry out the role, based on transparent, justifiable and objective criteria. The interview provides an opportunity to confirm and expand upon information provided in the job application and/or the candidate's CV.

It is important that, through the various questions you ask the candidate, you form a clear view of their approach to, and attitude towards, the safeguarding children.

Example of a hypothetical scenario:

*It is the end of the training session, and as you leave, you see a child talking to a man in a car with the window down. You know that this man is not the child's parent or legal guardian. What would you do?*

You would expect the candidate to respond as follows: *I will approach the child and ask where their parents are. I will also ask the man who he is and if he needs help. I will stay with the child until their parents come to collect them and tell the parents what I just saw.*

- Opportunity for self-disclosure – to allow a candidate the opportunity to confidentially disclose any relevant convictions, investigations, or disciplinary sanctions. For privacy reasons, this should only be carried out with shortlisted or successful candidates.

#### Hiring a professional or volunteer

- When hiring a professional/employee or volunteer, consider all information obtained from the application, interview and communication with individuals who provided references.
- Successful candidate(s) should be informed that the offer is contingent on satisfactory completion of full safer recruitment procedures.

#### Further guidelines for the assessment of applications

- Ensure that each application is assessed by more than one federation staff member.
- Ask to see an original identity document/passport to identify the person making an application.
- Information gathered during safer recruitment and criminal record screening is sensitive and the individual's right to privacy must be respected. Data gathered should only be used for the intended purpose and should never be used to discriminate against someone unfairly (Council of Europe, 2025, p.8).

#### Recruitment

Prior to the recruitment, the selected candidate must provide:

- proof of ID, any degrees, certificates and diplomas used in their application;
- a certificate of a clean criminal record and a certificate of non-inclusion on the list of convicted sex offenders,
- a birth certificate check – to confirm whether a candidate has changed their name since birth (criminal record checks should be conducted for current and previous names);
- a signature on the policy as proof of their knowledge and acceptance of their safeguarding duties and responsibilities.

### Post-recruitment

- The selected candidate must undergo an induction process and a probationary period involving more supervision and more targeted support for carrying out their duties and responsibilities.
- The recruited person (and any professional/paid worker or volunteer) must submit the following on an annual basis: a) a certificate of non-inclusion on the sex offenders list; and b) a clean criminal record certificate.
- Arrangements must be made for the selected candidate to participate in basic child safeguarding training in Gymnastics as soon as possible, if they have not received such training, or if more than three years have passed since their last relevant training. Areas of training and education shall cover as a minimum:
  - definitions and examples of violence and abuse, including sexual abuse and bullying, and poor practice in sport;
  - indicators of violence and abuse, including sexual abuse and bullying;
  - risk factors for violence and abuse, including sexual abuse and bullying in sport;
  - recognising and avoiding risk situations;
  - the position's minimum safeguarding responsibilities;
  - reporting procedures for disclosures, incidents, or (suspected) concerns of violence and abuse, including sexual abuse and bullying or poor practice within and outside the organisation;
  - the support available to individuals during and following a disclosure, incident, or concern of violence and abuse, including sexual abuse and bullying or poor practice and how they can access this.

## 5. Case-reporting procedure

### A. Sexual abuse

In the Cypriot legal system (CyLaw 2014), a complaint about child sexual abuse must be made to the police by the person that becomes aware of the abuse (Article 30 of the Law on Prevention and Combating of Sexual Abuse, Sexual Exploitation of Children and Depiction of Child Sexual Abuse Material of 2014):

“Anyone who fails to report a case that comes to their attention, where a child or a child with an intellectual or mental disability is involved in offences provided for in Articles 6 to 10 and 15 of this Law, or does not forward a relevant report, commits an offence and, if convicted, is subject to a prison sentence of up to fifteen (15) years, a fine of up to twenty thousand euros (€20,000), or both penalties”.

Cases of domestic violence involving a child must also be reported to the police.

There are three (3) ways to report to the police instances and/or suspicions/concerns in relation to child sexual abuse (Table 1).

**Table 1 Child sexual abuse types of reporting**

	<b>Type of reporting</b>	<b>What has happened</b>	<b>What to do</b>	<b>How to report to the police</b>	<b>Type of form to be completed (see Appendix)</b>
<b>1.</b>	Disclosure	A child discloses the abuse to an adult	The person that the child discloses to, must report it directly to the police.	Call 22808442 and then go to the police and hand in the report form	Child sexual abuse report form (CSA)
<b>2.</b>	Incident	Somebody witnesses an incident of a child being sexually abused	The witness must report it directly to the police.	Call 22808442 and then go to the police and hand in the report form	Child sexual abuse report form (CSA)
<b>3.</b>	Concern	Somebody recognises signs of sexual abuse in a child, or hears about sexual abuse from others, and therefore suspects sexual abuse.	The person must report their concerns directly to the police.	Call 22808442 and then go to the police and hand in the report form	Suspicion of child sexual abuse report form (SCSA)

**It is important to know:**

- ✓ If you are unsure or have any questions, ask the police by calling 22808442 (national contact number). A police officer will provide you with guidelines.
- ✓ You must report to the police and record what you have been told/witnessed. The record must be as accurate as possible. Try to record: the exact words the child used, their body language/gestures, their emotional state and their behavioural changes.
- ✓ After the child-sexual abuse disclosure, incident or concern has been reported to the Police the safeguarding officer of the Cyprus Sport Organisation (CSO), Mrs Stephanie Wheeler, must be informed by calling 22897248.
- ✓ It is a criminal offence punishable by imprisonment and/or fine and/or both under Article 30 of Law 91(I)/2014 (CyLaw 2014), not to report incidents and/or concerns of sexual abuse of children.

**Other forms of violence and abuse (including bullying):**

In cases of other forms of abuse (non-sexual), the general principle is that the person who becomes aware of the abuse should complete the child abuse report form (CA form in Appendix) and report it to the federation's safeguarding officer, who in turn proceeds with the necessary steps, including informing the police or other competent authorities, where this is required.

If the applicable internal safeguarding procedures of the federation or the Cyprus Sport Organisation (CSO) clearly define the reporting flow, then those procedures should be followed.

However, where no specific procedure is provided, action may be taken on the basis of vital interest, particularly where there is an immediate or serious risk to the safety, physical or mental integrity of a child or another vulnerable person.

Who can be informed in addition to the police?

In addition to the police, the safeguarding officer may inform:

- any other competent authority responsible for child protection or welfare, where this is necessary to safeguard the individual concerned;
- the Cyprus Sport Organisation, insofar as this is required for the CSO to exercise its statutory supervisory and safeguarding responsibilities.

Such disclosure must be limited to what is strictly necessary and properly documented.

The federation shall inform the Cyprus Sport Organisation, provided that:

- the disclosure is necessary and proportionate;
- it serves a legitimate safeguarding purpose;
- it is based on either:
  - the CSO's statutory competence to establish safeguarding procedures; or
  - the vital interests of the child or person at risk.

Key takeaway

Safeguarding procedures apply first. Where procedures are silent and there is a real risk, action may lawfully be taken on the basis of vital interest, including informing the Cyprus Sport Organisation, in a proportionate and well-documented manner.

**Box 1**

**How to respond to any form of child abuse**

- Keep calm and do not show shock or disapproval.
- Listen carefully to what the child says.
- Assure the child that speaking out was the right thing to do and emphasise that what happened is not their fault.
- Tell the child that what happened to them should never have occurred.
- Let the child freely recall what they want to say.
- Only ask questions to clarify something you may not have understood.
- Use open-ended questions allowing the child to unfold their own narrative about their experience. If you need to repeat a question for clarification, explain clearly and specifically why you are asking again. Otherwise, the child might think you want them to change what they already said.
- Recognise the trust that the child has in you to disclose this to you.
- Keep a detailed record of the child's account.
- Avoid making any promises that you may not be able to keep such as keeping what the child says secret.
- Establish if the child is at immediate risk of further sexual abuse and/or needs immediate care.
- Tell the child what you are going to do next; provide information on other sources of help such as child helplines.
- Pass on the report to the designated person with responsibility for child protection in the sports organisation, as soon as possible. If they are not available, ensure that you pass information on to statutory agencies who can take action to investigate the allegations and ensure the child's safety. Take their advice on who should contact the child's parents.

### Reporting obligations of the safeguarding officer

The safeguarding officer of your federation is responsible for undertaking specific duties for the management of child-abuse reports (Table 2).

*Table 2: Case-management duties of the federation's safeguarding officer*

Step	What does the federation's safeguarding officer do in terms of managing the cases reported
A	Keeps two (2) records of child-abuse reports: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. reports of child sexual abuse (disclosures, incidents and concerns) of which the safeguarding officer is aware (if, for example, they have been informed by the person reporting, by the safeguarding officer of the Cyprus Sport Organisation or by the police);</li> <li>2. reports of other forms of abuse (disclosures, incidents and concerns) that they have received from relevant stakeholders.</li> </ol>
B	Submits to the CSO a report within 15 days of the date they are informed about a case.
C	Submits to the CSO a report within one month of the date of completing the investigation of the case.

## 6. General provisions on the CGF Code of Ethics and Conduct

The CGF shall develop a Code of Ethics and Conduct in the implementation of the Action Plan for Healthy Sports. The Code of Ethics and Conduct shall integrate the provisions of the Code of Ethics and Conduct drafted by the CSO, which includes all the rules of conduct and ethics that govern the CGF based on the principles of good governance and specifically on the principle of respect for human dignity and equality – equal treatment of the individual, integrity, impartiality, transparency, and confidentiality, including children/minors and people with disabilities within the framework of fair play.

The competent body for examining the application of the Code of Ethics and Conduct and imposing the above penalties is the CSO Board of Directors.

It is noted that the CSO Board of Directors has the authority by the relevant law to delegate to any established committee, body, or institution the exercise of these competences concerning the examination of the application of the Code of Ethics and Conduct and the imposition of penalties.

In cases of non-compliance and/or violation of the Code of Conduct and Ethics by the entities funded by the CSO, the offender that is, the entity funded by the CSO is subject to the following sanctions:

- impact on the funding granted by the CSO; and/or
- impact on the provision of financial assistance granted by the CSO; and/or
- denial of grant for the use of sports facilities (and/or general sports exercise spaces) and/or
- impact depending on the violation on the net collectable percentages received by the directly funded CSO entity and on the percentage of fees, rights and burdens.

The following provisions of the CSO's Code of Ethics and Conduct are to be integrated into the CGF's Code of Ethics and Conduct.

### **CYPRUS SPORT ORGANISATION CODE OF ETHICS AND CONDUCT**

#### **A. DEFINITION AND SCOPE OF APPLICATION**

This Code of Ethics and Conduct (the "code") has been drafted by the competent body of the Cyprus Sport Organisation (the "CSO") as part of the Action Plan for Healthy Sports and includes all the rules of conduct and ethics that govern the following affected entities based on the principles of good governance and specifically on the principle of respect for human dignity and equality - equal treatment of the individual, integrity, impartiality, transparency, and confidentiality, including children/minors and people with disabilities within the framework of fair play.

Specifically, this code concerns the following.

Entities funded by the CSO, specifically sports federations and their members, sports clubs, communities, sports teams and missions, or any other entity funded by the CSO (the "affected entities").

All affected entities are obliged to obey, implement, and comply with this code, non-compliance with which will result in the appropriate penalties as referred to below for those funded by the CSO.

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## B. OBLIGATIONS

### **OBLIGATIONS OF AFFECTED ENTITIES**

#### **Preparation of the Code of Ethics and Conduct**

Unless otherwise provided in this code, those funded by the CSO are required to prepare a Code of Ethics and Conduct which must be consistent with and applied in conjunction with this code.

Specifically, the preparation of the Code of Ethics and Conduct by each affected entity must cover at least the following:

- respect for human dignity and equality (equal treatment of the individual)
- integrity/transparency
- impartiality
- conflict of interest
- confidentiality
- fair play
- use of social media

It is noted that the competent body of each interested entity will examine and/or evaluate the implementation of the Code of Ethics and Conduct that will be prepared by each interested entity and will further determine the disciplinary procedure and impose the relevant sanctions in case of non-implementation and/or violation of the Code of Ethics and Conduct prepared by the said interested entity.

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### **RESPECT FOR HUMAN DIGNITY AND EQUALITY**

This Code establishes the obligation of the affected entities to respect, safeguard, and promote fundamental human rights and to treat all people with respect and dignity, regardless of gender, ethnic origin, religion, sexual orientation, social class, or other factors, and to always act and behave with fairness and in an ethical way.

Dignity in sport requires the encouragement of ethical behaviour and the protection of an individual's health and well-being, and every individual who has the right to compete on fair terms, to enjoy equal opportunities for success, and not be subjected to abuse or humiliation. However, any practice by the affected entities that contradicts and is detrimental to the dignity and integrity of the individual, such as illegal performance-enhancing practices (doping), and any form of harassment or abuse (physical, psychological, professional, moral, sexual, or other), is strictly prohibited.

Every person should be recognised by the affected entities as unique and invaluable, with the right to equal treatment and equal opportunities to develop their abilities. Therefore, the CSO does not accept behaviours or activities that involve discrimination on the grounds of gender, race, ethnicity, religion, philosophical or political views, sexual preference, gender choice, family status, physical disabilities, or any other status.

Every affected entity subject to the provisions of this Code must not engage in any actions in violation of the principles of good governance, equality, equal treatment, proportionality, transparency, or respect for the individual, including children/minors and people with disabilities.

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## **INTEGRITY/TRANSPARENCY**

Affected entities must not seek, give, accept or offer directly or indirectly any remuneration, commission, profit, service or, benefit of any kind (overtly or covertly) connected with their activities and their electoral procedures.

For the purposes of this code, corruption constitutes any form of abuse of power for any kind of individual profit. Corrupt acts are usually intended to influence a person in the performance of their work to act dishonestly or unethically to their own benefit.

Bribery is the inducement or reward or any form of benefit offered, subjected, given, or permitted directly or indirectly to:

- influence someone wrongly;
- reward anyone for performing any function or activity to secure or obtain any commercial, contractual, regulatory or personal advantage.

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## **CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

All affected entities must avoid involvement in any conflict of interest.

A situation of potential conflict of interest arises when the opinion or decision of an affected entity performing a duty can reasonably be considered to be influenced by relationships they have, had, or intend to have with a specific person or organisation that will be affected by their opinion or decision.

Furthermore, these conflicts may arise if an affected entity has or appears to have an obvious or hidden interest that prevents them from performing their duties independently and impartially.

In such cases, the affected parties must disclose the fact and inform the relevant CSO service in writing.

Failure to inform the CSO constitutes a violation of this code.

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## **CONFIDENTIALITY**

Any information disclosed to the affected entities concerning their duties and/or activities will be considered confidential.

The obligation to respect confidentiality remains even after the termination of any relationship that makes an affected entity subject to this code.

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## **FAIR PLAY**

Fair play is the basic guiding principle for the affected entities.

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## **USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA**

The CSO values and encourages the use of social media, which must in all cases be carried out full awareness of the risks as this space is constantly changing and requires extremely careful use.

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## **3. SANCTIONS**

### **SANCTIONS FOR NON-COMPLIANCE WITH THE CODE OF CONDUCT AND ETHICS (TYPES OF SANCTIONS)**

This section includes cases of non-implementation and/or failure to comply and/or non-compliance and/or any violation of the Code of Conduct and Ethics by the affected entities.

- impact on the funding granted by the CSO; and/or
- impact on the provision of financial assistance granted by the CSO; and/or
- denial of grant for the use of sports facilities (and/or general sports exercise spaces); and/or
- impact depending on the violation on the net collectable percentages received by the directly funded CSO entity and on the percentage of fees, rights and burdens.

The CGF Code of Ethics and Conduct shall also include the following.

#### Code of behaviour of children in gymnastics

- I participate in gymnastics for enjoyment, personal development, and fun, not only winning.
- I pursue my own goals and dreams and understand that gymnastics includes both good and difficult days.
- I listen to my body and prioritise my physical and mental health above medals.
- I balance my passion for gymnastics with other important goals and interests in my life.
- I behave the way I want to be treated, always using polite language and respectful behaviour.
- I respect myself as I am and I accept everyone regardless of ability, gender, background, or any other status.
- I do not insult or mock opponents or teammates.
- I support good effort and celebrate everyone's successes
- I encourage my teammates when they make a mistake
- I acknowledge it when my teammates show respect, cooperate, or try their best to perform well
- I bring a positive attitude to training sessions and competitions.
- I take responsibility, encourage others and remain positive.
- I remember that gymnastics is about friendships, skills, physical activity, and play.
- I accept and respect the roles and decisions of judges, coaches, officials, and management, even when I disagree.
- I compete in accordance with the principles of fair play and integrity.
- I behave fairly and I talk to an adult I trust if I feel that something is wrong.
- I collect my personal belongings from the training and competition spaces, the changing rooms, the showers and the restrooms and take care of the facilities.
- I understand that I may not compete in gymnastics for as long as I wish, and I enjoy the journey.

#### **I know I have the right:**

- To feel safe (online and offline)
- To have healthy relationships with clear boundaries
- Not to feel uncomfortable or insecure
- Not to be subjected to any form of violence, abuse or bullying
- To be treated fairly

Code of Behaviour for Parents/Legal Guardians and Spectators at Gymnastics

Parents/legal guardians and spectators in gymnastics:

- support/applaud the effort made by all parties;
- always respect the judges, officials and coaches and encourage children to do the same;
- offer encouragement when gymnasts make mistakes;
- do not use offensive, abusive or aggressive language;
- do not display aggressive behaviour;
- let the coaches do their job;
- do not ask coaches for favourable treatment for your child.

### Code of Conduct for Coaches/Staff in Gymnastics

- I show respect to all involved in gymnastics: judges, opposing gymnasts, coaches and officials
- I show respect to the spectators
- I comply with the rules of gymnastics
- I demonstrate and promote high standards of conduct
- I always respect the decisions of the judges and officials
- I do not use or tolerate abusive, insulting or inappropriate language or behaviour
- I shall not engage in aggressive behaviour
- I put the welfare and safety of every gymnast above all else, even above winning
- I clearly explain what I expect from my gymnasts and what they can expect from me.
- I take time to speak to parents/legal guardians, so they are clear about what I expect from the children-gymnasts
- I do not bully and do not tolerate any form of intimidation
- I develop mutual trust and respect with each gymnast to build their self-esteem
- I encourage each gymnast to take responsibility for his/her own behaviour and performance
- I ensure that all the activities I organise are appropriate to the developmental level, skills, experience, age and maturity of the gymnasts
- I fully cooperate with other gymnastics professionals (e.g. judges, doctors, physiotherapists, fitness staff) in the best interests of each gymnast
- I behave fairly
- I promote the principles of "fair play"

## 7. Legal framework and definitions

### Legal framework

#### **Council of Europe's legal framework**

Cyprus has ratified the [Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse](#) (Council of Europe 2007) (the "Lanzarote Convention"). Cyprus has also ratified the [Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence](#) (Council of Europe 2011) (the "Istanbul Convention") and the [European Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings](#) (Council of Europe 2005).

#### **National legal framework**

Law 91(I)/2014 on Preventing and Combating the Sexual Abuse and Sexual Exploitation of Children and Child Pornography (CyLaw 2014) establishes measures to prevent and combat offences involving the sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of children, the depiction of child sexual abuse material and the grooming of children for sexual purposes. The law also aims to protect and support victims, establish control and supervision mechanisms for victims and perpetrators, and promote international co-operation in implementing these measures (Article 3).

The Law on Violence in the Family (Prevention and Protection of Victims, of 2000, L.119(I)/2000 (CyLaw 2000)) includes definitions and explanations on the following:

- "Violence" – physical, sexual or psychological harm within the family.
- If violence happens in the presence of a child, the law also considers that as violence against that child (psychological harm counts)
- Article 35A – failure to report violence against a minor can itself be prosecuted.

The Law on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence, of 2021, L. 115(I)/2021 (CyLaw 2021), complies with the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence and:

- aligns Cyprus with European standards/the Istanbul Convention;
- covers gender-based and domestic violence, including violence against girls.

Law 51(I) of 2016, Establishing Minimum Standards on the Rights, Support and Protection of Victims of Crime (CyLaw, 2016a) covers

- the minimum standards for the treatment of victims;
- protection from secondary victimisation.

Criminal Code, Chapter 155 (CyLaw 2016b) is applicable to non-sexual, non-family physical violence against a child (assault, threats, grievous bodily harm, etc.)

### Definition of child sexual abuse (Cyprus legislation)

Article 2 of Law 9(I)/2014, the Law on Preventing and Combating the Sexual Abuse and Sexual Exploitation of Children and Child Pornography (CyLaw 2014) defines sexual abuse and exploitation of children as the behaviour set out in Articles 6-10 and 15.

Article 2 of this law (ibid.) also defines "child" as any person under the age of 18 years.

The age of sexual consent in Cyprus is 17 years. However, even if a child has reached the age of sexual consent under the legislation of the Republic of Cyprus, it is still sexual abuse if an adult engages in sexual activities with the child using a recognised position of trust, authority or influence as provided for in Article 6(4) of the Law on Preventing and Combating the Sexual Abuse and Sexual Exploitation of Children and Child Pornography (ibid.).

According to Cypriot legislation (ibid.), anyone who becomes aware of an incident of sexual abuse or exploitation of a child has a legal obligation to report it. The Law on Preventing and Combating the Sexual Abuse and Sexual Exploitation of Children and Child Pornography (ibid.) holds criminally liable any person who has knowledge of the sexual exploitation or abuse of a child but fails to report it (Article 30).

### What constitutes child sexual abuse and/or exploitation?

#### Types/forms

For an act to be considered sexual abuse, it is important to note that penetration, violence, pain or touching are not necessarily involved. Child sexual abuse can involve both physical and non-physical activity.

#### Sexual abuse in sport

##### **A) Some examples of acts involving physical activity (touching) include:**

- touching the child's genitals and/or other private body parts.
- forcing or inviting a child to touch the genitals of another person (adult or child).
- forcing or inviting a child to play sexual games or have sexual intercourse by placing objects or body parts (such as fingers, tongue or penis) into the child's vagina, mouth or anus.

##### **B) Some examples of acts of non-physical activity (no touching) include:**

- exposing a child to pornographic material or sharing such material with a child;
- intentional exposing of an adult's genitals to a child;
- photographing a child in sexual positions;
- encouraging or coercing a child to watch or listen to sexual acts;
- inappropriately watching a child undress or bathe;

There is also the serious and growing problem of people producing and downloading child pornography, which includes sexual depictions of children in photographs and/or videos, from the internet. Anyone who watches images of child abuse is complicit in the abuse of the child.

## The Council of Europe's definitions of abuse

### What is child sexual abuse?

The Istanbul Convention (Council of Europe 2007), known as the Lanzarote Convention, defines “**child sexual abuse**” as:

- engaging in sexual activities with a child who, according to the relevant provisions of national law, has not reached the legal age for sexual activities;
- engaging in sexual activities with a child where use is made of coercion, force or threats;
- abuse is made of a recognised position of trust, authority or influence over the child, including within the family;
- abuse is made of a particularly vulnerable situation of the child, notably because of a mental or physical disability or a situation of dependence.

The last three situations apply also to children above the legal age of consent.

Sexual offences against children include **child sexual exploitation**, various actions related to **child sexual abuse material**, **sexual grooming/solicitation**, and causing a child to witness sexual abuse or sexual activities. It may involve contact and/or non-contact activities and **can happen in person and/or online** (Council of Europe, 2024: 8).

The **World Health Organisation (2006)** defines child sexual abuse as “the involvement of a child in sexual activity that he or she does not fully comprehend, is unable to give informed consent to, or for which the child is not developmentally prepared, or else that violates the laws or social taboos of society. Children can be sexually abused by both adults and other children who are – by virtue of their age or stage of development – in a position of responsibility, trust or power over the victim”.

- Examples of **sexual abuse that involves physical contact**: sexual touching of body parts including breasts and genitals, intercourse and oral sex or anal penetration without consent or where consent cannot legally be given due to the age of the victim or due to the position occupied by the perpetrator.
- Examples of **sexual abuse that does not involve direct physical contact**: showing of indecent images, voyeurism, inappropriate sexualised language, online grooming, coercing or manipulating a child into viewing or distributing abusive images or videos, or engaging in sexually explicit conversations.

### What is sexual violence?

The Istanbul Convention, defines sexual violence as the following intentional conduct (Council of Europe 2011: 10):

- engaging in non-consensual vaginal, anal or oral penetration of a sexual nature of the body of another person with any bodily part or object;
- engaging in other non-consensual acts of a sexual nature with a person;
- causing another person to engage in non-consensual acts of a sexual nature with a third person.

These definitions would apply to sexual relations between child peers above the legal age to consent to sexual acts.

### **What is sexual harassment?**

The Istanbul Convention defines sexual harassment as “any form of unwanted verbal, non-verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature with the purpose or effect of violating the dignity of a person, in particular when creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment (Council of Europe 2011: 11)”.

### **Other forms of violence**

Physical abuse involves any “act attempting to cause, or resulting in, pain and/or physical injury” of a child. It includes “beating, burning, kicking, punching, biting, maiming or killing, or the use of objects or weapons” (Council of Europe 2024: 12). Physical abuse can (and often does) constitute inhuman and degrading treatment (Article 3 of the European Convention on Human Rights).

Corporal punishment is a form of physical abuse.

Emotional/psychological abuse is the “persistent emotional maltreatment that impacts on a child’s emotional or psychological development. It can include restriction of movement, degrading, humiliating, bullying (including cyber-bullying), threatening, scaring, discriminating, ridiculing, and other non-physical forms of hostile and rejecting treatment” (Council of Europe 2024: 7). The Istanbul Convention (Council of Europe 2011) also recognises children may be victims, whether directly or as witnesses, of emotional/psychological forms of abuse or gender-based violence in family settings.

Neglect includes a failure to provide [a vulnerable athlete] with an adequate standard of nutrition, medical care, clothing, shelter, or supervision to the extent that the health or development of the [athlete] is significantly impaired or placed at serious risk. A [vulnerable adult athlete] is neglected if they are left uncared for over long periods of time or abandoned” (Tuakli-Wosornu et al. 2024: 1326). Neglect takes at least four forms: physical, educational, emotional, and medical (Council of Europe 2024: 11).

Bullying is the “unwanted, aggressive behaviour among school-aged children that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behaviour is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time. Bullying may include physical violence, sexual violence, threats, teasing, social exclusion, or other psychological violence” (Council of Europe 2024a, cited in Council of Europe 2024: 7). It may occur online (cyber-bullying) and/or in person and may be verbal and/or nonverbal.

More definitions can be found in the [Glossary on safe sport \(Council of Europe 2024\)](#).

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## APPENDIX

### Reporting forms

#### SEXUAL ABUSE REPORTING FORM (CSA)

**Complainant:**

First name :.....

Surname:.....

Position/role :.....

Contact no:.....

**Victim:**

First name :.....

Surname:.....

Parents' /legal guardians' first names and surnames:

.....

.....

Home address:.....

Phone no:.....

**Describe in the box below, what the victim has revealed to you or what you have witnessed:**

**Signature and date**

.....

.....

*\* This form is to be given in person to the police*

SUSPICION OF CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE REPORTING FORM (SCSA)

First name :.....

Surname:.....

Position/ role :.....

Contact no:.....

**Victim:**

First name :.....

Surname:.....

Parents'/legal guardians' first names and surnames:

.....

.....

Home address:.....

Phone no:.....

**Provide in the box below, any information on signs of sexual abuse that you have spotted or recognised in the child.**

**Signature and date**

.....

.....

*\* This form is to be given in person to the police*

ANY OTHER CHILD ABUSE REPORTING FORM (CA)

First name :.....

Surname:.....

Position/role :.....

Contact no:.....

**Victim:**

First name :.....

Surname:.....

Parents'/legal guardians' first names and surnames:

.....

.....

Home address:.....

Phone no:.....

**Please indicate in the box below what the child has disclosed to you, what you have witnessed or any concerns you may have.**

**Signature and date**

.....

.....

*\* This form is to be given in person to [name/last name] - safeguarding officer of the Cyprus Gymnastics Federation (e-mail: .... / tel: .....*