

Atletismo Sudamericano – Safeguarding Policy

Contents

1. Introduction
2. Scope of this Policy
3. Policy Statement of Commitment and Principles
4. Reporting of Concerns
5. Codes of Conduct
6. Review
7. Monitoring
8. Definitions

1. Introduction

Atletismo Sudamericano is responsible for promoting, developing and protecting athletics within South America in accordance with its Statute and for ensuring that it is a safe environment for persons in and related to athletics to develop their talents and achieve their goals be it as an athlete, instructor, coach, official, volunteer, manager, administrator or other sport personnel. This Safeguarding Policy (“this Policy”) establishes the responsibilities of Atletismo Sudamericano and its Member Federations to ensure that everyone is able to participate in or contribute to athletics safely and to have a fun, enjoyable and positive experience within the sport.

Atletismo Sudamericano recognizes that abuse may be conducted by and towards men or women, or children and that it happens in every area of the world, in every sector of society, sport and organization. Atletismo Sudamericano does not consider itself to be immune from safeguarding incidents nor exempt from the responsibility to protect participants associated with athletics at every level and form of participation.

2. Scope of this Policy

This Policy applies to athletes, officials, staff, volunteers, affiliates and any other person acting in a similar capacity at any official Area event recognized by Atletismo Sudamericano and organized by one of its Member Federation. All those to whom this Policy applies must comply with this Policy as well as the World Athletics’ Safeguarding Policy. Any breaches of this Policy by these individuals will be subject to potential sanctions under Atletismo Sudamericano’s safeguarding rules and procedures.

Atletismo Sudamericano has jurisdiction for safeguarding concerns and incidents which:

- Involve members of Atletismo Sudamericano staff, affiliates, athletes, or volunteer officials in any capacity;
- Take place at any meeting, conference, gathering, training/education seminars or events arranged by Atletismo Sudamericano, an Area Development Centre, or under the auspices of Atletismo Sudamericano; or
- Take place at or during events or competitions organized by Atletismo Sudamericano.

■ **Atletismo Sudamericano – Safeguarding Policy**

Atletismo Sudamericano is responsible for dealing with concerns as outlined above. If a concern is reported to Atletismo Sudamericano but does not fall within its jurisdiction, Atletismo Sudamericano will refer it to the appropriate Member Federation to deal with.

Member Federations are responsible for handling concerns which arise within their own territory and jurisdiction and must deal with them under the terms of their own safeguarding policy and in accordance with the World Athletics' Safeguarding Policy. The World Athletics' Safeguarding Policy requires concerns to be investigated and administered using a fair and clear process imposing consistent and proportionate sanctions, measures or actions taken where appropriate.

If an incident occurs at a competition or event organized by Atletismo Sudamericano or one of its Member Federations with the status of Area Event, it may, in any event, be best handled by the Member Federation where the accused person is located. Only when sufficient details of a concern are known Atletismo Sudamericano will decide which organization is best placed to handle the matter. If the matter is referred to a Member Federation for investigation and handling, then the Member Federation must do so promptly and appropriately. Atletismo Sudamericano shall also determine, on a case-by-case basis, that the criminal or civil authorities in the country where the alleged incident occurred are best placed to share or assume responsibility for the investigation and subsequent disciplinary procedure. If follow-up in any way on an incident occurring at an Area event is delegated to a Member Federation, the Member Federation must inform Atletismo Sudamericano of the follow-up action taken, the findings of any investigation or adjudication process and any disciplinary action taken.

3. Policy Statement of Commitment and Principles

This Policy is based on Atletismo Sudamericano's commitment to upholding and advancing the principles set out below.

- Everyone has the right to be treated with dignity and respect, and to be free from discrimination whether it is based on sex, race, age, ethnicity, ability, sexual orientation, gender identity, socio-economic status, beliefs, religious or political affiliation.
- Everyone has the right to participate, enjoy and develop personally through athletics in a safe, inclusive environment free from all forms of abuse, harassment or exploitation.
- Everyone has the right to have their voices heard, particularly if raising a concern about their own or another person's welfare. Everyone should know who to ask for help when they have a concern about an individual's behavior.
- Everyone, particularly those involved in planning or delivering programs for athletes under the age of 18, is responsible for the care and protection of those athletes, making decisions in their best interests as their welfare is paramount.

To achieve this Atletismo Sudamericano will:

- facilitate the provision of support, guidance and advice to its Member Federations initially by disseminating World Athletics' safeguarding materials and guidance;

■ **Atletismo Sudamericano – Safeguarding Policy**

- assist World Athletics by co-operating with World Athletics to train and educate Member Federations to help them to create fulfilling and safe environments for all those participating in athletics within their territory;
- educate and train all relevant members of Atletismo Sudamericano staff and volunteers about how to recognize and deal with safeguarding concerns and complaints;
- have a named member of staff or a volunteer who is responsible for leading on safeguarding within the territory of Atletismo Sudamericano (“the Safeguarding Officer”);
- ensure that any competitions or events organized by Member Federations, Atletismo Sudamericano with the status of Area events, adhere to the World Athletics’ Safeguarding Policy and any additional guidance produced by World Athletics specifically for safeguarding at events and competitions;
- deal with any concerns, allegations and complaints which Atletismo Sudamericano has jurisdiction over (as outlined in Section 2 above) in a fair and transparent manner, confidentially and securely (to the extent permitted and required by law); and
- carry out background checks, follow up on references and train staff and volunteers recruited and appointed to specified roles in the Area Association.

4. Reporting of Concerns

Everyone is responsible for ensuring that no one suffers abuse, harassment or exploitation. Where Atletismo Sudamericano has jurisdiction, as outlined above, the matter will be referred to Atletismo Sudamericano’s Safeguarding Officer. If Atletismo Sudamericano does not have jurisdiction, any concerns or suspicions that someone may have been subject to abuse, harassment or exploitation or about the behavior of another person will be reported to the appropriate Member Federation and its safeguarding officer or if relevant, to the police or other authorities in the jurisdiction where the incident occurred.

Atletismo Sudamericano must also provide any information relating to any safeguarding issues, concerns or suspicions to World Athletics where the nature of the issue, concern or suspicion relates to something that may be under the jurisdiction of World Athletics. For example, if a Member Federation has sanctioned an individual and Atletismo Sudamericano learns that this individual is working in a different Member Federation, Atletismo Sudamericano must inform World Athletics promptly so that the necessary action can be taken. Another example is if Atletismo Sudamericano knows that a Member Federation is aware of a Safeguarding issue but is not addressing it, World Athletics must be informed.

There may be occasions when a Safeguarding issue involves high profile individuals (athletes, coaches or officials) where World Athletics believes it is important to share information to enable support and guidance to be provided to anyone who requires it. Atletismo Sudamericano will cooperate with World Athletics in relation to any information requested by World Athletics in respect of such Safeguarding matters.

If Atletismo Sudamericano suspects that a person who is sanctioned may be in breach of any Safeguarding policy may move to another Area or to the territory of another member Federation, it must inform World Athletics immediately. This will enable World Athletics to impose such additional Safeguarding actions as may be necessary and appropriate in the circumstances.

■ **Atletismo Sudamericano – Safeguarding Policy**

If an individual is at immediate risk of serious harm Atletismo Sudamericano will report the matter to local emergency services. Local laws may influence whether Atletismo Sudamericano requires the consent of the individual who has been harmed to report a matter to the police and other agencies, and whether a report to police is required even if an individual refuses to give consent. If Atletismo Sudamericano has reason to believe that an alleged perpetrator might put others at immediate risk a report will be made by Atletismo Sudamericano to the relevant Member Federation and the local authorities of the country where the alleged perpetrator is resident or is affiliated with athletics. This will enable the Member Federation and/or the local authorities to take any appropriate action necessary to protect others in the territory.

5. Codes of Conduct

Atletismo Sudamericano has a Code of Conduct for use at Atletismo Sudamericano's events, competitions and for their own staff and volunteers including leaders, administrators, coaches, technical officials and athletes. Codes of Conduct are designed to provide everyone within athletics with a guide to expected standards of behavior.

Atletismo Sudamericano developed a Code of Conduct that will be made available to relevant groups and will ensure that it is displayed on event notices and entry forms and websites produced and/or distributed by the Area Association.

If an individual is aware of any other person breaching the relevant Code of Conduct, then this should be referred to the Safeguarding Officer as a concern for investigation and potential disciplinary action.

6. Review of this Policy

This Policy will be reviewed on a regular basis at least every other year.

7. Monitoring

The monitoring of this Policy and its implementation will be conducted regularly as appropriate by Atletismo Sudamericano or an independent safeguarding authority with the necessary expertise to perform this task.

This Safeguarding Policy was approved by the Atletismo Sudamericano's Executive Council on 5 July 2024.

8. Definitions

Abuse, harassment and exploitation

Abuse, harassment and exploitation are described below. They can be perpetrated by both males and females and is often where one party is in a position of power over the other.

Psychological abuse is an unwelcome act and includes vilification, belittling, rejection, confinement, isolation, verbal assault, humiliation, intimidation, infantilization or any other behavior which may diminish an individual's sense of identity, dignity or self-worth. This is at the center of most types of abuse as when these occur so does psychological abuse. This can often be seen as bullying or cyber-bullying.

Physical abuse is any intentional or unwanted act of, for example, kicking, beating, biting or burning which causes injury or physical harm. It can include the forced consumption of alcohol or systematic doping

■ **Atletismo Sudamericano – Safeguarding Policy**

practices. It can also be any forced or inappropriate physical activity such as training which is unsuitable for the age or physique of the athlete. Forced or excessive training may escape notice in a sporting environment as the ambitions of both athletes and coaches, as well as peer pressure, may induce one or both to impose or take on excessive training loads and/or competition commitments. Dialogue among athletes and coaches aimed at setting mutually agreed and achievable performance goals can help define tolerable and acceptable training demands. It is up to coaches to temper ambitions that may run counter to an athlete's health and wellbeing.

Sexual abuse is any conduct of a sexual nature, either contact (penetrative or non-penetrative) or non-contact, where consent is not given, cannot be given, is coerced or manipulated. This can involve individuals looking at or making sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging others to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a person in preparation for abuse.

Grooming is the process whereby an individual builds a relationship with a child encouraging them to trust them so that the groomer can manipulate and exploit them for their own advantage. Grooming an athlete's family, entourage and friends often leads those individuals to believe that the groomer is dependable and trustworthy, enabling the groomer to have access to the athlete. By manipulating the person and exploiting the relationship they will make the person believe they have to comply with the groomer's demands. The power a groomer has over the child is frequently used to isolate them from friends and family who might otherwise warn or caution them from complying with the groomer's demands.

Grooming can take place online as well as in person; online grooming is often much quicker often due to the groomer pretending to be younger and sometimes a different gender than they are in reality. Groomers may provide advice to a child as well as offering gifts or attention.

Harassment is unwanted or unwelcome behavior which offends or can make the person feel humiliated or intimidated. Power harassment is where someone in a position of power over another individual, usually in a working relationship, or within relationship established between the athletes and the athletes support personnel, uses that power to physically or psychologically harass another person in a lower position. Power harassment can include exclusion, inappropriate assignments (too little, too much or of a lower level that acceptable) as well as intrusive behavior.

Sexual harassment is any unwanted or unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature, whether verbal, non-verbal or physical. Examples of verbal sexual harassment include unwanted or intimate questions, which may be degrading, relating to body, clothes or one's private life, jokes with a sexual innuendo and proposals or demands for non-consensual sexual acts. These may be unwanted text messages, telephone calls, letters or other forms of communication with sexual content. Non-verbal examples may include staring, gesticulation, or sharing photographs or pictures with sexual allusions. Examples of physical sexual harassment are unnecessary physical contact with a sexual nature such as pinching, attempting to kiss, caress or touch.

Exploitation is when someone exercises control over another person and/or their assets for their own "personal gain", sometimes without the fully informed consent of the person. Personal gain may be psychological, reputational or commercial and constitutes exploitation when the rights of a person are sold or negotiated without express and fully informed consent of the other person. Examples in athletics may be fraudulent misrepresentation of an athlete's age or nationality, acting on behalf of an athlete fraudulently or taking an unreasonable share of the proceeds of sponsorship or funding arrangements. Exploitation comes

■ **Atletismo Sudamericano – Safeguarding Policy**

in many different guises. Examples include sexual exploitation, financial exploitation and signing athletes on to long-term contracts while they are still children.

Neglect is the failure to provide a minimum level of care, either physical or emotional, which causes harm, allowing harm to be caused or creating an imminent danger of harm. This usually relates to the care given by parents or caregivers to children but is also relevant to other people who have a duty of care towards another person such as a coach or team leader towards an athlete. This can include the failure to provide adequate water in high temperatures, adequate clothing in cold temperatures, suitable food, accommodation or safe travel arrangements, or even to provide the services of a chaperone to minor athletes at a competition.

Abuse, harassment and exploitation may be based on race, religion, color, beliefs, ethnic origin, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, disability, socio-economic status and athletic ability or a combination of any of these characteristics. It can range from a single isolated event to a series of events, be in-person or online, or deliberate, unsolicited or coercive. Bullying, hazing and negligence are all aspects of abuse, harassment or exploitation and should be treated in the same way under the terms of this Policy.

Any of these forms of abuse, harassment or exploitation may include an aspect of financial abuse. It may be that an individual may be coerced into signing contracts or agreements which benefit others financially but are of limited financial benefit to themselves. Any element of coercion may be abuse, harassment or exploitation if the individual is a child, if the individual has not authorized someone to act on their behalf or if the individual has not been adequately advised by an independent professional such as an accountant or lawyer of the impact of the terms of the agreement.

There may be times when actions which might not be abusive to one person may be abusive or harmful due to the vulnerability of the individual who is being abused. This may be due to the persons' age, ability or other form of vulnerability.

Abuse, harassment and exploitation often result from an abuse of authority by someone in a position of trust, meaning the improper use of power by someone in a position of influence, power or authority by an individual against another.

Child – a “child” or “children” refers to an individual or group of individuals who have not yet reached the age of 18.

Safeguarding – is the process of protecting/safeguarding, children and adults involved in athletics from abuse, harassment, and exploitation. Creating a safe and welcoming environment where everyone is respected and valued is at the heart of safeguarding. Everyone involved with athletics has a role to play in making sure they actively prevent abuse, harassment and exploitation, listen to accounts from children and adults of their experiences and respond safely and fully if there is a problem.