



Tennis Ireland

Safeguarding Policy

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Draft 1.1	17 th February 2022	Roger Geraghty	TI Board 28 th March 2022

This policy applies to all those involved in Tennis Ireland including, but not limited to, coaches, administrators, officials, volunteer drivers, members, parents, and young people.

SAFEGUARDING POLICY STATEMENT

Tennis Ireland is fully committed to safeguarding the well-being of its members.

Every individual in the organisation should at all times show respect and understanding for their rights, safety, and welfare, and conduct themselves in a way that reflects the principles of Tennis Ireland and the guidelines contained in this policy.

(For our Safeguarding Statement please refer to our website)

Safeguarding or Child Protection

The term child protection has been expanded to safeguarding as it reflects the wider responsibility for health and safety and prevention as well as just protection from abuse. The word safeguarding has been used with increasing frequency over the last few years in a wide range of settings and situations, going well beyond the world of children and child protection. It may be defined as “Doing everything possible to minimise the risk of harm to children and young people.”

Safeguarding is about being proactive and putting measures in place in advance of any contact with children to ensure that children are going to be kept safe.

This could include:

- Ensuring staff / volunteers are properly checked when they are recruited.
- Guidelines for people who encounter children as part of their role to ensure they know what they need to do to keep children safe; and
- Guidelines for planning an event or activity with children and putting measures in place to minimise the risk of safeguarding issues occurring.

Code of Conduct

Tennis Ireland supports the view that all children’s sport should be conducted in an atmosphere of fair play. In this context the NGB undertakes to adopt the definition of fair play as set out in the European Sports Charter and Code of Ethics, Council of Europe (1993).

“Fair play is much more than playing within the rules. It incorporates the concepts of friendship, respect for others and always playing within the right spirit. Fair play is defined as a way of thinking, not just a way of behaving. It incorporates issues concerned with the elimination of cheating, gamesmanship, doping, violence (both physical and verbal), exploitation, unequal opportunities, excessive commercialism, and corruption.”

To promote the best practice in children's sport, Tennis Ireland has adopted and implements the guidelines as set out in Safeguarding Guidance for Children & Young People in Sport and as required by law, has conducted a risk assessment of their children's programmes and the potential for harm to come to young participants whilst they are in their care.

As a follow up to the risk assessment exercise, the Board of Directors has written a Safeguarding Statement signed off by our chairperson and in conjunction with our Children's Officers and Designated Liaison Person, put in place the policies and procedures required to bring all risks down to low levels.

Tennis Ireland's Safeguarding Statement is posted prominently on the Organisation's Website and in their premises. We require all adults associated with children's activities to have signed our relevant code of conduct.

Tennis Ireland is operated under its Memorandum of Articles. This document has been approved and adopted by the members of the Association at various Annual and Extraordinary General Meetings of the members of the Association.

Any changes to the Memorandum of Articles, must be approved by the members of Tennis Ireland at a General Meeting of the members.

The Board of Directors of Tennis Ireland are elected by the members of the Company (The Clubs) at the Annual General Meeting in accordance with the procedures set out in the Memorandum of Articles.

Safe Recruitment

Tennis Ireland has adopted and consistently applies a safe and clearly defined method of recruiting and selecting Volunteers, Officials, Coaches and any other Employees or Contractors who have contact with children.

Details of this can be found in Appendix 4 in our Safeguarding Guidance for Children & Young People in Tennis Manual.

Tennis Ireland expects all affiliated clubs/organisations to adhere to our safe recruitment procedure.

The roles of the committee members, all Sports Leaders and parents/ guardians have been clearly defined.

Safeguarding Adults at Risk

One important difference between safeguarding adults and safeguarding children is an adult's right to self-determination.

Adults may choose not to act at all to protect themselves and only in extreme circumstances will the law intervene. Like for example, when an adult is assessed to lack capacity in that area.

This can make safeguarding adults more complex because it is not solely focused on creating an appropriate process and system to safeguard, but also needs to consider the importance of creating a culture which embraces the adults themselves and informs and consults them on all decisions about them.

Tennis Ireland are committed to implementing any Legislation enacted in relation to safeguarding adults and will consult with HSE personnel in the event of any cases that may arise.

<https://www.hse.ie/eng/staff/resources/hrppg/va.html>

Reporting Procedures

Tennis Ireland has a National Children's Officer, a Designated Liaison Officer and four Provincial Children's Officers appointed by the Board of Directors and Provincial Branches.

All Safeguarding Officers can be contacted through the following link –

<https://www.tennisireland.ie/child-protection/> or at roger.geraghty@tennisireland.ie

The Board of Directors appoints a Child Welfare Committee and one of the Board's Directors is tasked to act as the Designated Liaison Person to liaise with the Statutory Authorities in relation to the reporting of allegations or suspicions of child abuse. Any such reports are made in accordance with the procedures outlined in the Tennis Ireland Safeguarding Policy.