

Outer East Football Netball



Gender Equality Policy



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Introduction

The Outer East and affiliated clubs are committed to respect, inclusion, and gender equality. Men, women, and non-binary people affiliated with the Outer East have equal opportunity to participate as employees, players, supporters, volunteers, and officials. It is expected that all who engage with the Outer East observe the terms of this Gender Equality Policy to ensure that the Outer East is a safe and inclusive environment for all.

“We all have a role to play in creating clubs, teams, workplaces, venues, and communities where all women are safe, equal, and valued. Your sport can play a part in influencing the attitudes, behaviours, practices, and structures that allow violence to occur.” - Our Watch.

Sporting settings are complex environments which, although essential places to support physical activity, are also sites within the community where stigma and harmful social norms around mental health and gender inequality can be reinforced. Higher rates of family violence are observed in the Yarra Ranges relative to other Local Government areas in the Eastern Metropolitan Region. Creating inclusive and welcoming environments for all participants is a key driver for the Outer East and much has already been achieved including the delivery of the multi-strategy initiative Leading the Change, #ExpectRespect and Getting Girls In.

The Outer East has since established a Women’s Advisory Group to build upon the effort to increase women and girl’s participation in football. The purpose of the Advisory Group is to raise the profile of women in the league, promote women and girls’ inclusion and address matters affecting women and girls’ football and netball club members and volunteers. The group will support the Outer East to achieve gender equality in participation, access to resources and representation. With more women involved in decision making clubs will better identify and overcome barriers to women and girls’ participation in sport and leadership.

Purpose

Outer East Football Netball expects all affiliates to conduct themselves in a manner that demonstrates respect for all people, regardless of gender identity, cultural background, or sexual orientation.

Outer East is committed to:

- Ensuring women have the opportunity to participate in decision making at all levels.
- Providing a safe and inclusive environment for all people.
- Offering a fair and equal workplace culture regardless of gender identity or sexual orientation.
- Providing a safe and inclusive environment for female participants of Indigenous, Aboriginal, Torres Strait Island and culturally diverse backgrounds.
- Ensuring family violence support is accessible to all who need it.
- From the board down, Gender equality and inclusion will be embedded in every aspect of our strategic planning, operations and decision making.



All affiliates competing in Outer East Football Netball competitions must ensure that they:

- Share in the responsibility for ensuring that all others feel safe and included at all times.
- Are familiar with types of disrespect relating to gender that might occur within their area of responsibility and be aware of any indications of such conduct.
- Consider what language is used when instructing others. Use terms that are inclusive and commit to communicating in an appropriate manner. For example, use gender neutral language and refer to individuals as player, opponent, a back, a centre, a forward etc.
- Be an active bystander and reject sexist and discriminatory behaviour by showing support towards the recipient when observing disrespect. If it is unsafe to engage, report the incident to a team or club official.
- When responding to an incident, validate a person's experience.

Scope

This Policy recognises that Outer East Football Netball has a considerable responsibility as an employer and sporting organisation. Outer East Football Netball is an Australian Rules Football and Netball organisation within Victoria that comprises employees and volunteers. The senior competitions operate in a three-division system including 29 clubs with Football, U18's to Seniors and Netball 13 & Under to Open age, along with a Women's and Veteran's competitions. The Outer East Junior competitions facilitate 16 junior clubs for all Boys & Girls Football from ages 7 to 1.

The Outer East recognises the influence on attitudes and behaviours of the broader community and the significant duty of care they have in promoting gender equality. A club's reach is significant and extends beyond its players, coaches, administrators, and volunteers; for every 1 player, clubs reach 10 people in their community, generating increased civic pride.

Related Legislation and regulations

- [AFL Outer East By Laws](#)
- [AFL Gender Diversity Policy](#)
- [AFL Respect and Responsibility Policy](#)
- [AFL Respect and Responsibility Vilification Framework](#)
- [Age Discrimination Act 2004](#)
- [Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986](#)
- [Disability Discrimination Act 1992](#)
- [Equality and Respect in Sport Standards](#)
- [Gender Equality Act 2020](#)
- [Racial Discrimination Act 1975](#)
- [Sex Discrimination Act 1984](#)
- [AFL Womens Vision](#)
- [Netball Victoria Gender Regulation](#)
- [Guidelines for preventing Violence against women-Taking action through sport](#)

Complaint and Incident Management Protocol

In order to effectively support matters affecting the safety and inclusion of all, it is essential that a clear process for managing complaints or incidents of disrespectful conduct is available. In this context disrespect may include coarse language, sexual harassment, sexual or other assault (including threats), violence against women, discrimination based on sex, pregnancy, sexual orientation, gender identity or intersex status. Outer East Football Netball is dedicated to eliminating all forms of disrespect and violence.

A formal complaint from an individual this matter should be referred to the relevant club in first instance, with mediation and/or action undertaken. If a resolution cannot be found between involved parties, a written request is to be in writing to the CEO of Outer East Football Netball, where the matter will be managed under the Vilification procedures outlined in the Outer East Football Netball, Netball Victoria and AFL Victoria By-Laws (which ever is most relevant). The league may launch an investigation or further action at its discretion.

Dealing with disclosures

How you respond to someone who has been impacted by violence is important. If you have not had training in this area or do not feel confident, respond sensitively, and refer the person on to a specialist service such as 1800 RESPECT.

Visit [1800 RESPECT: Introduction to Responding](#) on how to respond sensitively and safely.

Definitions

Refer to [Outer East By Laws](#)