

RFL WHISTLE BLOWING POLICY – SAFEGUARDING

The RFL is determined to ensure that the culture of the sport is one in which it is safe, acceptable and gives confidence to those involved in rugby league to raise concerns about unacceptable practice and misconduct.

What stops people from whistle blowing?

- Concerns about getting it wrong or having misunderstood
- Fear of repercussions such as harassment or victimisation
- Fear of not being believed
- Concerns about starting a chain of events which may spiral out of control
- A belief that it would be disloyal to other volunteers
- Thinking that it doesn't matter or that nobody will get hurt
- Thinking its not their responsibility

Why should you whistle blow?

- Everybody involved in rugby league has a responsibility for raising concerns about any unacceptable practice or behaviour
- Whilst it may be difficult the welfare of children may depend on you and the children and young people in the game have a right to expect that you will do something about your concerns
- It is often the most vulnerable children who are targeted and these children need somebody to safeguard their welfare
- Historically, early effective intervention has been shown to prevent the problem getting more serious or affecting more children
- It can protect or reduce the risk to others
- It can prevent you from being implicated yourself or in the professional game facing a charge for failing to report misconduct

What should you do and who should you tell?

- You should not attempt to deal with any allegation or suspicion yourself (in an emergency contact the relevant emergency service)
- You should inform your Club Welfare Officer or the RFL Safeguarding team
- **In particular you should not:**
 - Inform the person about whom you have a concern
 - Inform other club officials
 - Start your own investigation or delay in reporting the suspicion

Contact Details

RFL Safeguarding team – 0844 477 7113 Option 6 or safeguarding@rfl.uk.com

What happens next?

- Information will be treated in confidence.
- During the investigation the identity of those raising the concerns will be kept as confidential as possible however it may be necessary for some people to be informed.
- Where possible the RFL will keep those who have provided information informed about the progress and conclusion of the investigation.
- No action will be taken if a concern proves to be unfounded but was raised in good faith
- The RFL rules make it an offence to harass or victimise a whistleblower
- Malicious allegations may be considered a disciplinary offence