

WHISTLE BLOWING POLICY

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WHISTLE BLOWING POLICY

BTBA Child protection



1. PURPOSE

To encourage BTBA members to raise concerns about the safety and welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults involved in tenpin bowling if appropriate to do so and provide a method to receive feedback on any action that may be initiated

The BTBA will ensure that individuals receive a timely response to their concerns and that they are aware of how to pursue them if they are not satisfied with the outcome. The BTBA will seek to reassure BTBA members that they will be protected from reprisals or victimisation for whistle blowing when concerns are raised in good faith.

2. SCOPE

Any BTBA member involved in any activities carried out under the auspices of the British Tenpin Bowling Association (BTBA) are covered by this policy.

3. KEY PRINCIPLES

The following important principles are contained within this policy:

- The policy should be read in conjunction with the BTBA's Child Protection Policy and the Complaints Policy and Procedures.
- The Chief Executive has overall responsibility for the maintenance and operation of this policy.
- If a matter raised results in any disciplinary action, the BTBA's disciplinary procedures will apply.

4. GENERAL PRINCIPLES

All members across all levels of the BTBA regardless of their capacity; Players, coaches, officials, parents or team followers are often the first to realise that a child's or young person's safety and welfare maybe under threat or at risk from poor practice.

Some members may feel that to express their concerns by speaking out may jeopardise their opportunity for progression and that they may suffer consequences due to their actions which may include but are not limited to harassment or victimisation. In these circumstances some members may choose to ignore the concern rather than report it.

The BTBA is committed to the highest possible standards of openness, honesty and accountability and individuals are encouraged, if they have serious concerns about any aspect of a child's safety and welfare, to come forward and voice those concerns.

The policy is intended to encourage and enable individuals to raise serious concerns within the BTBA rather than overlooking a problem or blowing the whistle outside.

It is in the interest of all concerned that disclosure of potential abuse or irregularities are dealt with properly, quickly and discreetly. This includes the interests of BTBA employees, all persons registered as members of the BTBA and any persons who are the subject of any complaint, as well as the person making the complaint.

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5. SAFEGUARDS

The BTBA is committed to good practice and high standards and wants to be supportive of everyone within the tenpin bowling community.

The BTBA recognises that the decision to report a concern can be a difficult one to make, not least because of the fear of reprisal from those responsible for the alleged poor practice. However if an individual believes what they are saying to be true, they should have nothing to fear because in reporting their concern they will be doing their duty to the child, young person or vulnerable adult concerned.

The BTBA will not tolerate any harassment or victimisation (including informal pressures) and will take appropriate action to protect individuals when they raise a concern in good faith.

Any investigation into allegations of alleged poor practice will not influence or be influenced by any disciplinary procedures or ongoing investigations that may already affect those individuals.

6. CONFIDENTIALITY

The BTBA will protect the identity of the whistle blower when they raise a concern and do not want their name to be disclosed. However it must be appreciated that the investigation process may reveal the source of the information and a statement by the whistle blower may be required as part of the evidence. They will be given prior notice of this and a chance to discuss the consequences.

Support is available from the BTBA Child Protection Officer.

7. ANONYMOUS ALLEGATIONS

This policy encourages the whistle blower to put their name to their allegation. Concerns expressed anonymously are much less powerful, but they will be considered (at the discretion of the BTBA Designated Safeguarding Management Group).

In exercising the discretion, the following factors to be taken into account would include:

- The seriousness of the issues raised
- The credibility of the concern
- The likelihood of confirming the allegation from reliable sources or factual records

8. UNTRUE ALLEGATIONS

If an individual makes an allegation in good faith, but it is not confirmed by the investigation, no action will be taken against them. If, however, it is established that they have made malicious, frivolous or vexatious allegations, disciplinary action may be taken against them. In such cases, the BTBA's disciplinary procedure will apply and any anonymity maybe jeopardised.

9. THE 'WHISTLE BLOWING' POLICY

The whistle blowing policy should only be followed if the person raising the concern feels unable to follow the standard reporting procedures as set out in the BTBA's Child Protection Policy and the Complaints Policy and Procedures.

10. HOW TO RAISE A CONCERN

Individuals should raise the concern in the first instance with the BTBA Child Protection Officer by telephone to 01283 212207 / 07702 543226 or by post to BTBA Child Protection Officer, City Pavilion, Collier Row Road, Romford, Essex, RM5 2BH (you should mark the envelope 'private & confidential') or email dsco@bowlsafe.com. If you believe that

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you have not received a satisfactory response to your concern, you should contact the Chief Executive Officer (CEO).

Concerns may be made verbally or in writing to the Child Protection Officer (as above). The individual should set out the background and history of the concern, giving names, dates and places where possible and the reason why they are particularly concerned about the situation. The earlier the individual expresses concern, the easier it is for someone to take action.

Although the whistle blower is not expected to prove the truth of an allegation, they will need to demonstrate to the BTBA's Child Protection Officer that there are sufficient grounds for their concern.

11. HOW WILL THE BTBA RESPOND?

The action taken by the BTBA will depend on the nature of the concern. In all cases the matter will be referred to the BTBA Designated Safeguarding Management Group. This is a multidisciplinary group and is made up of Regional Safeguarding Officers, the BTBA Child Protection Officer and an independent member of the National Council appointed from time to time to remain arbitrary.

In order to protect individuals it is likely that the BTBA Child Protection Officer will conduct initial enquiries so that the BTBA Designated Safeguarding Management Group can decide whether an investigation is appropriate and, if so, what form it should take.

Receipt of the individual's concern will be acknowledged immediately and, within five working days of the concern being received, the BTBA will write to them:

- Indicating how the matter will be dealt with.
- Giving an estimate of how long it will take to provide a final response.
- Tell them whether any initial enquiries have been made.
- Tell them whether further investigations will take place, and if not, why not.

The amount of contact between the people considering the issues and the whistle blower will depend on the nature of the matters raised, the potential difficulties involved and the clarity of the information provided. If necessary, further information will be sought from the whistle blower as part of the investigation process.

When any meeting is arranged, the whistle blower has the right, if they so wish, to be accompanied by a friend or a person of their choice who is not involved in the matter to which the concern relates.

The BTBA will take steps to minimise any difficulties which individuals may experience as a result of raising a concern. For instance, if the whistle blower is required to give evidence in criminal or disciplinary proceedings, the BTBA will advise them about the procedure.

The BTBA accepts that the whistle blower needs to be assured that the matter has been properly addressed. Subject to legal constraints, the Whistle Blower will be appraised about the outcomes of any investigations, and the action that is to be taken against those whose actions caused them concern. If appropriate, learning outcomes will be shared with the Whistle Blower to minimise the possibility of a similar concern being raised in the future.

12. HOW THE MATTER CAN BE TAKEN FURTHER

This policy is intended to provide individuals with a way in which they can raise concerns about the safety and welfare of any child, young person or vulnerable adult involved in any tenpin bowling activity under the auspices of the BTBA. The BTBA hopes

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individuals will be satisfied that any child protection matter they raise has been considered properly. If they are not satisfied, and if they feel it is right to take the matter outside of the BTBA they should contact:

- The Child Protection in Sport Unit (CPSU) 0116 234 7278;
- Their local area Child Protection Committee.
- Their local Social Services.
- Their local police.

If they do take the matter outside of the BTBA, they will need to ensure that they do not disclose prohibited confidential information. They must check this before they make contact.

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APPENDIX A – GENERAL FORM TO REPORT CONCERNS

Whistleblowing Policy Report Form

The BTBA is committed to the highest possible standards of openness, probity and accountability. In line with that commitment we expect BTBA Players, coaches, officials, parents or team followers and others that we deal with who have concerns to come forward and voice those concerns. It is recognised that many cases will have to proceed on a confidential basis. If you wish to make a report please use this pro-forma.

- 1 Background and history of the concern (please give as much information as you can dates, times of incidents, names of others who may have information, names of people involved)

- 2 The reasons why you are particularly concerned about the situation.

(Please attach additional sheets if necessary)

- 3 You are encouraged to put your name to this report. Concerns expressed anonymously are much less powerful but they will be considered so far as is possible by the BTBA. If you feel able to, please give your name and details below.

Signed

Name.....

YBC / Section / Club (if applicable).....

Address.....

.....

Contact Telephone Number.....

E-mail address:

Date.....