



MANAGING RISKS: OFFICIALS INFORMATION SHEET

Apply guidelines to ensure athlete safety

Officials have a duty to ensure competition can be conducted safely and should follow guidelines to ensure a safe environment for participation, for example [heat guidelines](#) and [blood rules](#).

Make fair and consistent decisions about the rules of the game

Do not make biased or inconsistent decisions when officiating. Consider undergoing further [education and training](#) to improve your knowledge, skills and confidence as an official. If you are making biased or unfair decisions consider completing online training in discrimination.

Manage and minimise conflict

Conflict is inevitable in sport and [managing conflict](#) is an essential part of an official's role. It is important to be calm, confident, firm and fair. If you are concerned about player safety you could consider stopping the game or in extreme circumstances cancelling the game. Be aware this may inflame the situation.

Take action against inappropriate behaviour

Be prepared to report actions that are in breach of your sports policies and rules or are not within the spirit of the game to your sport's tribunal. If any incidents, actions or behaviours cause you to suspect that a child is at risk, report your concerns to your club's administrator and child protection authority. This is a moral and, in some states, legal obligation.

Try to accommodate an athletes request for flexibility

Although your role is to ensure that your sport's rules are followed, you also need to be aware of the need for flexibility (e.g. allowing a Muslim women to wear her hijab) or long sleeve top. Try and accommodate these needs if you can. Consider undertaking training to learn more about [inclusive practices for officials](#). Request that your sport updates and provides guidance in dealing with emerging issues, for example, their uniform policy.

Avoid being alone with a child

To protect both yourself and a child from risk:

- Do not isolate yourself and a child and avoid being alone with any particular child.



- If a child approaches you and wants to talk to you privately about a matter, do so in an open area and in the sight of other adults (e.g. other coaches, officials or parents/guardians).
- Before going into change rooms knock or announce that you will be coming in. Try to have at least one adult with you in a change room with children.