

# **British Paralympic Association Whistle blowing Policy**

## **Purpose**

To encourage individuals to feel confident in raising concerns about the safety and welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults involved in Paralympic sport.

To provide a method of raising concerns and receiving feedback on any activity taken. To ensure that individuals receive a response to their concerns and that they are aware of how to pursue them if they are not satisfied.

The purpose of this Policy and the accompanying Whistle-blowing Procedure is to make it clear that you can raise your concerns in confidence without fear of victimisation, subsequent discrimination or disadvantage.

## **Scope**

ALL those involved in activities carried out under the jurisdiction of the British Paralympic Association are covered by this policy

## **Key Principles.**

The following important principles are contained within this policy:

- The code is complimentary to the BPA's Safeguarding and Protecting children and Safeguarding vulnerable adults policies and the BPA's code of conduct and ethics.(under the policy section on the BPA website)
- The Chief Executive has overall responsibility for the maintenance and operation of this policy.
- If a matter raised results in any disciplinary action the BPA's Disciplinary and Grievance Procedure will apply.

## **General Principles**

Athlete, coaches, officials, parents or team followers are often the first to realise that a child or vulnerable adult's safety and welfare are

under threat. However, they may not express their concerns because they may feel that speaking up may be too difficult to handle. It may be that they fear harassment or victimisation. In these circumstances it may be easier for them to ignore the concern rather than report what may be a suspicion or poor practice.

The BPA is committed to the highest possible standards of openness, honesty and accountability.

In line with that commitment, individuals are encouraged, if they have serious concerns about any aspect of a Child or Vulnerable Adult's safety and welfare to come forward and voice these concerns.

In the first instance the BPA would encourage individuals to see if their concerns could be dealt with under the Safeguarding Children or Vulnerable Adults Policies. However, if this is not the case this policy makes it clear that the individuals CAN raise a matter of concern without fear of victimization subsequent discrimination or disadvantage. This policy is intended to encourage and enable individuals to raise concerns within the BPA rather than overlooking the problem.

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 the BPA, its employees, all persons registered as members of a sport and any persons who are subject of any complaint as well as the person making the complaint.

## **Safeguards**

The BPA is committed to good practice and high standards and wants to be supportive of all within the Paralympic community.

The BPA recognises that the decision to report a concern can be a difficult one to make.

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 BPA will not tolerate any harassment or victimization (including informal pressures) and will take appropriate action to protect and individual 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 that already affect an individual.

### **Confidentiality**

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

### **Anonymous allegations**

This policy encourages the whistleblower to put their name to their allegation. Concerns expressed anonymously are much less powerful, but they will be considered (at the discretion of the CEO or nominated investigator)

In exercising the discretion the factors to be taken into account would include;

- The seriousness of the issue raised.
- The credibility of the concern; and
- The likelihood of confirming the allegation from attributable sources or factual records.

### **Untrue allegations**

If an individual makes an allegation on 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 fraudulent, malicious allegations or for personal gain, in such cases the BPA may follow up by using the Disciplinary procedure or in serious cases involving the police.

### **How to raise a concern**

Individuals should raise the concern in the first instance with the Lead or Designated-safeguarding officer. (Telephone 02078425789) or by post to the Lead safeguarding officer, at the BPA, 60 Charlotte Street, London W1T 2NU.

You should mark the envelope private and confidential. The whistleblower should set the background and history of the concern, giving names, dates and places where possible and the reason why they are concerned.

The earlier an individual expresses a concern the easier it will be to take action.

Concerns may be made verbally as long as they are made to either the Lead safeguarding officer, the designated safeguarding officer or the Chief Executive of the BPA.