

Lane Cove Football Club

Member Protection Information





OVERVIEW

- Role of the Member Protection Information Officer (“MPIO”)
- What concerns should be raised?
- What is my role as a coach, manager, player, parent or spectator?
- Issue resolution process
- Child Protection matters
- Signs to look out for
- How child protection matters are resolved
- Role of the Coach and Manager
- Useful websites



WHAT IS THE ROLE OF THE MPIO?

- The MPIO is a mandated role (it is a requirement that all clubs must have at least one MPIO and that person must be trained and certified)
- **Member protection is for everyone** involved in Lane Cove FC (parents, child and adult players, spectators, volunteers, officials and parents)
- The MPIO is mandated to resolve issues and complaints confidentially (whether raised from inside the club or from another Club's MPIO)
- The MPIO also oversees the writing and implementation of club policies and procedures to comply with NSFA and FFA regulations (e.g. implementing the Working With Children Check requirements)



WHAT CONCERNS SHOULD BE RAISED?

- **Bullying**
- **Harassment** - (language or behaviour that is not wanted, asked for, not returned, creates a hostile or uncomfortable environment)
- **Discrimination** - (based on race, gender, sexual orientation, religion, age, physical or intellectual capacity)
- **Inappropriate gestures** by players, parents, spectators or officials
- **Inappropriate language** - (negative words, aggressive tone, swearing) by players, parents, spectators or officials
- **Aggressive play** - (play that is dangerous beyond the normal scope of the game and injury is likely)

Regardless of age or role, if you feel uncomfortable about something, contact the club MPIO



WHAT ARE SOME EXAMPLES??

Bullying

“You are f***ing hopeless”

Giving the referee the middle finger

“Score a goal or you are not going out with your friends tonight”

Harassment

No one in the team will pass you the ball

“You kick like a girl”

Refusing to leave the field when sin binned

Discrimination

“What the hell is wrong with you”

“F**k off back to your own country”

You don't make the team because of your sexual preference

Inappropriate gestures

Tackling the goalkeeper rather than going for the ball

“Some teammates keep telling me I am dumb and a retard”

Inappropriate language

Arguing with a linesperson

Performing a late tackle with studs up

Aggressive play



WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I HAVE CONCERNS?

If you have concerns during a match or training session:

- **Players**
 - Speak to your coach at half time or full time to raise the issue
- **Coaches / Managers**
 - Notify the centre referee at half time of the concerns and monitor play
 - Move a player or substitute them to protect them or reduce the likelihood of further inappropriate behaviour
 - Talk to the player at the end of the game / session to explain what the issue is and what is expected of them
- **Parents / Spectators**
 - Speak to the club coach or manager and they will handle the issue using an agreed process

If at any time you need advice on a concern or the concern cannot be resolved at the time that it was raised, report details to the MPIO as soon as possible via email or phone



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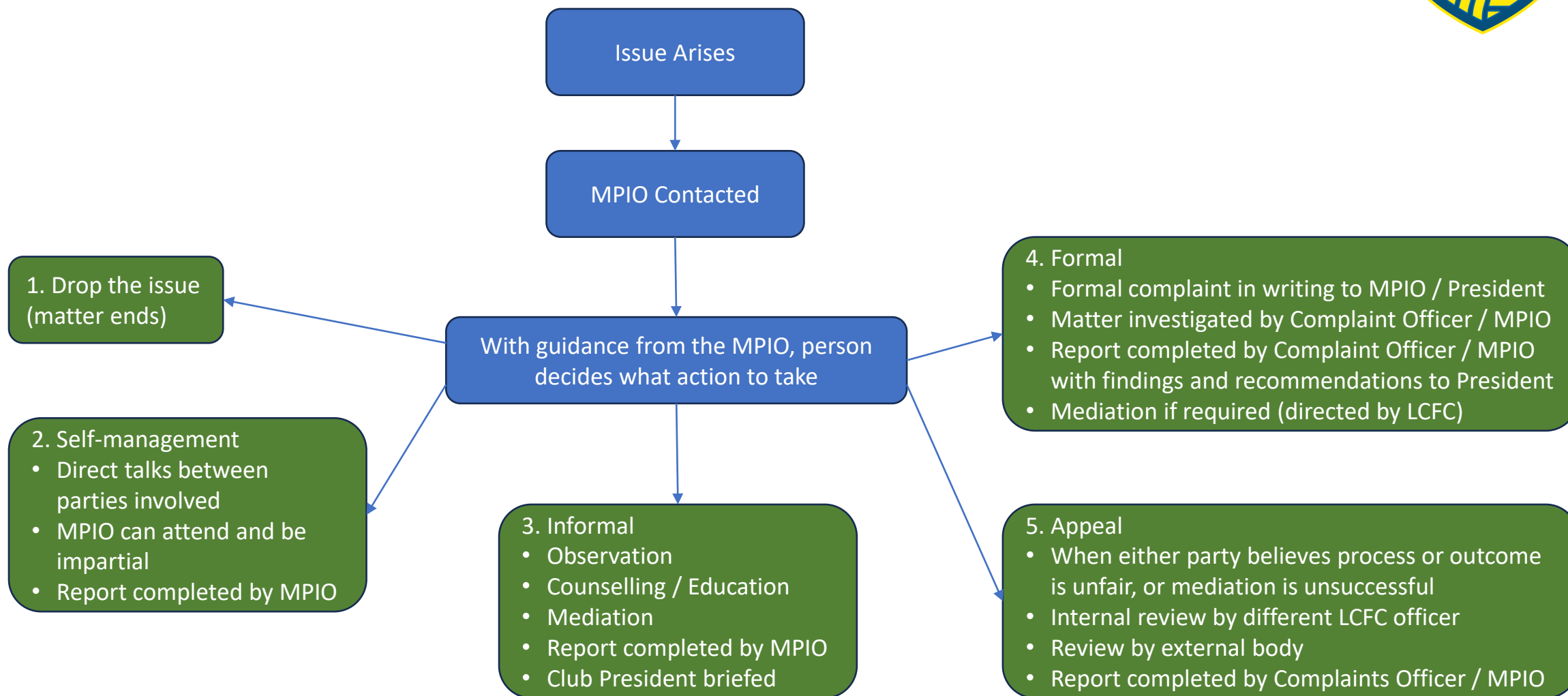
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ISSUE RESOLUTION PROCESS (GENERAL)





CHILD PROTECTION MATTERS

What do we mean by this?

- **Sexual abuse** – a sexual act or threat imposed on a child, including exposing them to sexual images
- **Physical abuse** – intentional harm, unintentional harm as a result of punishment, poorly maintained facilities and equipment
- **Emotional abuse** – rejection (an adult belittles them continuously and maliciously), verbal assaults, deliberately encouraging anti-social, deviant and destructive behaviour
- **Neglect** – failure to provide the basics (food, clothing, education, emotional bonding, reliable and safe accommodation)



WHAT ARE THE WARNING SIGNS?

Examples of warning signs include when a child....

- Is repeatedly not collected from training (late or at all)
- Stops attending training or games and you don't know why (parent has not provided you with an explanation)
- Shows attitude or behaviour changes (they may become more withdrawn, aggressive or teary on or off the field)
- Has bruising with no explanation on how it occurred, or differing explanations on how it arose
- Displays sexualised behaviour or language inappropriate for their age
- Displays extreme attention seeking, disruptive or aggressive behaviour
- Seeks inappropriate adult affection



WHAT IS MY ROLE?

As a Coach or Manager, if a child discloses alleged or potential abuse to you:

- Remain calm to minimise the child's distress
- Ask open-ended questions ("What happened then...?") and avoid questions that lead to yes / no answers
- Try and find out who / what / when / where / how / who else knows / how often abuse occurs
- Contact the club MPIO immediately and follow their directions

Child protection matters will be managed directly between the MPIO and the person raising the issue. Please keep all information in strict confidence.



INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOURS

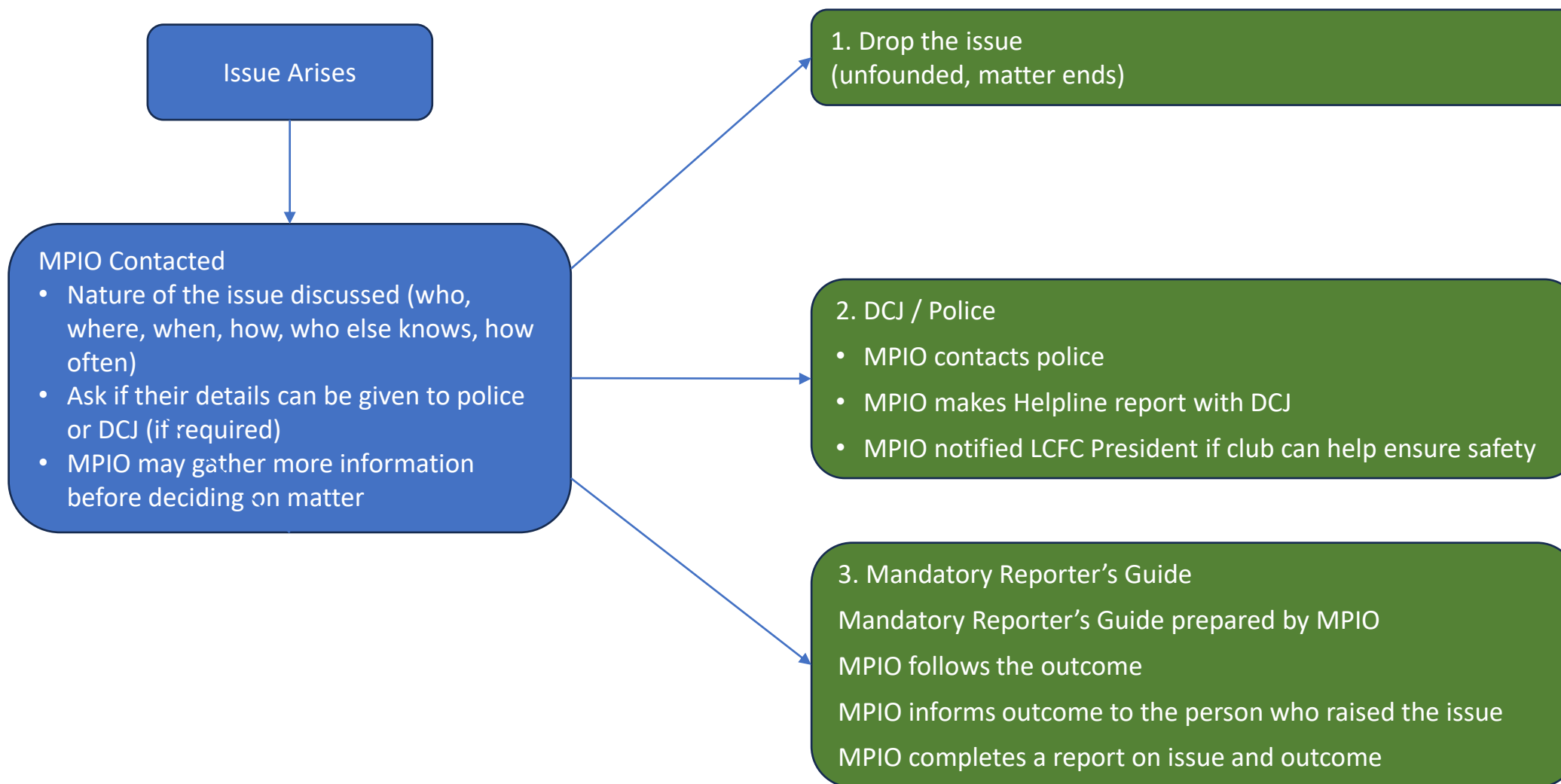
Inappropriate actions, if left unchecked, can become illegal behaviours. Keep an eye out for the following:

- Any use of camera equipment (including mobile phones) in areas where private activities occur (e.g. change rooms)
- Turning a blind eye to bullying behaviour
- Continual disregard for a child's personal space and boundaries when demonstrating a skill that requires physical contact

If you are in doubt, contact the MPIO, they will ask you for more information to determine the appropriate next steps.



ISSUE RESOLUTION PROCESS (CHILD PROTECTION MATTERS)





AS A COACH OR MANAGER...

Generally

- Be mindful of the age of the players, any physical contact with a player should be appropriate to the situation and necessary for the player's skill development
- Be mindful of any changes in behaviour or attitude of a child player (could indicate signs of harassment, abuse or bullying)
- If a player under 18 stops attending training / matches without reason, ask the parent for explanation or contact the club MPIO
- Do not leave training or matches until all under 18 players are collected
- If you have any player (any age) who is displaying inappropriate behaviour at training or during matches:
 - Speak with the team manager / coach about your concerns and decide who will speak to the player
 - In a respectful way, speak to the player about their inappropriate behaviour
 - If they use inappropriate behaviour again, remind them to stop, or contact the club MPIO



AS A COACH OR MANAGER...

During a match

- Ensure all equipment and facilities meet safety standards and are appropriate to the age and abilities of the players
- If a player argues with an official ask them to stop, speak with them at half or full time and you can address the concerns with the centre referee
- You are not allowed on the field of play unless you are tending to an injury
- If a player is injured, follow the advice of their physician as to when they should return to training / playing
- If you have an over-involved parent (yelling out coaching directions, entering the field during matches / training, suggesting you “stack” the team with good players):
 - Speak with the team manager about your concerns
 - The manager or coach will speak to the parent in a respectful manner about the concerns raised
 - If the issue persists, contact the club MPIO who can raise it with the parent in a confidential manner



CONTACTING THE LANE COVE FC MPIO

Lane Cove FC's MPIO contact details are listed on the Lane Cove FC website. The MPIO can be contacted via email at

mpio@lcfc.com.au



USEFUL WEBSITES

Lane Cove FC

www.lcfc.com.au

NSW Office of the Children's Guardian

<https://ocg.nsw.gov.au/>

Play by the Rules online courses

<https://www.playbytherules.net.au/online-courses/>

FFA Code of Conduct

<https://www.footballaustralia.com.au/sites/ffa/files/2017-09/National%20Code%20of%20Conduct.pdf>