



Australian Parachute Federation Ltd

# Member Protection Policy and Code of Conduct

A code of behaviour for APF members and others  
involved in parachuting activities

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VERSION 01-2022

**STATUS: MANDATORY**

This document is offered as a free download to APF members.  
Alternatively, contact the APF Office for a paper copy at a cost of \$5.00



## **Member Protection Policy and Code of Conduct**

(replaces the former Code of Ethics)

**This section covers the conduct expected of members, as well as processes for dealing with misconduct which is not safety related.**

APF members are expected to comply with a range of state and Commonwealth laws. It is not the role of APF to administer those laws. APF may not shield members from civil or criminal action arising from member misconduct but may, on a case-by-case basis, arrange for a preliminary investigation to be conducted.

APF does provide a confidential contact officer service which is at [contactofficer@apf.com.au](mailto:contactofficer@apf.com.au). The information sent to this address is assessed and managed according to the nature of the issue. Area Councils may also have a Member Protection Information Officer. These people can be sources of information about policies and practices. They may be able to help members who are considering their options.

APF does expect the holders of certain responsibilities to be a Fit and Proper Person in the eyes of the Board and/or CEO. This document also sets out the qualities of a Fit and Proper person in relation to APF responsibilities. The concept of Fit and Proper is contextual, meaning that expectations will differ according to the nature of the responsibility.

APF members must:

- Exercise the responsibilities of ratings and endorsements in a manner commensurate with the degree of responsibility involved. This means that a Chief Instructor would be held to a higher standard than a coach, and a Rigger would be held to a higher standard than a Packer B.
- Behave in a manner that promotes and upholds the highest standards of integrity, safety and professionalism whilst engaged in APF activities.
- Refrain from any behaviour which may bring the APF, its group members, its members or the sport of skydiving into disrepute.
- Conduct professional and skydiving activities in compliance with all relevant regulations and in a way that upholds and enhances the reputation of the APF.
- Demonstrate a proactive approach to tackling challenges, and continued compliance with relevant Commonwealth and State laws.
- Maintain the physical and mental health to be able to carry out the inherent requirements of any activity related to the sport of skydiving conducted by the member. Where any health issue may adversely affect the members ability to conduct the activities this must be disclosed to APF under Section 4.2 of the APF Privacy Policy.
- Demonstrate a high degree of individual responsibility especially when dealing with students, customers and persons under the age of 18 years

To be automatically considered to be a Fit and Proper person, demonstrated adherence to the above must be provided. In addition, no formal breaches of the above within the previous five years should be on the member's APF file. Breaches do not necessarily disqualify a person but may attract additional scrutiny and examination of the circumstances.

### **Removal of Fit and Proper status**

Once given, this can only be removed by a properly constituted Review Panel. The Review Panel must operate in a manner similar to that set out in the Misconduct Policy and Procedures Manual. This process can normally only be initiated by a request from the CEO for a Review Officer to be appointed to oversee the process

Once Fit and Proper status is removed under this policy, it can only be regained in the same manner as if the person had never held Fit and Proper status with APF. It follows on that if a member is no longer deemed Fit and Proper they can no longer hold a position that requires that status.

APF must have confidence that an authorisation holder will carry out the functions and responsibilities of that authorisation. APF must also have confidence in the holder's ability and temperament so as to be regarded as a person who can be relied upon to do these things properly and lawfully.

To be deemed fit and proper there must be demonstrated evidence that a person has the necessary ability and appreciates the responsibilities of the duties and functions of the authorisation; and demonstrated temperament that gives APF the confidence that the authorisation holder can be relied upon to carry out the duties and functions of the authorisation.

### **Breaches of the Code of Conduct**

Safety related matters are dealt with under a system set out in the Misconduct Policy and Procedures manual. For non-safety matters the following applies.

**Sport related misconduct**—members may discuss in confidence with a Member Protection Information Officer and/or lodge a confidential report at [contactofficer@apf.com.au](mailto:contactofficer@apf.com.au) Members have the right at any time to lodge a report with police and there may be times where this is advisable. APF, through the CEO, may, after discussion, also elect to lodge a police report and/or cause a preliminary internal or external investigation to be conducted.

**Workplace related misconduct**—For APF staff, this is covered elsewhere. For staff employed by Group Members, misconduct is covered by the employer's policy. The APF is not the employer in this case.

To report a suspected breach of the code of conduct, members have the option of emailing [ceo@apf.com.au](mailto:ceo@apf.com.au). This will trigger a process which may lead to an internal investigation. The CEO, after consultations, may seek to initiate an independent review process, through an APF Review Officer. The CEO also has the option of seeking an independent, external investigation.

The only person authorised to make a police report on behalf of APF is the CEO. Victims may elect to make a police report on their own behalf and in some cases may be advised to do so.

Where the CEO has charged a member, the purpose of the Review Panel is to determine whether the charges are justified and, if so, to determine an appropriate penalty (if any)

### **The Review Process under this policy**

There are a variety of different options, depending on the severity of the issue, the attitude of the individual or organisation and if the infringement is a first offence. Options that can be exercised by the CEO or a Review Officer include:

- informal procedures
- counselling and/or the issuing of a warning
- referral to police
- referral to independent external investigation
- referral for Alternative Dispute Resolution, which may be via independent mediation; or
- if the matter is found to be baseless or vexatious, there may be no disciplinary action taken against the person charged.

### **Review Panel powers under this policy**

A review panel, after considering procedural fairness, may do one or more of the following:

- Suspend APF membership for a finite period of time
- Suspend or cancel a rating, endorsement or appointment if the offence is related to those positions of responsibility
- Recommend to the CEO that a police report be lodged (but may not lodge a police report)
- Remove an Area Council Officer from their position and declare the position to be vacant if the offence is related to that responsibility.

In cases where the CEO is conflicted, or the Board determines that the CEO is conflicted, the National Review Officer may be authorised by the Board to act in lieu of the CEO in relation to this policy.