



SAFEGUARDING & WELFARE OFFICER : ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Version 1.2



Version History

Version	Summary of amendments/changes	Published Date
Version 1.0	Document Created	July 2024
Version 1.1	Expanded on SWO duties, Club Duties and added a recruitment section	October 2024
Version 1.2	<p>Added: Purpose & Scope, Definitions & Key Terms, Minimum Club Compliance Standard – Welfare Officer Requirement, Vetting, Background Checks & Eligibility, Local Compliance Addendums / Jurisdictional Guidance, Implementation & Compliance Enforcement – Club Affiliation Conditions</p> <p>Expanded: Role Description: Welfare Officer Duties & Responsibilities, Club Responsibilities & Support Requirements, Safeguarding Training & Competence Requirements, Reporting, Referral & Liaison Procedures, Confidentiality, Data Protection & Record Keeping, Monitoring, Review & Re-Vetting Schedule, Resources & Useful Contacts</p>	November 2025

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INTRODUCTION

Independent Gymnastics Association (IGA) is committed to providing a safe, supportive and inclusive environment for all gymnasts, staff, volunteers and visitors — especially children, young people, and any vulnerable adults. As a club-based organisation operating across different countries and legal jurisdictions, IGA recognises it has a duty of care to protect participants from harm, abuse or neglect, and to promote wellbeing, dignity and respect at all times.

Safeguarding and welfare are central to this commitment. This policy establishes a clear framework for the role of a Club Welfare Officer — a designated, trained and vetted individual at each affiliated club whose responsibility is to safeguard the welfare of members, oversee safe recruitment, respond to concerns, and help ensure compliance with relevant safeguarding legislation and best practice across all regions of IGA's operations.

Because IGA spans multiple jurisdictions — including England, Scotland, Northern Ireland, the Republic of Ireland and the Channel Islands — this policy recognises the differing legal and regulatory requirements in each area (for example, vetting schemes, safeguarding legislation and child-protection procedures). The policy is designed to ensure that all clubs remain compliant with their regional obligations, while maintaining a consistent safeguarding standard throughout IGA.

Through this policy, IGA aims to:

- Embed a culture of vigilance, openness and accountability around welfare and safeguarding.
- Ensure all clubs appoint at least one compliant Welfare Officer, who meets the necessary vetting, training and role-definition standards.
- Provide clarity on responsibilities — for both the Welfare Officer and the club — in safeguarding, recruitment, reporting, record-keeping and support.
- Provide a robust foundation for responding effectively to safeguarding concerns, disclosures or allegations, in accordance with legal and best-practice guidance.



- Promote a safe, welcoming, inclusive environment in which gymnasts — regardless of age, background or ability — can train and compete with confidence.

This policy applies to all IGA-affiliated clubs, coaches, volunteers, staff, members and anyone involved in IGA-organised activities — regardless of their employment status or location.

PURPOSE & SCOPE

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Establish clear safeguarding leadership roles within each IGA-affiliated club by defining the responsibilities and minimum standards required of Welfare Officers
- Ensure all clubs are compliant with regional safeguarding legislation and requirements across the UK, Scotland, Northern Ireland, Republic of Ireland, and the Channel Islands
- Promote a proactive, consistent, and accountable approach to safeguarding, child protection and welfare throughout IGA
- Provide clear reference guidance for Welfare Officers to fulfil their responsibilities effectively
- Strengthen the culture of safety, trust and wellbeing across all IGA environments, ensuring every participant is protected from harm, abuse, discrimination, or neglect
- Support early identification and appropriate response to welfare or safeguarding concerns

Scope

This policy applies to:

- All IGA-affiliated clubs and organisations
- All Welfare Officers appointed by IGA clubs
- All coaches, volunteers, officials, members of staff and contractors
- All gymnasts, participants, parents, carers, and visitors to club activities
- All activities taking place under the authority or oversight of IGA, including:
 - Club training sessions
 - Gymnastics displays and events
 - Competitions, camps and trips
 - Online/remote coaching or communications
 - Transport or supervision activities conducted by club personnel

Minimum Compliance Requirement

All clubs affiliated with IGA must:

- Appoint at least one fully compliant Welfare Officer who meets the requirements detailed in this policy
- Ensure that safeguarding responsibilities remain active and up to date throughout the duration of their affiliation
- Maintain suitable cover for welfare responsibilities, including availability during club operating hours or defined channels for urgent concerns



Where a Welfare Officer becomes ineligible or unavailable (e.g., vetting expires), the club must take immediate action to achieve compliance — failure to do so may result in review of club affiliation status.

Jurisdictional Coverage

Because IGA operates across multiple legal jurisdictions, all safeguarding actions — including vetting, training, reporting and escalation — must adhere to the specific regional legislation and regulatory requirements where the club is based or where activities occur.

Where requirements differ, the highest standard must always be followed.

DEFINITIONS & KEY TERMS

The following terms are used throughout this policy to ensure clarity and consistency across all jurisdictions in which IGA operates:

Welfare Officer

A designated, vetted and trained safeguarding lead within an IGA-affiliated club who holds responsibility for raising safeguarding standards, responding to concerns, and ensuring compliance with local and organisational safeguarding requirements.

Safeguarding

The proactive measures taken to promote the safety, welfare and well-being of children, young people and vulnerable adults, protecting them from harm, abuse, neglect, or exploitation.

Child / Young Person

A person under the age of 18 years.

(Aligned with legislation across the UK, Republic of Ireland and the Channel Islands.)

Vulnerable Adult / Adult at Risk

An adult aged 18 or over who may be unable to protect themselves from harm, abuse or exploitation due to their circumstances, disability, mental capacity, health, or dependency.

Regulated Activity

Work or roles that involve close and unsupervised contact with children and/or vulnerable adults, requiring a safeguarding-vetting check according to jurisdictional requirements.

Vetting / Background Check

Criminal-record or suitability checks mandated by national safeguarding frameworks, for example:

- DBS — Disclosure and Barring Service (England, Wales, Channel Islands)
- PVG Scheme — Protecting Vulnerable Groups (Scotland)
- Access NI — (Northern Ireland)
- National / Local Vetting Requirements — Republic of Ireland and Channel Islands
- Welfare Officers must maintain an approved and current check relevant to their jurisdiction.



Where a Welfare Officer becomes ineligible or unavailable (e.g., vetting expires), the club must take immediate action to achieve compliance — failure to do so may result in review of club affiliation status.

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Where requirements differ, the highest standard must always be followed.

Safeguarding Concern

Any worry, indication or disclosure that a child or vulnerable person may be suffering — or at risk of suffering — harm, abuse or neglect. Concerns may arise from direct observation, information shared, or behaviour change.

Disclosure

Information shared voluntarily or indirectly by a child, young person or adult about harm, abuse or a situation causing them fear or distress. Responses must be calm, supportive and correctly documented.

Designated Safeguarding Lead / Designated Liaison Person / Welfare Officer

Where local legislation (e.g. Republic of Ireland) defines specific mandated safeguarding roles, the Welfare Officer may also fulfil and act in accordance with these statutory obligations.

Statutory Authorities

External agencies responsible for the protection of children and vulnerable adults, for example:

- Children's Social Care / Social Services
- Police
- Local safeguarding / child protection boards
- Relevant national child-welfare bodies

Confidentiality

The duty to handle safeguarding information safely and appropriately, sharing only with those who need to know in order to protect a child or vulnerable person — never withholding information where someone is at risk.

Club

Any organisation, facility or entity affiliated with IGA that provides gymnastics activities and falls under this policy's jurisdiction.



MINIMUM CLUB COMPLIANCE STANDARD — WELFARE OFFICER REQUIREMENT

To ensure the safety and wellbeing of all participants, every IGA-affiliated club must have at least one designated Welfare Officer who fully meets the requirements set out in this policy.

This is a mandatory condition of affiliation to Independent Gymnastics Association (IGA).

Minimum Appointment Requirements

A Welfare Officer must:

- Hold a current enhanced, jurisdiction-appropriate safeguarding vetting check:
 - DBS (England, Wales, Channel Islands)
 - PVG Scheme (Scotland)
 - Access NI (Northern Ireland)
 - Local vetting requirements (Republic of Ireland / Channel Islands)
- Have completed required safeguarding training for their jurisdiction and role, including:
 - Initial safeguarding awareness training
 - Welfare Officer-specific training recommended
 - Refresher or update training as required (every 3 years)
- Be a trusted and competent individual with no conflicts of interest (e.g. not solely responsible for disciplinary decisions in the club) (They can not be in dual roles within coaching or management)
- Appear approachable and be available to members, volunteers, staff and parents
- Uphold confidentiality and strong communication skills
- Have safeguarding responsibilities clearly stated in their role description

Failure to maintain any of the above requirements means the Welfare Officer is not compliant, and the club must act immediately to restore compliance.

Continuity of Welfare Provision

Clubs must:

- Ensure Welfare Officer cover is maintained during operational hours (does not always have to be on site, but must be contactable)
- Have succession and contingency planning
- Appoint additional Welfare Officers where:
 - There is a large membership base
 - Multiple sites or venues operate
 - Both male and female representation is required to ensure accessibility (recommended)
 - if welfare officer roles are held by a parent of the club

IGA strongly encourages clubs to appoint more than one Welfare Officer to ensure resilience and availability.



Visibility & Communication

Welfare Officer contact details must be:

- Clearly displayed within the club and on digital platforms
- Provided to parents/carers during onboarding
- Communicated to gymnasts in age-appropriate ways
- Known to all coaches, staff and volunteers

This ensures concerns can be raised easily and safely.

Compliance Monitoring

Clubs must:

- Maintain documented evidence of Welfare Officer vetting, training, and role assignment (on welfare officers JustGo profile)
- Present compliance records during audit, affiliation renewal, or upon request
- Immediately notify IGA if their Welfare Officer becomes ineligible, unavailable, or leaves their role

IGA may suspend or review club affiliation if ongoing non-compliance poses safeguarding risk.

Shared Accountability

While each Welfare Officer has a clear safeguarding leadership role, the club as an organisation retains overall accountability for ensuring:

- Effective welfare provision
- Full compliance with safeguarding legislation
- A safe environment for children and vulnerable adults

ROLE DESCRIPTION: WELFARE OFFICER DUTIES & RESPONSIBILITIES

The Welfare Officer is the safeguarding lead within each IGA-affiliated club. They are responsible for championing a safe culture, responding to concerns, and ensuring ongoing legal and organisational compliance relating to the welfare of children and vulnerable persons.

The role is proactive and leadership-focused — not simply for responding once something goes wrong.

Safeguarding Leadership & Promotion

The Welfare Officer must:

- Promote and maintain a culture where safeguarding and wellbeing are prioritised at all times
- Ensure safeguarding policies, procedures and codes of conduct are understood and implemented throughout the club
- Ensure safe recruitment practices are followed for roles involving children, including vetting and suitability checks in line with national safeguarding frameworks
- Provide guidance and advice to coaches, staff, volunteers and parents on safeguarding best practice



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Reporting & Responding to Concerns

The Welfare Officer must:

- Act as the first point of contact for safeguarding concerns, disclosures, or behavioural issues that may indicate risk
- Ensure concerns are recorded accurately, securely and in a timely manner
- Determine whether concerns require referral to statutory authorities (e.g. children's services, police)
- Maintain clear and safe escalation procedures in line with IGA policy and jurisdictional laws
- Ensure children and adults know how to report concerns and feel confident doing so

Confidentiality & Information Management

The Welfare Officer must:

- Appropriately manage sensitive information on a strict "need-to-know" basis
- Store safeguarding records securely in accordance with data-protection law
- Share information with statutory agencies when someone is at risk, even where confidentiality would otherwise apply

Training, Knowledge & Competence

The Welfare Officer must:

- Maintain current safeguarding training relevant to their jurisdiction
- Complete Welfare-Officer-specific training (recommeneded)



- Undertake refresher training at intervals determined by legislation or IGA requirements (every 3 years)
- Stay informed on changes to safeguarding legislation or guidance in their region
- Support the education of club personnel by ensuring they receive appropriate safeguarding training

Accessibility & Engagement

The Welfare Officer must:

- Be visible and accessible to gymnasts, parents, staff and volunteers
- Ensure contact details are clearly displayed at the club and communicated on websites/registration materials
- Provide support that is approachable, child-centred and free from judgement

Monitoring & Oversight

The Welfare Officer must:

- Monitor safeguarding compliance within the club (including vetting, consent forms, supervision ratios)
- Review incident patterns or concerns to identify emerging risks
- Provide regular safeguarding updates to club leadership
- Participate in audits or compliance reviews by IGA when required

Collaboration & External Liaison

Where required, the Welfare Officer must:

- Work collaboratively with statutory safeguarding agencies during investigations or referrals
- Liaise with IGA's Safeguarding & Compliance Team for support or escalation
- Engage with local safeguarding networks or national guidance providers when appropriate

CLUB RESPONSIBILITIES & SUPPORT REQUIREMENTS

To support effective safeguarding and welfare, each club affiliated to IGA must uphold the following responsibilities. Compliance with these requirements is mandatory — clubs failing to meet them may have their affiliation reviewed or suspended.

Appointment & Resourcing of Welfare Officer

- Appoint at least one appropriately vetted and trained Welfare Officer in accordance with the "Minimum Club Compliance Standard."
- Provide sufficient resources for the Welfare Officer to carry out their duties — including time, facilities, administrative support, and access to confidential record-keeping systems.
- If the club operates across multiple sites or sessions, ensure adequate Welfare Officer cover (e.g. more than one Officer, rostered cover) so that welfare oversight is always available.

Safe Recruitment & Vetting Processes

- Implement safer-recruitment procedures for any staff, coaches or volunteers working with children or vulnerable persons. This includes relevant vetting checks, reference verification, induction, and suitability assessment.
- Maintain records of vetting, references and suitability checks, linked to staff profiles and accessible for audit.



Training & Induction

- Ensure all staff, volunteers and coaches complete mandatory safeguarding training (awareness training, codes of conduct) before commencing duties.
- Provide induction for new members to include safeguarding policy awareness, Welfare Officer contact details, and club code of conduct.
- Facilitate periodic refresher training and updates when legislation or guidance changes.

Policy Implementation & Dissemination

- Adopt and implement the full IGA Safeguarding & Welfare Policy (this document) at club level.
- Make the policy, Welfare Officer contact, reporting procedures and code of conduct available to all members, parents, volunteers and visitors (e.g. on noticeboards, website, registration packs).
- Display Welfare Officer contact details visibly on-site and online.

Record-Keeping & Confidential Information Management

- Maintain secure and confidential records of: vetting checks, induction/training, disclosures, safeguarding concerns, incidents, referrals, actions taken and follow-ups.
- Ensure compliance with data-protection and privacy laws relevant to the club's jurisdiction.
- Provide access to records for safeguarding audits, policy reviews or external inspections when required (while safeguarding confidentiality).

Reporting, Referral & Liaison Support

- Support the Welfare Officer in responding to disclosures, safeguarding concerns or allegations — including access to private, safe space for conversations and confidential reporting procedures.
- Facilitate timely reporting to statutory safeguarding authorities when required by local law, and cooperate fully with external investigations.
- Provide indemnity or appropriate insurance cover (where required) for Welfare Officer functions and safeguarding activities.

Oversight, Monitoring & Review

- Periodically assess safeguarding compliance (e.g. annually or after incidents) — including vetting status, training up-to-date, welfare contacts, supervision ratios, record completeness.
- Support audits or compliance checks by IGA or regulatory authorities.
- Ensure that any identified shortcomings are rectified promptly, including re-vetting, additional training, policy adjustments, or reinforcement of safeguarding practices.

Culture & Communication

- Promote a club culture that values safeguarding, listening, transparency and respect.
- Encourage open communication: make it easy for gymnasts, parents, volunteers or staff to raise concerns without fear of recrimination.
- Ensure that Club leadership (committee or board) recognises and supports the welfare function — giving authority, visibility and resources to the Welfare Officer role.



VETTING, BACKGROUND CHECKS & ELIGIBILITY

To ensure only suitable individuals hold safeguarding responsibilities, all Welfare Officers must undergo appropriate criminal-record and safeguarding-suitability vetting checks relevant to their jurisdiction.

This process is mandatory before appointment and must be monitored and renewed as required.

Jurisdiction-Specific Vetting Requirements

Vetting must comply with the legal framework where the club operates:

- **England, Wales & Channel Islands** - Welfare Officers must hold an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check where eligible
- **Scotland** - Welfare Officers must be registered and cleared through the Protecting Vulnerable Groups (PVG) Scheme
- **Northern Ireland** - Welfare Officers must obtain an Enhanced Access NI check
- **Republic of Ireland** - Clubs must comply with local safeguarding and vetting requirements for individuals in child-related roles

Welfare Officers may be required to act as Designated Liaison Person depending on local legislation

No Welfare Officer may begin their duties until the appropriate vetting outcome has been confirmed as acceptable by the club.

Eligibility Requirements

A Welfare Officer must:

- Be aged 18 or over
- Have no convictions or investigations that raise safeguarding concerns
- Not be barred or under any restriction from working with children or vulnerable adults
- Not hold dual roles in coaching or management (or hold any bias's towards those working within these roles)
- Be a person of integrity, trusted by the club community and able to maintain fair judgement

If any information emerges that calls suitability into question, the individual must cease duties immediately pending review.

Re-Vetting & Continuous Suitability

Welfare Officers must:

- Renew vetting checks within required legislative intervals (every 3 years)
- Immediately notify the club if investigation, arrest, or safeguarding allegation occurs
- Maintain compliance with all safeguarding updates, mandatory training, and IGA requirements

Clubs are responsible for tracking vetting expiration and ensuring continuous compliance.



Record Keeping & Verification

The club must maintain:

- A secure record of vetting checks (reference number, date of issue, outcome)
- Any risk-assessments or decision-records relating to vetting outcome
- Evidence that vetting status is up to date at all times

IGA may periodically audit vetting records as part of safeguarding compliance monitoring.

Suspension of Duties Due to Non-Compliance

Where a Welfare Officer:

- Allows their vetting status to lapse,
- Fails to provide required evidence of compliance,
- Becomes subject to new safeguarding concerns,

...the club must immediately remove them from safeguarding responsibilities until suitability is confirmed. Failure to restore compliance may result in IGA affiliation review.

SAFEGUARDING TRAINING & COMPETENCE REQUIREMENTS

To ensure Welfare Officers effectively fulfil their safeguarding responsibilities, they must hold and maintain training and knowledge that is appropriate for their role, the level of risk in their club, and the legal requirements of their jurisdiction.

Training must be completed before a Welfare Officer actively assumes their duties.

Required Training for Welfare Officers

A Welfare Officer must complete:

- Initial Safeguarding Training relevant to their jurisdiction (e.g., child protection, adult safeguarding) (must be CPD accredited)
- Welfare Officer / Club Safeguarding Lead-specific training within appropriate timeframes (must be CPD accredited)
- Refresher training in accordance with regional guidance or within a timeframe set by IGA (typically every 3 years or sooner if duties or legislation change)

Where clubs operate with both children and vulnerable adults, training must cover both areas.

Recommended Competencies

A Welfare Officer should be able to demonstrate:

- Understanding of safeguarding legislation and reporting pathways relevant to their region
- Ability to respond appropriately to concerns, disclosures and allegations
- Knowledge of safe recruitment practices and supervision standards
- Strong interpersonal and communication skills
- Capability to maintain confidentiality and accurate documentation
- Understanding of equality, diversity and inclusion principles
- Confidence in engaging with parents, gymnasts, volunteers, coaches, and external agencies



Ongoing Learning & Skills Development

Welfare Officers must:

- Stay up to date with changes to safeguarding laws and best practice
- Take part in continuing professional development (CPD)
- Engage with IGA compliance updates, guidance briefings, and safeguarding forums when available
- Refresh and maintain basic knowledge of:
 - Recognising child abuse, neglect, emotional harm and online safety risks
 - Responding to concerns in a child-centred and supportive way
 - Maintaining professional boundaries

IGA may specify additional training where trends, concerns, or jurisdictional updates require upskilling.

Club Responsibilities for Training Support

IGA-affiliated clubs must:

- Ensure Welfare Officers are allocated time and resources to attend mandatory and refresher training
- Record training completion and update dates on each Welfare Officer's compliance record
- Review competence as part of safeguarding audits or development planning
- Provide access to learning materials, safeguarding information and professional support networks

Where training lapses or is overdue, the club must take immediate action to restore compliance.

Verification & Documentation

All safeguarding-training records must be:

- Documented and securely stored by the club
- Available for inspection by IGA during compliance audits
- Regularly reviewed to ensure training remains current and appropriate

Failure to produce up-to-date training records may be treated as non-compliance with safeguarding standards.

REPORTING, REFERRAL & LIAISON PROCEDURES

Principles

- The welfare and safety of children, young people and vulnerable adults must always be the primary concern.
- Any safeguarding concern, disclosure, allegation or suspicion must be treated seriously.
- Confidentiality must be maintained, but safeguarding concerns should never be ignored or hidden.
- Prompt action and correct reporting ensure compliance with legal duties and protect individuals and the club from harm or liability.



Internal Reporting Steps

When a concern, disclosure or incident arises:

1. Safeguard immediately — ensure the person at risk is safe and protected from further harm.
2. Notify Welfare Officer — the first person informed should be the club's designated Welfare Officer, regardless of their jurisdiction.
3. Document information — record date, time, persons involved, what was disclosed or observed, any visible signs (injury or behaviour), and immediate action taken. Use a confidential incident / safeguarding report form.
4. Discuss with Welfare Officer — Welfare Officer evaluates whether the concern requires external referral (based on seriousness, risk, local law) or can be managed internally per club safeguarding procedures and codes of conduct.
5. Inform parents/guardians (if applicable) — where policy and law permit/require, notify parents or guardians unless it would increase risk to the individual.

External Referral — When & How

Clubs must refer to statutory authorities when required by local safeguarding legislation or when:

- A child or vulnerable adult may be at risk of significant harm
- An alleged abuse (physical, sexual, emotional, neglect) occurs
- A disclosed concern suggests risk beyond club capacity to manage
- A criminal offence is alleged or may have occurred

Depending on jurisdiction:

- UK (England / Wales / Scotland / Northern Ireland): refer to local children's services / social services, or police as required.
- Republic of Ireland: refer to Túsla (Child and Family Agency) or other mandated body under Irish child-protection law.
- Channel Islands: refer to local statutory safeguarding authority.

Referrals must be made promptly, by the Welfare Officer or their deputy if unavailable.

After referral, the club must:

- notify IGA national Welfare & Compliance team
- provide support to individuals concerned
- preserve evidence and maintain confidentiality

Liaison with Statutory Agencies & External Bodies

Where a case is referred:

- The Welfare Officer should act as primary liaison between the club and external agencies (social services, police, child protection bodies, mandated persons)
- Provide full cooperation: share records, statements, logs, and consent-forms where legally permitted
- Maintain communication to monitor outcome and ensure appropriate club response

IGA may be notified for oversight, support, and compliance follow-up, especially where allegations involve serious harm, safeguarding risks, or multiple jurisdictions.



Confidentiality, Records & Data Protection

- All safeguarding reports must be stored securely, with access restricted to authorised personnel
- Only share information on a need-to-know basis or when legally required by statutory agencies — otherwise, maintain confidentiality
- Records of referrals, reports, investigations and decisions must be retained for minimum required periods defined in local law or data-protection policy
- Data protection laws (e.g. UK GDPR / local equivalents) must be respected at all times

Support for Individuals & Reporting Persons

Clubs must ensure:

- Individuals making reports or disclosures receive empathy, support and protection from retaliation
- Clear information is provided on what to expect after a report (investigation, referral, confidentiality, support)
- Access to support services, safeguarding advice or external counselling if needed
- Welfare Officer (or deputy) is available to discuss concerns in a safe, private environment

Review & Follow-Up

After a report or referral:

- The club must follow up on outcomes from statutory agencies, ensuring any recommendations are implemented
- Risk assessments and safeguarding procedures reviewed and updated if gap identified
- Lessons learned communicated to club members, staff and volunteers (anonymised) to improve safeguarding culture

CONFIDENTIALITY, DATA PROTECTION & RECORD KEEPING

Confidentiality, Data Protection & Record Keeping

Safeguarding information is highly sensitive. It must be managed in a lawful, secure and responsible manner to protect the rights, dignity and safety of children, young people, and adults at risk.

IGA and its affiliated clubs are committed to confidentiality while ensuring information is shared appropriately to prevent harm.

Confidentiality Principles

All safeguarding concerns, disclosures and reports must be treated as confidential. Information must only be shared:

- On a need-to-know basis
- For the purpose of safeguarding
- With individuals or agencies who have a legal right to know

Confidentiality must never prevent the reporting of a safeguarding concern or delay urgent action to protect a child or vulnerable adult.



Information Sharing

The Welfare Officer has responsibility for managing safeguarding information. They must:

- Share relevant information promptly with statutory agencies where there is a risk of harm
- Record what information is shared, with whom, and why
- Ensure parents/guardians are informed unless doing so would increase risk
- Seek guidance from IGA or safeguarding authorities if unsure

Staff and volunteers must not disclose safeguarding information to others without Welfare Officer approval.

Data-Protection Compliance

All safeguarding information must be handled in accordance with applicable data-protection laws for the jurisdiction in which the club operates, including:

- UK GDPR / Data Protection Act (UK)
- Data-protection requirements of Scotland, Northern Ireland, Republic of Ireland, and Channel Islands regulatory frameworks

Clubs must ensure:

- Access to safeguarding records is restricted to authorised personnel only
- Records are safely stored in a secure and locked location or encrypted digital system
- Information shared electronically is password-protected and encrypted where possible

No safeguarding information should be stored on personal devices unless authorised and secure.

Record Keeping Requirements

The Welfare Officer must ensure that records are:

- Accurate — fact-based and free from opinion or assumptions
- Timely — written as soon as possible after the concern or disclosure
- Complete — including dates, times, names, factual details, actions taken and outcomes
- Signed/attributed — indicating who made the report

Records must include:

- Concern/disclosure reports
- Referral and communication logs
- Correspondence with statutory agencies
- Follow-up actions and case closure decisions

Storage & Retention

Safeguarding records must be:

- Stored separately from general membership records
- Kept securely (locked cabinet or encrypted digital system)
- Retained for the minimum statutory period required for the jurisdiction, or longer where a case remains active

Where required by law or regulatory guidance, clubs must be prepared to provide records for audit, inspection or investigation.



Rights of Individuals

Subject access requests regarding safeguarding records must be managed carefully:

- Information may be withheld if disclosure could cause harm
- Requests must be managed with input from IGA and/or safeguarding authorities where appropriate
- Any disclosure must follow the correct legal process to protect all parties involved

MONITORING, REVIEW & RE-VETTING SCHEDULE

To safeguard participants effectively and ensure ongoing compliance, Welfare Officers' suitability, training, and vetting status must be regularly monitored and reviewed. Safeguarding best practice is dynamic, and clubs must ensure Welfare Officers remain up to date and capable of fulfilling their responsibilities at all times.

Ongoing Monitoring of Welfare Officer Compliance

IGA-affiliated clubs must continually monitor:

- Vetting status and expiration dates
- Completion of mandatory safeguarding training
- Adherence to role responsibilities and safeguarding expectations
- Any concerns raised regarding suitability or conduct
- Availability and accessibility of Welfare Officers during club operations

Clubs must address any identified compliance issues immediately.

Re-Vetting Requirements

Re-vetting must be conducted:

- In line with jurisdictional safeguarding law
 - DBS / PVG / Access NI renewal cycles vary by region
 - Clubs must check official renewal periods and remain compliant
- Sooner if:
 - A Welfare Officer changes jurisdiction
 - Concerns arise regarding conduct or suitability
 - Their role expands into new areas of responsibility

No Welfare Officer may carry out duties if their vetting has expired.

Safeguarding Training Review

Training must be:

- Renewed at least every 3 years, or sooner if legislation, guidance or club risk profile changes
- Confirmed as current during safeguarding audit or annual review
- Documented within the club's Compliance & Training Register

IGA may specify updated training requirements as safeguarding practices evolve.



Annual Welfare Compliance Review

Each club must conduct an annual safeguarding review to ensure:

- Welfare Officer information is current and publicly displayed
- Training and vetting records are in date
- Reporting procedures are understood by all staff and volunteers
- Any safeguarding incidents or trends are reviewed for learning
- Corrective actions are fully implemented and are effective

This review must be documented and made available to IGA upon request.

IGA Oversight & Audit

IGA may:

- Conduct periodic compliance audits
- Request evidence of vetting, training and Welfare Officer appointment
- Provide recommendations or enforce corrective actions
- Escalate concerns where non-compliance creates significant safeguarding risks

Failure to rectify non-compliance may result in suspension or withdrawal of club affiliation.

Continuous Improvement

Clubs and Welfare Officers should routinely reflect on:

- Lessons learned from safeguarding cases or near-misses
- Feedback from gymnasts, parents, coaches and volunteers
- Best practice changes in safeguarding and welfare standards
- Adjustments needed to policies, procedures or training

Safeguarding must be treated as an ongoing process of development and improvement.

LOCAL COMPLIANCE ADDENDUMS / JURISDICTIONAL GUIDANCE

IGA operates across multiple regions, each with different safeguarding legislation, reporting requirements, and vetting systems. To ensure every club remains compliant, this policy must be supported by a Local Compliance Addendum specific to the jurisdiction in which the club operates.

Purpose of Local Addendums

Local addendums ensure that each club:

- Follows the correct regional safeguarding laws
- Uses the appropriate vetting and suitability checks
- Applies accurate statutory reporting and referral procedures
- Is aware of the relevant local safeguarding authorities
- Understands any special roles or mandated responsibilities that apply in their region

Where there is any doubt, the highest protective standard must always be followed.



What Each Local Addendum Must Include

Each club must maintain and regularly update a local addendum that contains:

1. Legal and safeguarding frameworks applicable to its jurisdiction
2. Statutory reporting responsibilities
3. Local vetting requirements and renewal timelines
4. Local safeguarding authority contact information
5. Emergency contact details and escalation procedures
6. Any locally required safeguarding roles (e.g., designated contacts or liaison persons)
7. Links to local government and/or sports safeguarding guidance
8. Any additional obligations relating to:
 - Adults at risk
 - Equality, diversity and inclusion
 - Anti-bullying and behaviour safeguards

Clubs Operating in Multiple Jurisdictions

If a club runs activities in more than one region (e.g., competitions or training in different countries), it must:

- Identify which safeguarding legislation applies per activity location
- Ensure Welfare Officers are aware of correct referral pathways
- Update local addendums accordingly
- Apply the most stringent applicable requirements where overlap occurs

IGA may provide additional guidance for clubs frequently crossing regions.

Maintaining and Reviewing Local Addendums

- Clubs must conduct a minimum annual review of their addendum
- Amend immediately if local law, guidance, or regulatory structure changes
- Provide the updated addendum to IGA upon request
- Ensure all coaches, volunteers and staff are aware of jurisdiction-specific requirements

RESOURCES & USEFUL CONTACTS

The following organisations provide safeguarding guidance, support, and referral pathways. Clubs must ensure that up-to-date contact details for local safeguarding authorities are included in their Local Compliance Addendum.

IGA Internal Contacts

For safeguarding support, advice and escalation:

info@igauk.com
0345 319 7000

Serious safeguarding concerns must be reported to IGA within 24 hours.



National & Regional Support Contacts

(Clubs must update with local contact details where required)

- Local Children's Social Care / Social Services - (for urgent safeguarding concerns or suspected abuse)
- Local Police - Emergency: 999 (UK/Channel Islands) / 112 (Ireland)
- Non-emergency: 101 (UK) / local Garda station (Ireland)
- Regional Safeguarding Authority Contacts
 - England / Wales / Scotland / Northern Ireland: Local authority child protection teams
 - Republic of Ireland: Túsla Child & Family Agency (child protection referrals)
 - Channel Islands: Local safeguarding authority (details must be locally confirmed)

Emergency & Medical Assistance

In the event of immediate harm or risk:

999 (UK/NI/Channel Islands) / 112 (Ireland & Channel Islands)

Emergency responders should be given any relevant information to safeguard the individual involved.

Updating and Displaying Contacts

Each club must:

- Display Welfare Officer and emergency contact details clearly on-site and online
- Ensure all staff and volunteers are aware of reporting routes
- Regularly check and update Local Compliance Addendum contact information
- Include relevant contacts in onboarding information for parents and gymnasts

IMPLEMENTATION & COMPLIANCE ENFORCEMENT — CLUB AFFILIATION CONDITIONS

Safeguarding is a fundamental requirement of club affiliation to the Independent Gymnastics Association (IGA). All affiliated clubs must implement this policy in full. Compliance with these safeguarding standards is not optional and will be monitored on an ongoing basis.

Safeguarding as a Condition of Affiliation

To remain an IGA-affiliated club, each club must:

- Appoint and maintain at least one compliant Welfare Officer at all times
- Ensure full adherence to all requirements in this policy, including:
 - Vetting and re-vetting
 - Training and refresher requirements
 - Reporting and referral procedures
 - Confidential record keeping
 - Local jurisdiction compliance (Local Addendum)
- Provide evidence of compliance when requested by IGA
- Ensure safeguarding measures remain embedded in day-to-day club operations

Failure to meet any part of this policy constitutes a breach of affiliation conditions.



Implementation Responsibilities

Clubs must:

- Communicate this policy to all staff, volunteers and members
- Ensure Welfare Officer details and reporting procedures are clearly displayed
- Maintain safeguarding documentation and compliance logs
- Integrate safeguarding into club governance and decision-making
- Allocate necessary resources to support the Welfare Officer role effectively

IGA will provide guidance and tools to support implementation.

Compliance Monitoring & Audits

IGA may conduct compliance checks at any time, including:

- Welfare Officer vetting and training records
- Safeguarding incident logs and actions taken
- Visibility and accessibility of safeguarding contacts
- Appropriateness of risk management and supervision structures
- Verification of adherence to Legal & Jurisdictional Addendums

Clubs must fully cooperate with IGA compliance reviews.

Non-Compliance: Escalation Process

If a club fails to comply with safeguarding requirements, IGA may take the following steps:

1. Formal notification and corrective-action request
2. Specified timeframe to restore compliance
3. Increased monitoring or temporary practice restrictions
4. Suspension of affiliation for serious or ongoing non-compliance
5. Termination of affiliation where safety cannot be assured

Where safeguarding risk is immediate or severe, actions may escalate without warning.

Support and Guidance

IGA will:

- Provide training support and compliance resources
- Offer safeguarding advice and consultation where requested
- Assist clubs in improving their safeguarding standards
- Share learning and updates to support continuous improvement

Compliance enforcement aims to support clubs to be safer, not to punish mistakes — however, safety always comes first.