Equality and Respect in Sport

The workplace Equality and Respect Standards for sports organisations

Prepared by
Our Watch 2020

Our
WATCh
End violence against
Women And Their Children

Sport has a vital role to play in creating an Australia where women are not only safe but also respected, valued and treated as equals in private and public life.

The Equality and Respect in Sport Standards set the goals that sports organisations must achieve to address gender inequality and prevent violence against women.

These standards highlight what your organisation can do to create change in the three key areas of leadership, strategy, and norms and practices.

With the support of the Workplace Equality and Respect Standards package of helpful tools, you can contribute to creating an Australia where all women are safe, respected and equal.

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VICTORIA
State Government

Equality and Respect in Sport: Prevention of violence against women in sports organisations.
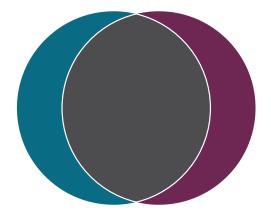
All violence is unacceptable, whether it occurs in the home, the workplace or the sporting field, and whether it is perpetrated by men or women.

To assist in prevention efforts, these Standards focus on the most common forms of violence and those for which we have the most research to guide us. This document explores how sports organisations can help prevent the high rates of violence experience by women in Australia.

Family violence

Most family violence is perpetrated by men against women.

Violence against women

Women also experience violence outside of the family, such as sexual assault and harassment by colleagues or clients.

The vast majority of acts of violence against both women and men are reported to have been perpetrated by men (ABS, 2017).

Violence against women takes many forms: physical, sexual, psychological and financial.

- Women are nearly three times more likely to have experienced violence from a current or former partner than men (ABS, 2017).

- One in five Australian women has experienced sexual violence compared to one in 20 Australian men (ABS, 2017).

- A recent Victorian survey reported 64% of women experience bullying, harassment or violence in their workplace (Victorian Trades Hall Council, 2017).

- 30% of workers in a national survey reported having experienced domestic violence during their lifetime (McFerran, 2011).

- Some population groups experience higher rates or more severe forms of violence, such as women with disabilities, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and LGBTIQ people (AIHW, 2019).

We all have a role to play in creating clubs, teams, workplaces, venues and communities where all women are safe, equal and valued.

Your sport can play a part in influencing the attitudes, behaviours, practices and structures that allow violence to occur.

Gender inequality drives violence against women.

We know that violence against women is much more likely when men and women are not treated equally and when women are valued and respected less than men.

Gender inequality intersects with other forms of discrimination such as racism, ableism, ageism, classism or homophobia and transphobia. This shapes how different women experience inequity and violence, including the frequency and severity of violence, and the barriers they face in accessing support.

Preventing violence against women means taking action to address these inequalities across our workplaces and sporting communities, to create an equal, safe and respectful society for everyone.

Gender equality

Violence against women

Whether intended or not, organisational policies, practices and cultures can also perpetuate gender inequality by devaluing, excluding or marginalising women. This can result in biased recruitment and promotion processes, the underrepresentation of women in leadership roles and the unequal sharing of resources.

Every conversation, policy and action has the potential to either reinforce or challenge gender and other forms of inequality and the kinds of attitudes and norms that drive violence.

Research tells us that there are four main drivers of violence against women:

Condoning violence against women

Attitudes, words and actions that trivialise, make light of or justify violence against women allow people to think violence is acceptable or excusable.

Men's control of decision making and limits to women's independence

When men control decisions and recources in the home, workplace or community, they have an opportunity to abuse power with violence, while women have less power to stop it, call it out, or leave.

Rigid gender roles and stereotypes about masculinity and femininity

Strict ideas about women and men's roles, identities and relationships can contribute to a culture that supports violence. When male dominance is normalised, violence can be used to 'punish' women who don't conform to expected roles.

Men disrespecting women to bond with other men

When aggression and disrespect towards women are seen as natural parts of being 'one of the boys', it is more likely violence towards women will be excused- by the perpetrator, their peers and the wider community.

Miriam is well respected at work but as the only woman on the executive team she sometimes feels outnumbered. She is recommending a new family violence leave policy but, despite saying they're supportive, her colleagues insist they need to prioritise core business. While the business case for a family violence policy is strong, Miriam doesn't press the issue as she's seen what happens to women who push too hard.

Mark has always been 'one of the boys' and laughs along with sexist jokes and disrespectful comments about women at the game. When he finds out one of the guys from his team has been violent towards their partner, he is shocked.
He thought everyone knew they were just kidding around - that it was just locker room talk.

There are many opportunities across sport to change these stories, at work and on the ground.

Preventing violence against women and promoting gender equality will benefit your staff and organisation.

Attract and retain talent and increase staff performance

Employee turnover is widespread, with figures suggesting that workplaces experience staff turnover of 16% each year (AHRI, 2015). It has been widely established that inclusive workplaces are associated with reduced turnover (O'Leary et al., 2015). A workplace that is known to support women and men to reach their potential will have a competitive advantage in attracting and retaining the best talent. Diverse, inclusive and respectful workplaces produce higher satisfaction levels, which increase employee engagement and performance.

Save money and increase profits

Violence against women cost Australian employers $1.9 billion in 2014–15 (Australian Government, 2016). These costs tend to be invisible, but include leave and staff turnover, absenteeism and lost productivity. On the other hand, workplace gender equality can increase profits – one study suggested that shifting from an all-male or all-female office to one split evenly along gender lines could increase revenue by over 40% (Ellison & Mullins, 2014).

"Companies with more women board directors experience higher financial performance."
Catalyst, 2017

"Workplaces that encourage employees to voice their opinions and be involved in decision making have on average 33% lower employee turnover."
O'Leary et al., 2015

Enhance understanding of diverse markets and clients

Just as 70% of retail decisions are influenced by women, a high proportion of service users and stakeholders are women. Gender equality in your workforce gives you more understanding of how to reach and engage all customers and clients.

Minimise risk and ensure staff wellbeing

You have a duty to ensure the wellbeing of your employees and prevent discrimination and harassment. Meeting these obligations minimises your risk of financial and reputational loss from lawsuits caused by discrimination.

Support positive change and enhance your reputation

Working to change the social and structural conditions that drive violence is good for business. You build trust and loyalty, and enhance your reputation by showing leadership on issues the community cares about.

"Companies in the top quartile for gender diversity are 15% more likely to have financial returns above national industry medians."
Hunt, et al., 2015

"Over 98% of respondents expect employers to ensure that women are provided with the same opportunities as men."
Pennay & Powell, 2012

The Equality and Respect in Sport Standards set out what needs to be done to truly embed equality and respect in any sports organisation.

The five Standards and their associated Elements will support you to:

- secure the **commitment** of leaders and staff
- ensure **conditions** support gender equality
- reject sexist and discriminatory **culture**
- **support** staff and stakeholders who experience violence
- integrate gender equality into your core **business.**

STAFF FOCUS

1	Commitment
2	Conditions
3	Culture
4	Support
5	Our Business

STAKEHOLDER FOCUS

Equality and Respect in Sport:
Key steps and tools

The Basics

STEP 1   Getting Started

Identifying staff to lead the work internally

Understanding violence against women and how sports organisations can prevent it

Securing genuine commitment from leaders

Ensuring workplaces can respond to staff who experience violence

HELPFUL TOOLS
- Standards
- Implementation guide
- Introductory training

The Next Steps

STEP 2   Prioritising and planning

Consulting and engaging staff and key stakeholders

Collecting data on your organisation

Assessing your organisation against the Standards to determine priorities

Developing/revising a long-term strategy and immediate action plan

HELPFUL TOOLS
- Self-assessment tool
- Gender Equality Indicators
- Staff survey

STEP 3   Taking action

Implementing priority actions to support gender equality

HELPFUL TOOLS
- Equality and Respect in Sport Website

ANNUAL CYCLE

The Workplace Equality and Respect Standards help you:

- **understand** how workplaces can address the drivers of violence against women, based on evidence and experience

- **identify** structures, norms and practices that devalue, exclude or marginalise women, and prioritise areas for action

- **measure** baseline performance and track your progress over time against key indicators of workplace gender equality

- **develop** long-term strategies and immediate action plans

- **implement** actions to address the drivers of violence against women

- **communicate** effectively to support cultural change in your organisation and your sports community.

No two sports organisations are the same.

An effective approach to preventing violence against women needs to be:

- tailored to suit the individual resources, capacity and cultural needs of the workplace

- owned and driven by the organisation

- supported by a long-term strategy

- evidence based

- focused on changing organisational culture

- a process of continual improvement.

The Standards can be used by any sporting organisation, regardless of type or size.

All organisations – large and small and in all sectors – can help prevent violence against women by promoting equality and respect and working towards gender equality.

All contributions to this shared community goal are valuable.

The particular way you work towards meeting the Standards will depend on the current situation in your organisation, the processes and structures already in place, and the resources available.

You don't need to meet all criteria, nor undertake all good practice actions from the start. The Self-Assessment Tool is specifically designed to help you identify areas for improvement and priorities based on your needs and resources.

We're a small organisation – what can we do?

We don't have dedicated HR staff – how can we do it?

Standards and Elements

The Standards are what all sports organisations should work towards meeting to ensure workplace equality and respect.

They focus on what you can do with your staff and your external stakeholders to address the drivers of violence against women.

The Elements describe what needs to be achieved to meet each Standard in terms of:

- leadership
- strategy
- norms and practices.

Equality and Respect in Sport Standards

STAFF FOCUS

1 Commitment

We are commited to preventing violence against women and have structures, strategies and policies that explicitly promote gender equality.

2 Conditions

We embed gender equality in our recruitment, remuneration and promotion processes and men and women utilise flexible work options, without penalty.

3 Culture

All staff feel safe and confident to express themselves, and gender stereotypes, roles and norms are actively challenged in the workplace.

Staff can raise concerns about gender inequality and potential discrimination without adverse consequences.

4 Support

We have the structures, practices and culture to ensure an appropriate response to staff and external stakeholders who experience violence, bullying and sexual harassment.

5 Our Business

We demonstrate our commitment to gender equality and the prevention of violence against women in all our work and interactions with stakeholders.

STAKEHOLDER FOCUS

Key areas for action

NORMS & PRACTICES

Norms and practices reflect and impact on gender equality.

Acceptable attitudes and behaviours are shaped by messages that friends, family and social institutions reinforce.

Sports organisations need to use their powerful influence to support attitude and behaviour change.

LEADERSHIP

Leadership shapes what is expected, accepted and applauded in the workplace.

Leaders across the organisation must actively and visibly support and model gender equality to prevent violence against women, and ensure the necessary resources to support organisational change.

STRATEGY

Strategy is essential to driving, supporting and sustaining change.

All practices and processes must represent, include and be accountable to women and support the structural and cultural changes necessary to achieve and sustain gender equality.

1.
COMMITMENT

STANDARD

We are committed to preventing violence against women and we have structures, strategies and policies that explicitly promote gender equality.

ELEMENTS

LEADERSHIP

- Our leaders consistently demonstrate a commitment to preventing violence against women.

STRATEGY

- We promote gender equality in our strategies, policies and procedures.

- We have dedicated resources and budget to actively address gender inequality and the drivers of violence against women within our workplace.

NORMS & PRACTICES

- We hold staff accountable for consistently promoting gender equality in all communications, organisational plans and activities.

1.

COMMITMENT

WHY DOES IT MATTER?

When societies and institutions condone violence against women, rates of violence are higher.

Workplace leaders have a key role in setting new standards by actively addressing gender and other forms of inequality and taking action to end violence against women.

WHAT DOES IT TAKE?

- Well-informed leaders who are committed to actively promoting gender equality in strategies, policies and their individual actions are vital.

- Appoint key staff to lead work on gender equality and give them the time and resources they need to take action.

- Gender equality work is guided by women from a range of backgrounds and centres the voices of those who have the least power.

- Implement measures of accountability that will support change – these might include public statements, targets and quotas, and procedures to avoid bias.

- Deliberately promote gender equality through communications and keep staff and stakeholders informed – not just about the organisation's commitment but also its progress towards achieving workplace equality.

ORGANISATIONAL BENEFITS
ATTRACT TALENT

INCREASE STAFF SATISFACTION AND RETENTION

ENHANCE REPUTATION AND GROW MARKET SHARE

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2.
CONDITIONS

STANDARD

We embed gender equality in our recruitment, remuneration and promotion processes, and men and women utilise flexible work options without penalty.

ELEMENTS

LEADERSHIP
- We have structural support for women's leadership, including the provision of leadership opportunities for part-time staff; and male and female leaders model the use of flexible work options.

STRATEGY
- We implement deliberate strategies to recruit, train, mentor and retain women in leadership roles.

- We make efforts to reduce the gender pay gap and give all staff access to flexible work options and parental leave.

NORMS & PRACTICES
- Our workplace culture and communication promotes and supports flexible work and parental leave for both men and women.

- We have transparent practices to help uphold commitments to gender equality in recruitment, professional development and career progression.

2.

CONDITIONS

ORGANISATIONAL BENEFITS
ENSURE RECRUITMENT OF
THE BEST CANDIDATES

INCREASE STAFF SATISFACTION
AND RETENTION

SUPPORT MARKET SHARE GROWTH
WITH WORKFORCE DIVERSITY

WHY DOES IT MATTER?

Women having less power and independence than men is one of the drivers of violence against women. Women will continue to be underrepresented in leadership and have less power until inequitable structures and biases that lead to discrimination against women are identified and addressed.

WHAT DOES IT TAKE?

- Start with statistics – take a look at pay, seniority and length of contracts This will tell you where to focus efforts to achieve gender equality for men and women in your workplace, including understanding which men and women currently benefit the most and who does not.

- Use transparent recruitment and promotion processes that include actions to eliminate bias, and applaud women's leadership – this will support progress.

- Make sure flexible work and access to parental leave are secured in enterprise agreements and policies. These must be supported by leaders, embedded in the culture, and promoted to both female and male staff.

- A workplace culture that genuinely supports men and women to balance work and care responsibilities is needed for true gender equality in the workplace.

3.
CULTURE

STANDARD

All staff feel safe and confident in our workplace, and we actively challenge gender stereotypes, roles and norms.

Staff can raise concerns about gender inequality and discrimination without adverse consequences.

ELEMENTS

LEADERSHIP

- Our leaders challenge gender stereotypes, discrimination and attitudes that support male superiority, and think critically about styles of leadership that are valued and rewarded in the workplace.

- Our leaders consistently model respectful and equal relationships between men and women.

STRATEGY

- Our policies and procedures (i.e. code of conduct, induction, occupational health and safety, equal opportunity etc.) include proactive measures to address gender inequality.

NORMS & PRACTICES

- Staff across our workplace understand the importance of promoting gender equality and know they will be supported to challenge sexism and raise issues relating to gender and discrimination.

- We actively avoid perpetuating gender stereotypes in our communications across the workplace; and we have implemented strategies to minimise backlash or resistance and build support for change.

3.
CULTURE

ORGANISATIONAL BENEFITS
SUPPORT AND ATTRACT
FEMALE LEADERS

DIVERSIFY VIEWS AND
FOSTER INNOVATION

ENSURE A SAFE WORK
ENVIRONMENT FOR ALL STAFF

WHY DOES IT MATTER?

Violence against women is more common in communities with rigid ideas about what it means to be a 'real man' or 'real woman' and where men use disrespect towards women as a way of bonding with each other. Peer relationships and stereotypes can be formed and shaped in the workplace, so what an organisation accepts and rewards will influence attitudes, behaviours and culture.

WHAT DOES IT TAKE?

• Organisational change takes courage and commitment. Take a stand against sexist or discriminatory language and images in the workplace and create a culture where staff feel they can do the same without being ignored or penalised.

• Give leaders information, training and space to think critically about how workplace culture might be perpetuating the status quo: are stereotypes and discrimination part of our workplace? How do the leadership styles we value and promote favour men or women? Do we exclude, undervalue or fail to credit women's leadership and opinions in our communications and decision making?

• Whatever action you take, use communications to challenge stereotypes and help staff see the link between gender equality and violence again women.

4.

SUPPORT

STANDARD

We have the structures, practices and culture to respond appropriately to staff and stakeholders affected by violence, bullying and sexual harassment.

ELEMENTS

LEADERSHIP
- Our leaders consistently reject any form of violence or harassment, whether occurring within or outside of the workplace.

STRATEGY
- We have clear policies and procedures to provide appropriate support for staff and stakeholders who experience violence; and we make sure employees don't use workplace resources to commit any act of violence.

NORMS & PRACTICES
- We have the partnerships, systems and trained staff to respond promptly and appropriately to complaints and claims about violence and sexual harassment.

4.

SUPPORT

ORGANISATIONAL BENEFITS
MEET DUTY TO ENSURE
STAFF WELLBEING

SUPPORT PEOPLE EXPERIENCING
VIOLENCE AT A CRITICAL TIME

REDUCE STAFF TURNOVER AND
LOST PRODUCTIVITY COSTS

WHY DOES IT MATTER?

For those who experience violence, a supportive workplace and stable income can offer strength at a critical time. Appropriate systems and cultures of support not only ensure wellbeing and safety but also send a clear message that violence is not acceptable and perpetrators should be held accountable for their actions.

WHAT DOES IT TAKE?

- Make sure you have clear best-practice policies and procedures to support staff who experience violence or bullying. Be proactive about letting people know their rights and entitlements. Consider whether you have a responsibility to support any stakeholders in a similar way.

- Train and support key staff responsible for implementing policies to respond appropriately. Hold leaders accountable for minimising or justifying sexism, harassment or violence in any internal and external communication.

- Check in consistently to ensure that staff making complaints or disclosures are supported, that issues raised are always taken seriously and dealt with appropriately and effectively.

5.
OUR BUSINESS

STANDARD

The work we do and the way we promote it aligns with our commitment to gender equality and the prevention of violence against women.

ELEMENTS

LEADERSHIP

- Our leaders effectively use our work and public profile to demonstrate support for gender equality and the prevention of violence against women.

STRATEGY

- We integrate key actions to promote gender equality into our core business, and our engagement with the community reflects our commitment to gender equality and preventing violence against women.

NORMS & PRACTICES

- Our stakeholder engagement activities, public statements and external communications reflect our commitment to promoting gender equality, rejecting sexism and challenging attitudes that justify, minimise, trivialise or excuse violence against women.

5.

OUR BUSINESS

ORGANISATIONAL BENEFITS
LEAD OTHER WORKPLACES TO CHANGE

ENHANCE REPUTATION AND COMMUNITY STANDING

SHIFT SOCIAL NORMS THAT SUPPORT VIOLENCE

WHY DOES IT MATTER?

Attitudes and behaviours that justify, excuse or downplay violence against women create a supportive environment for violence against women to occur.

In their interactions with stakeholders, workplaces can use their status and influence to challenge the condoning of violence against women and promote gender equality.

WHAT DOES IT TAKE?

- Use your organisation's influence outside the workplace – with clients, customers or the community – to challenge the drivers of violence against women and promote gender equality.

- Whether you're talking one-on-one or developing a wider campaign, reflect your organisation's commitment to supporting gender equality in all communications. This is as much about what is said as it is about who is doing the talking, so consider who is representing your organisation publicly.

- Consider how the things you already do every day in running your business might impact on gender equality and use the opportunities you have – through advertising, sponsorship, stakeholder engagement or supply chains – to challenge stereotypes, support women's leadership and independence, and promote gender equality.

Tools, resources and next steps

There are several tools and resources that can support you to meet the *Equality and Respect in Sport Standards*:

- The *Implementation Guide and Intersectional Reflection Tool* provides more details to help you understand what steps to take and how to meet each Standard, with examples of good practice.

- The *Self-Assessment Tool, Staff Survey* and *Gender Equality Indicators* help you reflect, and identify areas of strength and areas where improvement is needed.

Equality and Respect in Sport: The Standards	→	Implementation Guide	→	Self-Assessment Tool
				Gender Equality Indicators

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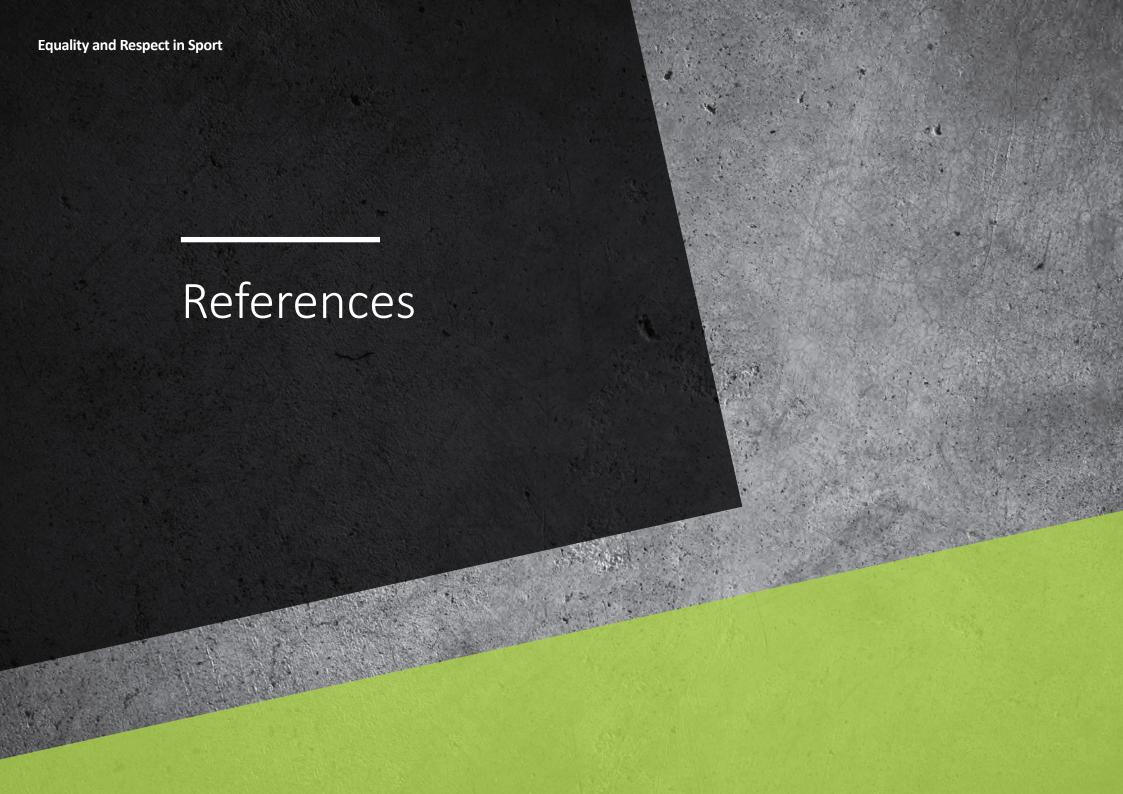
Women's Health Loddon Mallee
For more information see the Women's Health Loddon Mallee website (http://www.whlm.org.au) or download a copy of the Gender Equity Quality Standards here: http://www.whlm.org.au/?s=quality+standards.

VicHealth (Victorian Health Promotion Foundation) and EnMasse
To access the Equal Footing toolkit, developed by VicHealth and EnMasse visit https://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/media-and-resources/publications/equal-footing-toolkit

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