



## HKTA Child Protection Policy

### 1. Introduction

- A. All children have the right to be protected against harm and exploitation regardless of their race, language, religion, immigration status, gender, age, health or ability and behaviour.
- B. The purpose of the HKTA Child Protection Policy (this policy) is to protect the health, safety and well-being of children who participate in the activities of Hong Kong Tennis Association (HKTA), including those delivered by affiliated individuals, organizations and clubs.
- C. HKTA takes, seriously, its responsibility to provide a safe environment for children under the age of 18 years, participating in tennis, and has a “zero tolerance” for Child Abuse.
- D. HKTA considers any form of Child Abuse; be it sexual, physical or psychological in nature, against a child, by a person involved in tennis, as a serious offence and such conduct will not be tolerated.

### 2. Obligation

- A. All relevant persons of the organization have the obligation and responsibility to ensure the protection of children.
- B. HKTA has a “Mandatory Reporting” policy. Any person involved with the organization who witnesses an incident of child abuse or neglect, or is made aware of such an incident by a third party, MUST report the incident.
- C. The mandatory report can be made to any member of HKTA management or staff.
  - a. HKTA recognizes the importance of reporting of such incidents, to be immediate and without hesitation, and will act on any report made to HKTA management or staff.

### 3. Objective

- A. The objective of the HKTA Child Protection Policy is to ensure all children of the organization, are able to receive training, participate in events and activities, and have access to services in a safe environment, and to provide protection to the children suspected to be abused, or having been abused.

### 4. Scope

- A. The HKTA Child Protection Policy protects all children:
  - a. Participating in tournaments, competitions, or leagues, conducted, endorsed or approved by HKTA;
  - b. Taking part in domestic or international tennis tours conducted, endorsed or approved by HKTA;
  - c. Training in HKTA player development programs;
  - d. Receiving private tennis lessons by full-time or part-time HKTA coaches; and,



- e. Participating in tournaments, competitions, leagues, or taking part in tennis tours, or receiving training or coaching, from a HKTA Licensed Coach.
- B. The HKTA Child Protection Policy applies to:
- a. Persons and administrators appointed or elected to boards of directors, or committees (including sub-committees),
  - b. Employees of HKTA (full-time and part-time),
  - c. Contractors engaged by HKTA,
  - d. Officials appointed or selected by HKTA in relation to players and/or teams which represent HKTA, including team management personnel such as team captains, coaches, managers, physiotherapists etc.,
  - e. Tennis coaches (including assistant coaches) who are appointed and/or employed by HKTA (whether paid or unpaid),
  - f. HKTA Licensed Coaches,
  - g. Referees, umpires and other officials (e.g. lines persons) involved in the regulation of the game of tennis, appointed by HKTA,
  - h. Tennis players who enter any tournament, competition, league, activity or event (including camps and training sessions) which are conducted or endorsed by HKTA,
  - i. Any other person who is member of, or affiliated with HKTA (including life members);
  - j. Any other person or entity (for example a parent/guardian, spectator or sponsor) who or which agrees, in writing, (whether on a ticket, entry form or otherwise) to be bound by this policy.
- C. If an incident of Child Abuse is witnessed, or if information is received regarding an incident of Child Abuse, it MUST be reported to HKTA (management or staff), as per the “Mandatory Reporting” procedure.
- a. Management or staff receiving a report of Child Abuse MUST report immediately to the HKTA Chief Executive Officer (“CEO”).
  - b. Management or staff making the report are to be aware that the incident MUST be reported to the HKTA CEO.
  - c. Management and staff making the report are to be aware that the incident may involve the police.
- D. Complaints will be investigated, and retaliation towards the person filing the complaint will not be tolerated.

## **5. Definition of Child Abuse, Assault, Neglect.**

- A. Child Abuse is broadly defined as any act of commission or omission that endangers or impairs the physical or psychological health and development of an individual under the age of 18.
- B. Child Abuse can be sexual, physical or psychological in nature.
  - a. Sexual Abuse is the involvement of a child in sexual activity (e.g. rape, oral sex) which is unlawful, or to which a child is unable to give informed consent. This includes direct or indirect sexual exploitation and abuse of a child (e.g. production of pornographic material).



- b. Physical Abuse is a physical injury or physical suffering to a child (including non-accidental use of force, deliberate poisoning, suffocation, burning etc.) where the injury has been inflicted non-accidentally; and,
  - c. Psychological Abuse is the repeated pattern of behaviour and attitudes towards a child, or an extreme incident, that endangers or impairs the child's emotional or intellectual development.
- C. Child Abuse also includes the act of Neglect which is a severe or repeated pattern of lack or attention to a child's basic needs that endangers or impairs the child's health or development. It may be physical, medical, educational or emotional.
- D. Child Abuse is any such act toward a child from an adult, or another child, or children.
- E. Child Abuse can be a single incident or a pattern of abuse over an extended period of time.
- F. Child Abuse may occur to any child, regardless of gender, and between a child and an adult of the same or opposite gender.
- G. Incidents of Child Abuse are related to power in a relationship, i.e. the adult is always in a position of authority over a child.
- H. Social Media as a platform for Child Abuse.
- a. Social Media refers to any interactive website or technology that enables a person to communicate and/or share content via the internet. This includes, but is not limited to, social networking websites such as Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, Instagram, and Snapchat.
  - b. Persons bound by this policy must conduct themselves appropriately when using social networking sites to share information.
  - c. Social Media must not be used as a platform for Child Abuse, and therefore must not contain material which is, or has the potential to be, offensive, aggressive, defamatory, threatening, discriminatory, obscene, profane, harassing, embarrassing, intimidating, sexually explicit, bullying, hateful, racist, sexist or otherwise inappropriate.

## 6. Child Abuse Reporting and Complaint Lodging Mechanism

Any incident, or suspected incident, of Child Abuse MUST be reported in the following manner:

- A. The incident can be reported to any member of HKTA management or staff.
  - a. HKTA recognizes that the reporter must feel comfortable with disclosing.
  - b. The report can be written or verbal, however the reporter must recognize that the incident will be documented (in written form) during the reporting and investigation process.
- B. The HKTA management or staff member MUST report immediately to the HKTA CEO.
  - a. The report must be presented in written form.



- C. The CEO will then be responsible for handling the complaint of Child Abuse.
- D. Any complaint, or reporting of Child Abuse will be treated with:
  - a. The utmost seriousness,
  - b. Equal priority to any other report of complaint.
  - c. The appropriate discretion.

## **7. Disciplinary Actions**

- A. Breaches of this policy will lead to disciplinary actions and may also entail civil liability and even criminal consequences.
- B. Appropriate sanctions will be imposed by HKTA Council, depending on the seriousness and severity of the violation.

## **8. Recruitment and Screening**

Screening is an important element of Child Protection. Screenings should be conducted for existing and potential employees, and volunteers (refer to Scope 4. B.) Thorough screening requires:

- A. Checking referees.
  - Including making verbal or written enquiries of the person's nominated referees (preferably at least two) as to the person's suitability for the role and their suitability for involvement with children under 18 years of age.
- B. Interviewing the person.
  - Including questioning the person as to their suitability for the role and their suitability for involvement with children under 18 years of age.
- C. Obtaining a Sexual Conviction Record.
  - As a mandatory component of screening and recruitment.
- D. Obtaining other relevant police checks.
  - As a Sexual Conviction Record may not show up a record of physical abuse or neglect.

If the outcome of the screening process results in the discovery of relevant criminal history, including any offence involving violence, abuse or assault against a child, then:

- i. Persons who are seeking appointment (whether full-time, part-time or otherwise) to work with children under 18 years of age, as coaches, team managers, tournament directors, officials and umpires (paid or unpaid), should not be appointed.
- ii. Persons seeking appointment to a role in which they are likely to have unsupervised contact with children under 18 years of age, should not be appointed.
- iii. In the case of an existing employee, subject to obtaining appropriate legal advice beforehand, the appointment of the person should be ended.