



CHILD SAFETY AND WELLBEING POLICY

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 HRCav is committed to ensuring that children and young people who participate in its activities have a safe and happy experience. HRCav supports and respects children, young people, staff, volunteers, and participants.
- 1.2 The aim of HRCav's Child Safe Policy (the Policy) is to protect the safety of children in our care and prevent abuse from occurring, and in the event that allegations are raised in relation to child abuse, to ensure that the allegations are properly addressed. All complaints will be treated seriously and fully investigated and handled with maximum confidentiality and discretion.
- 1.3 Should a person wish to make any enquiries in relation to this Policy, please contact the HRCav Child Safety Officer by telephone (03) 9877 0330 or email info@hrcav.com.au

2. POLICY STATEMENT

- 2.2 HRCav is committed to providing the highest level of membership service. This includes protecting members' privacy, promoting positive behaviours and attitudes, protecting the health safety and wellbeing of members, particularly children and delivering the HRCav's activities while acting in the best interests of children involved in HRCav sanctioned activities.
- 2.3 Specifically, HRCav considers that the health, safety and well-being of children take priority over all other competing considerations. HRCav considers that this is necessary to ensure the health, safety and welfare of all members and protect the image and reputation of the association, HRCav and its affiliate members.
- 2.4 HRCav has a zero-tolerance approach to child abuse and is committed to promoting and protecting children from abuse and neglect to the greatest extent possible. All children have equal rights to protection from child abuse, regardless of their sex, religion, disability, or sexual orientation etc.
- 2.5 Child protection is a shared responsibility between HRCav, its employees, workers, contractors, associates, parents/guardians, coaches, spectators, volunteers, and members of the HRCav community. Everyone that participates in HRCav's activities is responsible for the care and protection of children and reporting information about child abuse.
- 2.6 HRCav supports the active participation of all children. It listens to their views, respects their views, and involves them when making decisions, where appropriate, especially about matters that will directly affect them (including their safety). Some of the ways in which the HRCav empowers children are:
- 2.7 HRCav is also committed to the cultural safety of Aboriginal children, and those from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, and to providing a safe environment for children living with a disability.



HORSE RIDING CLUBS ASSOCIATION OF VICTORIA

OFFICIAL POLICY

We create a culturally safe sporting environment in which we:

- a) uphold the rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children/Young People to:
 - i. identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander with pride and without fear of retribution or questioning;
 - ii. to express their Culture as they deem appropriate;
 - iii. receive an education that strengthens their Culture and identity;
 - iv. maintain connection to their land and Country;
 - v. maintain their strong kinship ties and social obligations;
 - vi. be taught their cultural heritage by their Elders and community;
 - vii. receive information in a culturally sensitive, relevant and accessible manner;
 - and
 - viii. be involved in services that are culturally respectful.
- (b) take action to grow inclusiveness for all cultural identities and to establish equitable, respectful and empowering engagement with culturally and linguistically diverse communities.

2.8 HRCav promotes fairness and consideration for all HRCav employees, volunteers, members, and participants.

3. SCOPE OF POLICY

3.1 This Policy applies to all HRCav affiliated Clubs, members and employees of those Clubs and bodies, participants, parents/guardians of Junior Members, spectators, contractors, officials, coaches, judges and staff throughout all HRCav events and activities.

3.2 This Policy will continue to apply retrospectively to a person or member following the cessation of their association or employment with HRCav.

3.3 Affiliation with HRCav is conditional on an affiliated Club implementing and complying with this Policy. Failure to implement and comply with this Policy may cause HRCav to end its affiliation with a club that is in breach of its obligations.

4. RELATED DOCUMENTS & LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS

4.1 This Policy must be read in conjunction with the relevant Commonwealth and State legislation:
VICTORIA

4.1.1 the law of the Commonwealth and Victoria including but not limited to:

- 4.1.1.1 Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 (Vic)
- 4.1.1.2 Child Wellbeing and Safety (Child Safe Standards Compliance Enforcement) Amendment Act 2021
- 4.1.1.3 Crimes Act 1958 (Vic); and
- 4.1.1.4 Working with Children Act 2005 (Vic)
- 4.1.1.5 Worker Screening Act 2020

[NEW SOUTH WALES](#)

[COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENTS FOR NSW BASED CLUBS](#)

[SOUTH AUSTRALIA](#)

[COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENTS FOR SA BASED CLUBS](#)

4.1.2 HRCav policies and procedures, including but not limited to:

- 4.1.2.1 Privacy Policy;
- 4.1.2.2 Constitution;
- 4.1.2.3 HRCav rules;
- 4.1.2.4 Codes of Conduct;
- 4.1.2.5 Risk Management Policy and Guidelines;
- 4.1.2.6 Grievance and Discipline procedures;
- 4.1.2.7 Social Media Policy
- 4.1.2.8 Member Protection Policy

5. DEFINITIONS

- 5.1 **Child** means a person involved in the activities of HRCav and under the age of 18 years unless otherwise stated under the law applicable to the child.
- 5.2 **Child Abuse** is the mistreatment of a Child or Young Person that has Harmed, is Harming, or is likely to Harm or endanger that Child or Young Person's physical or emotional health, development or wellbeing and the Child has not, or is not likely to be protected by the parent(s) or guardian(s). For the avoidance of doubt, this includes but is not limited to Emotional or Psychological Abuse, Bullying, Grooming, Sexual Exploitation, Neglect and Harassment.
- 5.3 **Child protection** means any responsibility, measure or activity undertaken to safeguard children from harm.
- 5.4 **Grooming** is a term used to describe what happens when a perpetrator of Abuse builds a relationship with a Child with a view to abusing them at some stage. There is no set pattern in relation to the Grooming of Children. For some perpetrators, there will be a lengthy period of time before the Abuse begins. The Child may be given special attention and what starts as an apparently normal display of affection, such as cuddling, can develop into sexual touching or masturbation and then into more serious sexual behaviour. Other perpetrators may draw a Child in and Abuse them relatively quickly. Some abusers do not groom Children but Abuse them without forming a relationship at all. Grooming can take place in any setting where a relationship is formed, such as leisure, music, sports and religious activities, or in internet chatrooms, in social media or by other technological channels.
- 5.5 **Harm** means Harm to a person or a Child is any detrimental effect of a significant nature to the person or Child's physical, psychological or emotional wellbeing. It is immaterial how the harm is caused. Harm can be caused by:
- Physical, Psychological or Emotional Abuse or Neglect;
 - Sexual Abuse or Exploitation;
 - a single act, omission or circumstance; and
 - a series or combination of acts, omissions or circumstances.
- 5.6 **Sexual offence** means a criminal offence involving sexual activity or actions of indecency or any act which exposes a child to, or involves a child in, sexual activity or matters beyond his or her understanding or contrary to accepted community standards. Sexual offence behaviours can include the fondling of genitals, masturbation, oral sex, vaginal or anal penetration by a penis,

finger, or any other object, fondling of breasts, voyeurism, exhibitionism, and exposing the child to or involving the child in pornography. It includes child grooming, which includes actions deliberately undertaken with the aim of befriending and establishing an emotional connection with a child (or the child's carer, family, or supervisor) to lower the child's inhibitions and prepare them for engagement in a sexual offence.

- 5.7 **Mandatory reporter** means a person who is legally required to make a report to the relevant government authority or the Police if they form a belief on reasonable grounds that a child needs protection. It includes (but is not limited to) teachers, principals, registered psychologists, nurses, doctors, and midwives.

6. RECOGNISING AND REPORTING CHILD ABUSE

- 6.1 A person may, in the course of participating in the events or other activities of the HRCAV or affiliated Clubs or carrying out their work, form a belief on reasonable grounds that a child is in need of protection from child abuse.

- 6.2 If a person is concerned about an immediate risk to a child's safety, the person must phone "000" as soon as practicable.

- 6.3 **Specific types of Child abuse** include:

- 6.3.1 **Physical abuse:** occurs when a child has suffered, or is likely to suffer, significant harm as a result of a physical injury, such as a non-accidental physical injury.
- 6.3.2 **Sexual abuse:** occurs when a child has suffered, or is likely to suffer, significant harm as a result of sexual abuse, such as when a child is exploited, or used by another for his or her sexual gratification or sexual arousal, or for that of others.
- 6.3.3 **Emotional and psychological abuse:** occurs when a child has suffered, or is likely to suffer, emotional or psychological harm of such a kind that the child's emotional or intellectual development is or is likely to be significantly damaged; and
- 6.3.4 **Neglect:** occurs when a child's physical development or health has been, or is likely to be significantly damaged. It refers to an omission, such as depriving a child of food, clothing, warmth, hygiene, intellectual stimulation, supervision and safety, attachment to and affection from adults, or medical care.

- 6.4 **Mandatory Reporters**

- 6.4.1 Select classes of people in the community (including teachers, nurses, and doctors - amongst others) are required by law to report to the relevant government body where they have formed a belief, on reasonable grounds, that a child is in need of protection because they have suffered (or are likely to suffer) significant harm due to physical or sexual abuse.
- 6.4.2 This report must be made as soon as practicable, and after each occasion where he or she becomes aware of a further reasonable grounds for the belief.

- 6.5 **Reasonable grounds for belief**

- 6.5.1 A reasonable belief is formed if a reasonable person believes that:

- 6.5.1.1 the child is in need of protection;
- 6.5.1.2 the child has suffered or is likely to suffer significant harm as a result of physical or sexual injury; and
- 6.5.1.3 the child's parents are unable or unwilling to protect the child.

6.5.2 To form a reasonable belief, you should consider and objectively assess all the relevant facts, such as the source of the allegation and how it was communicated, the nature of and details of the allegation, and whether there is any other related matters known regarding the alleged perpetrator.

6.5.3 A 'reasonable belief' or a 'belief on reasonable grounds' is not the same as having proof, but is more than mere rumour or speculation.

6.5.4 You will have reasonable grounds to notify if:

6.5.4.1 a child states that they have been physically or sexually abused;

6.5.4.2 a child states that they know someone who has been physically or sexually abused (sometimes the child may be talking about themselves);

6.5.4.3 someone who knows a child states that the child has been physically or sexually abused;

6.5.4.4 professional observations of the child's behaviour or development leads a professional to form a belief that the child has been physically or sexually abused or is likely to be abused; or

6.5.4.5 signs of abuse lead to a belief that the child has been physically or sexually abused.

6.6 Voluntary Reporters

6.6.1 In addition to the mandatory reporting obligations above, any person who believes on reasonable grounds that a child is in need of protection from any form of child abuse, *may* disclose that information to the Police, DFFH or the Commission for Children & Young People.

6.7 Reporting Child Sexual Abuse

6.7.1 If a person receives information that leads them to form a reasonable belief that a sexual offence has been committed in Australia against a child (under the age of 16 years) by another person (of or over the age of 18 years), the person has a legal obligation to disclose that information to the Police as soon as it is practicable.

[More information on reporting child abuse in Victoria](#)

[Information on reporting child abuse in NSW](#)

[Information on reporting child abuse in South Australia](#)

6.8 HRCAV Approach to Reports of Abuse

6.8.1 HRCAV supports and encourages a person to make a report to the Police or relevant government body if they form a belief on reasonable grounds that a child needs protection, or they are concerned about the safety, health or wellbeing of a child.

6.8.2 Any person that makes a report in good faith in accordance with their reporting obligations (whether mandatory or discretionary) will be supported by HRCAV and will not be penalised by HRCAV for making the report.

6.8.3 If a person is uncertain as to whether they should make a report to an external authority in relation to the safety of a child, they may speak to the HRCAV Child Safety Officer or for guidance and information. If in doubt, ask for assistance.

6.8.4 If an allegation is made against a member of staff, committee member or official, HRCAV will follow the reporting procedure outlined in **Appendix A** and will take all steps to ensure that the safety of the child is paramount. An initial step will involve the withdrawal of the accused person from active duty, which could entail standing down, reassignment to a role



- without direct contact with children (including removing access to the HRCav Data base), working under closer supervision during an investigation, or any other measures deemed appropriate depending on the seriousness of the allegation.
- 6.8.5 HRCav will investigate allegations of inappropriate conduct against a child in accordance with procedural fairness and will handle the allegations in a confidential manner to the greatest extent possible.
 - 6.8.6 HRCav will cooperate with the directions of the Police and/or relevant government body in relation to any investigation conducted by these authorities.
 - 6.8.7 HRCav will keep a register of any allegations regarding inappropriate conduct.

7. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF PERSONNEL PROTECTING CHILDREN

- 7.1 Personnel involved in protecting children include the Executive Committee, HRCav Employees, officials, Club officials (including Club-based Child Safe Officers) and volunteers within the Organisation. Those people have responsibilities in relation to protection of children and are expected to:
- 7.1.1 understand the rights of children, as appropriate to their role;
 - 7.1.2 respect the cultural and religious practices of families who access HRCav's services, programs or events;
 - 7.1.3 understand and appropriately respond to the needs of children with developmental delays or disabilities;
 - 7.1.4 appropriately act on any concerns raised by children;
 - 7.1.5 understand the definitions, indicators and impact of child abuse;
 - 7.1.6 at all times, know and follow regulations in relation to the care of children and follow the HRCav Code of Conduct for Dealing with Children and Young People
 - 7.1.7 co-operate with the HRCav, police and/or relevant government body involved in the investigation to the best of their ability; and
 - 7.1.8 not harm or exploit children who access HRCav's services.

Further information and online training can be found at [Play By the Rules](#)

8. CHILD SAFE GUIDELINES TO PREVENT AND MANAGE RISKS OF CHILD ABUSE

8.1 Supervision of Children

- 8.1.1 Children attending or participating in HRCav activities and events must be accompanied by a parent, guardian or adult nominated by the parent or guardian.

8.2 Working With Children Checks (WWCC)

- 8.2.1 All HRCav staff, Executive Committee members, Sub Committee members, officials and volunteers who are engaged in child related work are required to have a Working with Children Check as per 'WWCC in HRCav January 2024' (**Appendix B**)

8.3 Coaches

- 8.3.1 All coaches employed by Clubs are required to hold a current WWCC card (or proof of an equivalent check) if teaching children. (see **Appendix B**)
 - 8.3.1.1 all coaches must ensure that all physical contact with members which occurs when coaching is appropriate for the situation and necessary for the member's safety.
 - 8.3.1.2 coaches must ensure that there are other adults present whenever coaching junior members;



- 8.3.1.3 coaches must take care to explain the procedure to the child prior to beginning any physical contact; and
- 8.3.1.4 coaches must obtain consent from the Junior member prior to beginning any physical contact.

8.4 **Images of Children**

- 8.4.1 Permission from a child's parent/guardian is to be obtained before taking an image of a child. The parent/guardian must understand how the image will be used. When using a photo of a child, information which may identify the child shall not be published without the consent of the parent or guardian. Permission is to be sought from the parents/guardians of the children before using these images. Only appropriate images, relevant to the sport are to be used.

8.5 **Unaccompanied activities**

- 8.5.1 Adults have a 'duty of care' for children and they must meet that duty and avoid unaccompanied and unobserved activities with persons less than 18 years of age wherever possible. For the avoidance of doubt this requirement does not apply to parents/legal guardians.
- 8.5.2 Adults should avoid being alone with children in enclosed areas such as toilets, change rooms, hotel rooms etc.

8.6 **Raising concerns**

- 8.6.1 All adults retain the responsibility to advocate for the welfare of all Junior Members at HRCAV events and activities and must raise any concerns relating to child safety with the appropriate officer.
- 8.6.2 Allegations of child abuse should be reported in accordance with the process outlined in **Appendix A**.
- 8.6.3 Improper conduct of a sexual nature towards a member includes any form of child sexual abuse (as indicated in Clause 5.3) as well as but not limited to the following:
 - 8.6.3.1 inappropriate conversations of a sexual nature;
 - 8.6.3.2 obscene language of a sexual nature;
 - 8.6.3.3 suggestive remarks or actions;
 - 8.6.3.4 jokes of a sexual nature;
 - 8.6.3.5 obscene gestures;
 - 8.6.3.6 unwarranted and inappropriate touching;
 - 8.6.3.7 sexual exhibitionism;
 - 8.6.3.8 use of any device to show/watch offensive material; and
 - 8.6.3.9 any other action that could lead to an athlete being physically, emotionally or psychologically harmed.

8.7 **Adults under investigation**

- 8.7.1 Adults under investigation in relation to a matter involving child abuse, or any matter which has the potential to jeopardise their Working with Children Check (WWCC) (or other state equivalent) status may be prohibited, by the HRCAV Executive Committee, from participating in HRCAV activities.

9. **ENGAGING NEW PERSONNEL RECRUITMENT AND SCREENING**



HORSE RIDING CLUBS ASSOCIATION OF VICTORIA

OFFICIAL POLICY

- 9.1 The minimum standard for background checks of employees and volunteers of the HRCav and its members is the law as it applies in Victoria and other states.
- 9.2 HRCav undertakes a comprehensive recruitment and screening process for staff and volunteer officials aiming to:
 - 9.2.1 promote and protect the safety of all children who participate in the activities of HRCav;
 - 9.2.2 identify and recruit the most suitable candidates who share HRCav's values and commitment to protect children; and
 - 9.2.3 prevent a person from working for HRCav if they pose an unacceptable risk to children.
- 9.3 HRCav requires their staff and volunteer officials to pass the recruitment and screening process prior to commencing their engagement with HRCav.
- 9.4 As part of the screening and recruitment process, an applicant must provide appropriate evidence (e.g. WWCC) or other state equivalent and Police check (if required as per 9.6)) to show that they are suitable to work with children and young people in a recreational setting.
 - 9.4.1 The following key HRCav personnel are required to comply with the requirements of 9.4:
 - 9.4.1.1 HRCav Child Safety Officer
 - 9.4.1.2 HRCav Technical Delegates and Representatives at HRCav events
 - 9.4.1.3 All HRCav Judges
 - 9.4.1.4 anyone else nominated by the HRCav due to the nature of the duties/work that they are undertaking for HRCav (see **Appendix B**)
- 9.5 All shortlisted applicants must consent to undergo a Police check before being offered a contract of employment.
- 9.6 HRCav will undertake at least two thorough reference checks prior to engaging any personnel.
- 9.8 HRCav will provide staff and volunteers with access to this policy via the HRCav website.
 - 9.8.1 Staff must review and acknowledge their understanding of this policy by signing the policy which will be held on the employer records.
 - 9.8.2 Club Officials are responsible to ensure volunteers are aware of this policy and of free online training available via [Play by the Rules](#)

11. CLUB RESPONSIBILITIES

- 11.1. HRCav affiliated clubs are required to promote and apply the principles of this policy at Club level and promote the HRCav Child Safe Code of Conduct.
- 11.2. Clubs must ensure that club volunteers and paid workers who are required to have direct contact with children as part of their duties at club activities and events, satisfy WWCC requirements for their state. The club shall be responsible for maintaining records of the WWCC status of relevant Club-based volunteers and workers.
- 11.3. Clubs which accept junior members and hold events where junior members may be in attendance are required to appoint a Child Protection Officer whose role is to promote a child safe environment within the Club, encourage members, children and others to contact them to report any potential or suspected child safety issues and act upon any reported concerns



relating to child safety. It is strongly recommended that the Club Child Protection Officer completes the [Play by the Rules on-line training course](#).

11.4 Further information, support and resources can be found here:

[Victorian based Clubs](#)

[NSW based Clubs](#)

[SA based Clubs](#)

12. RISK MANAGEMENT APPROACH

12.1 Child safety is a part of HRCav's overall risk management approach.

12.2. HRCav will audit Club Risk Management Plans on an annual basis; additionally, spot checks may be conducted at the discretion of the HRCav.

13. POLICY BREACHES

13.1. It is a breach of this policy for any person or organisation to which this policy applies, to have been found to have done anything contrary to this policy. Any person who may breach this policy is subject to disciplinary action under the HRCav Complaint Handling rules.

14. POLICY PROMOTION

14.1 This policy will be made available to all members via the [HRCav website](#)

14.2 This policy will be communicated to all Employees and Committee members.

14.3 References to this policy will be included in training information for HRCav officials.

15. RECORD KEEPING

15.1 HRCav retain records of reports of child abuse and complaints about child safety.

15.2. In maintaining records of reports about child safety, HRCav will maintain confidentiality and privacy for children and families in accordance with legislation.

15.3 HRCav will appropriately note identified risks to child safety through the record keeping process and will incorporate those into its risk management plan

16. REVIEW PROCESS

16.1. This policy will be reviewed by the HRCav Executive Committee on an annual basis or earlier should there be a change in legislation.

16.2. If you would like to provide HRCav with any feedback or suggestions to improve this policy, please contact the Child Safety Officer.

16.3 In addition to the regular review of this policy, recommendations for changes to the policy may be submitted to the HRCav for consideration at any time. In the event that changes are



HORSE RIDING CLUBS ASSOCIATION OF VICTORIA

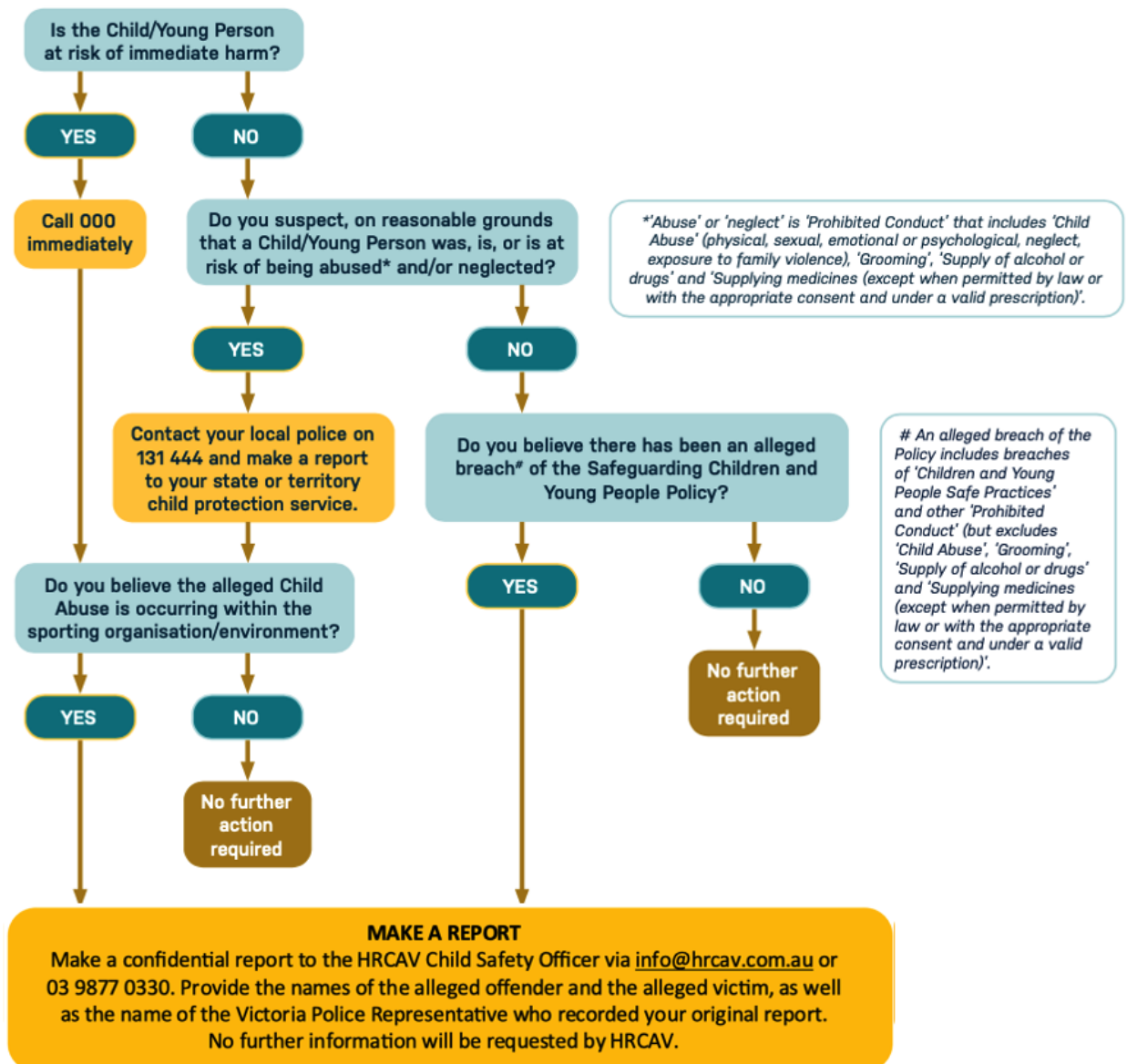
OFFICIAL POLICY

accepted, the policy will be updated, and circulated to all stakeholders via the website and other appropriate communication channels.

POLICY REVIEW

Commencement Date	Date Endorsed	Endorsed By	Next Review Date
10/06/2024	07/06/2024	HRCav Executive	10/06/2025

APPENDIX A: RESPONDING TO AND REPORTING TO A BREACH OF THE HRCav CHILD SAFETY AND WELLBEING POLICY





APPENDIX B: WORKING WITH CHILDREN CHECK REQUIREMENTS IN HRCav

Revised January 2024

Working with Children Checks in HRCav *Option B version 2 Requirements*

<p style="text-align: center;">YES</p> <p style="text-align: center;">A Working with Children Check IS REQUIRED</p> <p style="text-align: center;">for the following positions:</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">NO</p> <p style="text-align: center;">A Working with Children Check IS NOT REQUIRED</p> <p style="text-align: center;">for the following positions:</p>
<p>Committees and Staff:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HRCav Executive Committee Members • HRCav Sub-Committee members • Club Office Bearers/Committee Members (IF your Club has Junior members and/or holds events where children may participate*) • HRCav Office Staff <p>Officials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level Assessors • Coaches • 3PE Judges • Dressage Judges • Show Jumping Judges • Showing Judges • Technical Delegates • Course Designers • XC Course Accreditors <p>Event/Activity Volunteers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Card/Event Office volunteers • Gear Checkers • Canteen volunteers • Volunteer coordinators • Gate Marshalls • Ring Stewards 	<p>Committees:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Club Office Bearers/Committee Members (IF your Club does NOT have Junior Members and does NOT hold events open to riders from other Clubs*) <p>Event/Activity Volunteers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cross Country Jump Judges • SJ Arena volunteers • Pencillers • Dressage Test runners • Judge coordinators

*Events include Competitions, open rallies and clinics that juniors may attend