

Aberdeen Hockey Club

Reporting and Recording Concerns Procedure

Purpose

Aberdeen Hockey Club is committed to providing a safe, welcoming, and well-run environment for all our members. This procedure sets out how any member, parent, coach, official, or member of the public can raise a concern about the conduct or welfare of anyone connected with AHC, and how those concerns will be handled.

The procedure covers three categories of concern:

- **Child protection concerns** — concerns that a child is at risk of significant harm.
- **Poor practice concerns** — concerns that a member of AHC has behaved in a way that breaches our Code of Conduct or professional standards.
- **Wider concerns** — concerns that don't fit either category above but that AHC should know about — for example, adult-to-adult conduct, governance concerns, or the wellbeing of an adult member.

Each type of concern has a specific route, described below. This procedure is publicly available and every member is expected to know how to raise a concern.

Principles we work to

- **Take concerns seriously.** Any concern raised will be listened to, respected, and acted upon appropriately.
- **Act promptly.** Concerns will be triaged as soon as they are received and progressed without unnecessary delay.
- **Handle confidentially.** Information will be shared only with those who need to know to progress the concern properly. Confidentiality is not the same as secrecy — some information must be shared with statutory authorities if the concern requires it.
- **Protect those who raise concerns in good faith.** No member will suffer detriment for raising a concern honestly, even if the concern turns out not to be substantiated.

How to raise a concern

Who to contact

Concerns should be raised with the person named in the table below, based on the nature of the concern. All named roles have training and support to handle concerns appropriately.

Nature of concern	Raise with
Any concern about the welfare, protection or treatment of a child (under 18)	Child Wellbeing and Protection Officer (CWPO) – Glenn Bowen
Concern about the conduct or welfare of an adult member	President

Concern about the CWPO	President
Concern about the President, or about both the CWPO and President simultaneously	Any Team Captain — the reporter can choose whichever captain they feel most comfortable speaking to.
Governance concerns (how a decision was made, misuse of club resources, etc.)	Any Team Captain — the reporter can choose whichever captain they feel most comfortable speaking to.

How to make contact

A concern can be raised:

- In person, at a training session, match or club event
- By email to info@aberdeenhockeyclub.com – the subject should be 'FAO xxx Re Concern'
- Using the AHC Concern Report Form available in the same section of the site this policy is published
- Anonymously (see below)

Anonymous concerns

AHC accepts anonymous concerns. Anyone raising a concern can choose not to give their name.

However, there are limits to what AHC can do with an anonymous concern:

- We cannot follow up with the reporter for more information
- We cannot report back to the reporter with the outcome
- We may have less evidence available to act on
- Where the concern involves a suspected child protection matter, the anonymity may need to be broken if statutory authorities require it

Wherever possible, AHC encourages members to raise concerns under their own name so we can support them and give the concern the fullest possible response. Members can also choose to raise a concern confidentially — giving their name to the receiving officer but requesting that their identity is not shared beyond what is necessary to progress the concern.

What happens after a concern is raised

Immediate action

1. The receiving officer records the concern in the AHC Concerns Log
2. The receiving officer conducts an initial triage: is this a child protection concern, a poor practice concern, or a wider concern?
3. If the concern relates to an immediate risk of harm to a child, the club CWPO will contact Police Scotland and/or Social Work Services immediately, before doing anything else
4. For all other concerns, the receiving officer acknowledges the concern to the reporter (if named) at the earliest opportunity

Child protection concerns

Where a concern relates to the welfare or protection of a child:

1. The CWPO takes ownership of the concern.
2. The CWPO makes an initial assessment: is the concern serious enough to require immediate referral to statutory authorities? If yes, the CWPO refers to Police Scotland or Social Work Services without delay.
3. The CWPO informs Scottish Hockey's Child Wellbeing and Protection function in line with their reporting requirements.
4. The CWPO records the concern, the assessment made, and any external referrals in the Concerns Log.
5. AHC does not investigate the concern itself — investigation is a matter for statutory authorities.
6. Where the concern relates to a person working with children at AHC, the club may take precautionary steps (e.g. temporary suspension from a role) pending the outcome of the external process. This is not an admission of wrong-doing but a precautionary measure.

Poor practice concerns

Where a concern relates to a breach of AHC's Code of Conduct or poor practice by a member:

1. The receiving officer takes ownership of the concern.
2. The receiving officer makes an initial assessment: is the concern serious enough to warrant a formal response, or is it best addressed through an informal conversation with the individual concerned?
3. If a formal response is warranted, the concern is referred to the AHC committee.
4. The receiving officer records the concern, the assessment made, and any actions taken in the Concerns Log.
5. The person the concern is about is informed of the concern and given a fair opportunity to respond, unless doing so would prejudice a related child protection process.

Wider concerns

Where a concern doesn't fit the categories above:

1. The receiving officer takes ownership of the concern.
2. The receiving officer determines the appropriate route — which may be a conversation with the individual concerned, referral to the committee, or referral to an external body.
3. The receiving officer records the concern, the assessment made, and any actions taken in the Concerns Log.

Confidentiality

Concerns raised under this procedure will be treated confidentially. Information will be shared only with those who need to know in order to progress the concern properly — for example:

- The person taking ownership of the concern

- The AHC committee, where a formal response is required
- Statutory authorities (Police Scotland, Social Work Services), where a referral is made
- Scottish Hockey, where their reporting requirements apply
- The person the concern is about, so they can respond — unless doing so would prejudice a related process

Confidentiality is not the same as secrecy. Where a concern relates to the safety of a child, or where the law requires disclosure, information will be shared with the appropriate authorities regardless of the reporter's wishes. The receiving officer will explain this at the outset wherever possible.

Protection for people raising concerns

Any member who raises a concern in good faith — whether the concern turns out to be substantiated or not — will be supported and protected from any form of retaliation.

This protection applies to concerns raised by named reporters, confidential reporters, and anonymous reporters. It also applies to members who assist an investigation, provide information, or act as witnesses.

Concerns raised maliciously or in bad faith (for example, to discredit a person known to be innocent) are not protected and will not be tolerated.

Recording and retention

Every concern raised under this procedure is recorded in the AHC Concerns Log. The log is held securely by the CWPO. Editing rights are held by the CWPO only.

Records are retained as follows:

- **Child protection records:** until the child concerned reaches the age of 25, or longer if statutory guidance requires.
- **Adult concerns records:** for a minimum of 7 years from the date of the concern.
- **Governance concerns records:** for a minimum of 7 years from the date of the concern.

At the end of the retention period, records are securely destroyed. Records will not be destroyed while a related process (investigation, appeal, statutory referral) remains open.

Learning from concerns

The CWPO reports annually to the AHC committee on the pattern of concerns raised across the year (anonymised where necessary). This is not a report on individuals — it is a review of what the concerns collectively tell us about the club's culture, practices, and areas for improvement.

Where concerns identify a systemic issue — for example, repeated concerns about the same type of behaviour, or gaps in a process — the committee will consider whether policy or practice changes are needed.

If you are not satisfied with the response

A member who has raised a concern and is not satisfied with how it was handled can escalate as follows:

- First: raise the concern again in writing with the person originally receiving it, setting out what has not been addressed
- Then: if still not satisfied, raise the concern with the next role in the escalation table above (e.g. escalate from CWPO to President, or from President to any Team Captain)
- Finally: any member can raise a concern directly with Scottish Hockey's Child Wellbeing and Protection function, or with Police Scotland, at any point in this process.