



CHILD SAFEGUARDING POLICY

[NG-CTO-012]





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01. PURPOSE

For LALIGA, uppermost among its principles are those of respect, integrity and standing against any form of violence. That is why it is committed to safeguarding and fostering the protection and well-being of everyone who participates in the activities it organises, but especially of children and young people. To achieve this, LALIGA has adopted this Child Safeguarding Policy with the following objectives:

- To ensure that all settings in which LALIGA projects, programmes and competitions take place are safe and protective environments, in which the focus is on the full development of the individual, particularly that of children and young people.
- To prevent any form of violence against children and young people either by professionals from LALIGA or its partner organisations, by other children and young people, or by anyone from outside LALIGA.
- To detect, effectively and efficiently, situations of risk, maltreatment and violence involving children and young people who attend activities organised by LALIGA.
- To establish reliable, coordinated procedures for taking action in any situation of risk, maltreatment or violence involving children and young people that occurs in any activity organised by LALIGA, including providing them, their families and legal guardians with the necessary support.

02. SCOPE OF APPLICATION

This Policy applies to all the entities in the LALIGA Organisation and is binding on all their personnel and all members of their governing and representational bodies, regardless of whether or not the relationship is one of a contractual nature, and if it is, whether it is an employment or commercial contract, and regardless of their geographical location and the functions they perform.

“LALIGA Organisation” means the Spanish National League of Professional Football, the LALIGA Foundation and their wholly- or majority-owned investees now or in the future (hereinafter referred to as “**LALIGA**”).

The Child Safeguarding Policy applies to everyone who participates in activities with children and young people that are organised by LALIGA. However, the responsibilities and authority of each category are different:

- **LALIGA’s own personnel** (under employment or commercial contract, including administrative and service personnel and providers of cleaning and maintenance services, students on work placements and volunteers of any kind): their responsibility is to familiarise themselves with and implement all the tools of the Child Safeguarding System, as described in **Section 5, Structure of the Child Safeguarding System**.
- **LALIGA partner organisations** (companies and foundations with shared projects, service providers, sports organisations that participate in LALIGA activities, other organisations, etc.): their responsibility is to ensure that they are internally organised in a way that guarantees the proper implementation of a Child Safeguarding System. This can be either the LALIGA system or an adaptation of it, or the organisation’s own system that is compatible with the LALIGA system and complies with the applicable legislation. Each organisation must provide its personnel with the necessary training, or it may call upon the organisational support of LALIGA for assistance in doing so and for supervision of the necessary processes.
- **The children and young people who take part in any activity organised by LALIGA:** LALIGA must ensure that they fully understand how to ask for help and how to disclose situations involving themselves or others. They must undertake to be respectful and well-mannered in their relations with other children and young people and with other persons.
- **Families and legal guardians:** they must undertake to be respectful and well-mannered both in family life and when engaging in sports or social activities. They have the responsibility to report any situation of risk involving their own children or those of other families.





03. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

To guarantee the safeguarding of children and young people requires a basic terminology and an understanding of the associated concepts. The vocabulary must match the theoretical frameworks employed by government authorities and agencies with Child Safeguarding responsibilities. To provide a systematic overview, this section outlines the basic concepts that are used throughout the LALIGA Child Safeguarding System.

Violence is described as a situation in which **harm** is caused to someone in **different ways** through the **abuse of power**. These three factors are particularly relevant to children and young people:

1. The harm done to the person. Because children and young people are still growing, they are much more vulnerable to various forms of harm, and its consequences can impact their development and extend into their adult life.
2. **The abuse (misuse) of power** that is the origin of the harm. Taking the concept of power to be the neutral ability to influence the life of another person, any form of power can be used constructively (to protect, to teach, to take care of, etc.) or destructively (to harm, to subjugate, to put at a disadvantage, etc.). Power may stem from emotional attachment, authority, physical strength or turning differences into inequalities. Adults who work or assist in the activities organised by LALIGA may hold each of these forms of power over the children and young people they are with. Depending on how they use their power, they can either safeguard the children and young people and help them to develop in an environment of safety and protection, or they can cause them harm.
3. **The way in which harm is caused.** Although there are various ways of classifying forms of violence, the LALIGA Child Safeguarding System uses the following four types as a reference because they cover a variety of different forms:
 - **Physical violence:** this involves bodily harm.
 - **Psychological violence:** this is harm that has an impact on a psychological level. Most forms of violence have psychological consequences of some kind.
 - **Sexual violence:** this is harm that has to do with an individual's sexuality. It may be physical (sexual abuse, rape, etc.) or non-physical (exhibitionism, showing pornography, etc.). It has psychological consequences, but because it involves such an integral and private dimension of an individual as is their sexuality, there are distinctive features to its effects that are better addressed via this specific category.
 - **Neglect:** the harm is the result of the failure to act of someone who should have taken care of a child or young person and protected them, but has not done so. Their inaction, or failure to take appropriate action, harms the child or young person.

Seen in this way, safeguarding is not just about preventing, detecting and acting in the face of any form of violence, but also about fostering the full development of an individual, particularly that of children and young people. It is important to take into account that safeguarding is not just a

matter of avoiding negative situations and addressing them when they occur, it also has the well-being of all as its goal. This standpoint, known as Integral Protection, focuses on environments as well as on people's actions.

It means that it is essential to ensure that activities are held in **Safe and Protective Environments**: these are places in which protection of every kind, ranging from the physical to the emotional, is assured, where the professional and organisational expertise is safe and protective, and where everyone involved participates, including the children and young people themselves.

Integral Protection also means intervening in any situation that may cause harm to a child or young person. Although this is addressed in detail in the Action Protocol, the following is a brief description of the various situations:

- **Peer conflict.** Since conflict is an everyday reality, it must be addressed from an educational and restorative approach. To do this, adults must first handle any conflict that they have with children and young people in a safe and protective manner. That way, when conflicts between peers arise, adults can use their own actions as models of non-violent conflict resolution and mediate effectively and safely.
- **Vulnerability.** To create safe and protective environments it is essential to first recognise the social and cultural structures that limit or prevent some sectors of the population from exercising their rights because of the social differences that exist. These inequality-creating structures mainly affect children and young people (because of the difference in age and understanding), but also girls and young women (because of gender inequality), people with disabilities or functional diversity (because they function differently), specific groups because of their ethnic or social origin, either because of their legal situation (especially unaccompanied children and young people whose migration status is irregular), because they are subject to protective measures (children and young people in foster or residential care), because of their sexual identity or orientation, because they are socially isolated, etc. An educational and social intervention that is safe and protective must be oriented towards restoring the full exercise of the rights of each child and young person, so as to ensure that they receive equitable care in all areas.
- **Situations of mild or moderate risk.** The detection of situations of mild or moderate risk, understood as circumstances in which some rights are not being fully respected, must lead to action - usually involving the competent authorities - to reduce or eliminate the risk, in a way that ensures the safety and full development of the child or young person.
- **Violation of rights,** including maltreatment and violence. In these situations the legal obligation is to refer the situation to the competent authorities in order to ensure that the safety and protection of the child or young person are restored. This may involve the official intervention of the social, health, educational or court authorities and the law enforcement agencies, all of which must receive full cooperation.

To conclude this section, it is essential to ensure that all persons who are in contact with children and young people are trained. Every professional must have sufficient knowledge to be able to respond appropriately within their sphere of responsibility, in terms of prevention, detection, action and support. To achieve this, there must be both **initial and continuing training** that is an integral part of how the organisation operates. This training must provide the knowledge and skills to be able to act safely and protectively in all situations, both on a day-to-day basis and at critical moments.



04. PRINCIPLES

This Child Safeguarding Policy has at its core the following principles, founded on the most innovative safeguarding best practices, as well as on values that LALIGA has long upheld:

- The **Child Rights-Based Approach**, paying particular attention to its guiding principles of Non-Discrimination, Life, Survival and Development, Best Interests of every child and young person and Participation. The 1989 UN Convention on the Rights of the Child forms part of Spain's legislative framework and that of most of the countries where LALIGA is active.
- The Integral **Protection approach**, the objective of which is not just to prevent and detect situations of violence and harm and take action in response to them, but also to foster the full development of every child and young person by nurturing their well-being in all spheres.
- The **responsibility that every adult and every organisation** has, regardless of their position or relationship with LALIGA, for the safeguarding and well-being of all children and young people.
- **Transparency**, providing clarity about the various processes and the actions taken by:
 - Providing online access to all the tools of the Child Safeguarding System in a clearly identified area of the LALIGA website.
 - Clearly indicating the communication channels for reporting suspicions or evidence of cases and the procedures for doing so, with a simple explanation of how to contact the Child Safeguarding Delegates for each LALIGA-organised activity as well as the LALIGA Child Safeguarding Committee, should that be necessary.
 - Issuing regular accountability reports on the functioning of the Child Safeguarding System, paying particular attention to the actions that have been taken to guarantee the safeguarding of children and young people in activities organised by LALIGA.
- **Teamwork**, recognising that, as on the sports field, cooperation between individuals and organisations is essential in order to ensure that all children and young people are well protected. Coordination is fundamental for taking appropriate action in situations in which the rights of children and young people are being violated, including violence and maltreatment. To achieve it, each person must fulfil their roles and their responsibilities by following the designated guidelines provided in each of the Child Safeguarding System tools. Child Safeguarding includes collaboration between organisations and particularly collaboration with the competent authorities.
- **Respect** for all those involved in the various situations (children and young people, adults, organisations and authorities), by ensuring the confidentiality and privacy of the processes (paying maximum attention to the children and young people and their families and legal guardians) and guaranteeing secure referral of cases in collaboration with the competent authorities.



- **Equal opportunities and equal rights**, taking into account the individual and collective differences of the persons involved (in terms of age, gender, disability or functional diversity, ethnic or social origin, irregular official or migration status, because they are subject to child protection measures, or due to their sexual identity or orientation or other features that set them apart, etc.) so that all children, and their families and legal guardians, are treated equitably.
- **Improvement and innovation** that drive the continuing improvement of the Child Safeguarding System by means of ongoing training of all those involved, the systematic evaluation of procedures and results, and the incorporation of good practices.
- **Inclusive leadership** that motivates by setting an example (in this case of the safeguarding and integral development of participants) by incorporating the full diversity of children, young people and adults. LALIGA also exercises this leadership in its relations with other sports, social, educational and cultural organisations, by promoting a nurturing culture and providing access to the tools of its Child Safeguarding System as inspiration for other organisations.

05. STRUCTURE OF THE CHILD SAFEGUARDING SYSTEM

The LALIGA Child Safeguarding System is comprised of several levels, each with its own roles and responsibilities. Because LALIGA activities usually involve a variety of partner organisations, the system structure provides for interorganisational coordination to guarantee the well-being and safeguarding of all children and young people.

The full structure, with the definitions and levels of authority of each profile, is described in detail in the document entitled **The Child Safeguarding Roles and Responsibilities**. However, this section gives a brief description of the system structure and the profiles that comprise it.



5.1. Designated Safeguarding Officers

5.1.1. Main Child Safeguarding Contacts

These are people who are in frequent contact with the children and young people for whom they are Main Child Safeguarding Contacts and they know them well. They become figures of trust with whom the children and young people can share situations that concern them, including disclosures about situations of violence. In such cases the Main Child Safeguarding Contacts have basic safeguarding knowledge and they refer situations to the Child Safeguarding Delegates using the appropriate channels.

The **Main Child Safeguarding Contacts appointed by LALIGA** are well acquainted with the Child Safeguarding System and they refer cases to the LALIGA Child Safeguarding Delegates, or directly to the LALIGA Child Safeguarding Committee, should that be necessary.

In activities with children and young people that are organised by LALIGA and shared with other organisations, the latter must notify LALIGA of the **Main Child Safeguarding Contacts appointed by the partner organisations** who will fulfil the same role with children and young people at their organisations (sports teams, sports organisations, etc.). LALIGA acknowledges the autonomy of each organisation to appoint these contacts (they may be their own Child Safeguarding Delegates, or other similar safeguarding figures), and at the same time it provides guidelines for interorganisational cooperation. These Main Child Safeguarding Contacts will always notify the LALIGA Child Safeguarding Delegates of any situation in which there is suspicion or evidence of the violation of rights, including maltreatment and violence, involving any child or young person within the framework of LALIGA-organised activities, in order to ensure that there is coordination between organisations and safe and protective action is taken in accordance with the applicable legislation.

5.1.2. Child Safeguarding Delegates

These are professionals with specific training in Child Safeguarding who are fully acquainted with the Child Safeguarding System procedures and tools of either LALIGA or their own club or organisation. Their principal function is to ensure the well-being and safeguarding of children and young people in the activities that are within their remit of responsibility. They are the point of reference for receipt of disclosures about situations in which there is suspicion or evidence of the violation of rights, including maltreatment and violence, involving any child or young person, and they have the authority to set safeguarding mechanisms in motion, reporting in all cases to the LALIGA Child Safeguarding Committee.

5.1.3. Child Safeguarding Committee

This committee is made up of LALIGA professionals with extensive training in Child Safeguarding. It advises the Child Safeguarding Delegates in the performance of their functions and it is the body that represents LALIGA in the necessary official procedures. The Child Safeguarding Committee operates as a collective body to combine swift and effective action with the inclusion of all the necessary points of view.

5.2. Other persons with Child Safeguarding responsibilities

5.2.1. LALIGA professionals and adults

They are sufficiently acquainted with the LALIGA **Child Safeguarding System**, particularly this **Child Safeguarding Policy** and the **Code of Conduct**, and they have the authority to activate any safeguarding process. They maintain close contact with the LALIGA Main Child Safeguarding Contacts and the Child Safeguarding Delegates and they know the fast tracks for communication with all of them.

5.2.2. Professionals and adults from other organisations

As professionals of other organisations outside LALIGA, they will have received sufficient training in Child Safeguarding from their own organisations or in sessions facilitated by LALIGA. To perform their functions in activities shared with LALIGA they must comply with a code of conduct that is compatible with that of LALIGA and complies with the applicable legislation (or otherwise **LALIGA's own Code of Conduct**). They must also know how to report situations in which there is suspicion or evidence of the violation of rights, including maltreatment and violence, involving children and young people, both via the Main Child Safeguarding Contacts and Child Safeguarding Delegates of their own organisation and via the LALIGA counterparts, in LALIGA activities.

5.2.3. Children and young people themselves

It is the responsibility of children and young people to respect everyone in activities organised by LALIGA, and they are also agents for their own safeguarding and that of their peers. This requires them to be clear that any person involved in activities with children and young people organised by LALIGA has the responsibility to provide them with protection and help if they need it. They must also know how to communicate in any situation with the Designated Safeguarding Officers of their own organisation, in the first instance, or otherwise with the Designated Safeguarding Officers of LALIGA.

5.2.4. The families and legal guardians of children and young people

It is the responsibility of families and legal guardians to treat all children and young people (their own and others) with respect and without violence. They can report any situation in which there is suspicion or evidence of the violation of rights, including maltreatment and violence, involving their own children and young people or any others, via the Designated Safeguarding Officers of their own organisation, in the first instance, or otherwise via the Designated Safeguarding Officers of LALIGA.



06. SAFEGUARDING SYSTEM TOOLS

6.1. The Child Safeguarding Policy

The **Child Safeguarding Policy** (this document) describes the general framework of the LALIGA Child Safeguarding System and sets out in an orderly manner the various components that comprise it. Thus, it sets out the objectives, the fundamental principles, the theoretical framework, to whom the policy applies (including children and young people themselves and their families), the structure that underpins the Safeguarding System and the system's tools of reference.

6.2. The Child Safeguarding Roles and Responsibilities

This document sets out in detail the various structural levels of the LALIGA Child Safeguarding System, indicating the mandatory safeguarding objectives to be met at each level. It covers the following categories:

- The Child Safeguarding Committee.
- The Child Safeguarding Delegates.
- The Main Child Safeguarding Contacts.
- LALIGA professionals and other persons.
- Professionals and other persons of partner organisations.
- Children and young people themselves.
- The families and legal guardians of children and young people.

6.3 The Code of Conduct

The **Code of Conduct** specifies all of the actions and approaches that are either mandatory or prohibited for persons performing any official role in activities with children and young people organised by LALIGA. Any adult participating in an activity organised by LALIGA must know the Code and abide by it.

6.4. El Protocolo de Actuación

The **Action Protocol** describes the procedures that must be followed when there is any suspicion or evidence of violence involving a child or young person who is participating in activities organised by LALIGA. It is primarily intended for the upper levels of the Child Safeguarding System (the Child Safeguarding Committee, Child Safeguarding Delegates and Main Child Safeguarding Contacts), but any adult can apply it while awaiting their intervention. It addresses the various steps between the detection of a case and its referral to the Child Protection authorities, and emphasises the obligation there is to cooperate with the authorities in any process, as well as to provide support afterwards in each situation.





07. INTERPRETATION AND QUERIES

Queries about how to interpret or implement this Policy should first be raised with the Child Safeguarding Delegates of each LALIGA-organised activity:

- At LALIGA Genuine: protecciongenuine@laliga.es
- At LALIGA Promises: proteccionpromises@laliga.es
- At LALIGA Competicion: proteccioncompeticion@laliga.es
- At LALIGA Corporativo: proteccioncorp@laliga.es
- At LALIGA Grassroots: protecciongrassroots@laliga.es

Otherwise, queries can be raised with the LALIGA Child Safeguarding Committee (comiteproteccion@laliga.es), which is responsible for promoting dissemination, awareness and implementation of the Policy.

08. BREACHES

All LALIGA professionals, managers and members of governing bodies have a duty to heed and comply with the provisions of this Child Safeguarding Policy in the performance of their activities.

Any breach of the Policy may be considered a sanctionable offence under the relevant disciplinary system.

Anyone violating the Child Safeguarding Policy may also be held personally or criminally liable. Engaging in violence against children and young people can carry different types of penalties depending on the seriousness of the offence. These penalties may include prison sentences, fines and disqualifications that may affect the ability of both the individuals involved and the organisations to engage in their professional activities.

09. EFFECTIVE DATE

This Child Safeguarding Policy was approved by the LALIGA Executive Committee on June 22nd, 2023 and is effective from the day after its distribution via the LALIGA internal communication channels.



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