

# World Karate Federation



## WKF Safe Sport Policy

June 2019



## **PREAMBLE**

This policy was first considered after an initial survey conducted by the WKF Athletes' Entourage Commission during the World Karate Championships for Cadet, Junior and U21 athletes, held in Tenerife, Spain, in October 2017. As like in other sports, the results of the survey showed that our athletes are at real risk of being exposed to forms of misconduct, mainly harassment and abuse. A second and more detailed survey was carried out in November 2018, in Madrid, during the World Senior Karate Championships to confirm and compare the results. Many reports of harassment and abuse, including sexual harassment, coming directly from the athletes, urged us to take firm action. There will be no delay in implementing the necessary policies and required action given that the WKF is committed to protecting its athletes and providing them with the safest sport environment, with the utmost respect for their safety, welfare and dignity. Our objective is to ensure a safe environment free from physical, psychological and sexual misconduct.

### **I. INTRODUCTION**

The World Karate Federation (WKF), in compliance with the International Olympic Committee (IOC) Guidelines for IFs and NOCs to create and implement a policy to safeguard athletes from harassment and abuse in sport, commonly known as "[The IOC Guidelines for IFs and NOCs](#)", the "[Olympic Agenda 2020, Recommendation 18](#)" (Strengthen support to athletes), and also the "[IOC Consensus Statement : Harassment and Abuse in Sport](#)" (2007 and 2016), is committed to developing this policy as well as further actions and procedures in order to offer athletes a more safeguarded environment for the safe practice of their beloved sport and ongoing development. The other references to be taken into account are the [IOC Code of Ethics](#) (Article 1.4), the [WKF Disciplinary and Ethics Code](#) (Section 1), and the IOC Prevention of Harassment and Abuse in Sport (PHAS) initiatives.

The WKF is committed to providing a safe environment in which all individuals are treated with respect and dignity. Everyone has the right to enjoy taking part in sport events, planned and provided by those who prioritise, above all, the safety and wellbeing of all participants.

Misconduct and abusive situations can potentially arise in Karate *dojos* and training centres where the general objectives are focused on competitive results, at the expense of an athlete's well-being. Athletes, having to participate in back-to-back competitions, and therefore exposed to excessive training schedules, can be at psychological and physical risk if adequate rest and recovery is not permitted.

Another concerning issue is that young athletes are often required to immerse themselves in a more adult environment. Their level of maturity and vulnerability further increase their chances of being exposed to misconduct. These situations can arise from anyone in their entourage, including but not limited to peers, coaches, doctors, trainers, physiotherapists, family members, friends and event organisers.

At elite level, a person's commitment is expected and presumed, but in other situations within a certain "culture", such commitment can be abused physically, sexually or emotionally. Adults around younger people must ensure that suitable boundaries are maintained, and dangerous practices are removed from the sport.

The "[IOC Consensus Statement](#)" offers the following words on this subject : "Despite the well-recognised benefits of sport, there are also negative influences on athlete health, well-being and integrity caused by non-accidental violence through harassment and abuse. All athletes have a right to engage in 'Safe Sport', defined as an athletic environment that is respectful, equitable and free from all forms of non-accidental violence to athletes".



## **II. DEFINITIONS OF THE NON-ACCIDENTAL VIOLENCE**

“Harassment” is a form of discrimination. “Harassment” is prohibited by human rights legislation and is considered unlawful in many countries.

“Harassment” as stated in [Article 1.4 of the IOC Code of Ethics](#) or “harassment and abuse” includes psychological abuse, physical abuse, sexual harassment and neglect. These forms of harassment and abuse may occur in combination or in isolation.

Harassment and abuse can be based on any grounds including race, religion, colour, creed, ethnic origin, physical attributes, gender, sexual orientation, age, disability, socio-economic status and athletic ability. It can include a one-off incident or a series of incidents, and it may be in person or online. Harassment may be deliberate, unsolicited and coercive.

Harassment and abuse often result from an abuse of authority, meaning the improper use of a position of influence, power or authority by one individual against another person.

### **II . 1. Psychological Abuse**

Psychological abuse means any unwelcome act including confinement, isolation, verbal assault, humiliation, intimidation, infantilization, or any other treatment which may diminish the sense of identity, dignity and self-worth.

Psychological or emotional harassment and abuse is a pattern of deliberate, prolonged, repeated non-contact behaviour within a power differentiated relationship. This form of abuse is at the core of all other forms. It mainly occurs in the coach-athlete relationship, but also can occur from other members of the athletes’ entourage and from fellow athletes. Psychologically abusive behaviour can include belittling, humiliating, shouting, scapegoating, rejecting, isolating and threatening behaviour as well as being ignored, or denied attention and support.

Psychological abuse can impair long-term physical and psychological health, affecting personal and social development, self-report feelings, anxiety and depression, sleeping problems, problems in trusting others, feelings of guilt and shame, physical stress reactions, low self-esteem and self-confidence, poor body image and, ultimately, dropping out of sport.

As like sexual and physical abuse, childhood psychological abuse has been found to be the most powerful correlate of long-term post-traumatic and dissociative symptomatology among athletes.

Psychological or emotional harassment and abuse do not include professionally accepted coaching methods for skill and performance enhancement, physical conditioning, team building, or appropriate discipline, generally seen within combat sports and martial arts.

#### **II . 1 . 1. Bullying**

Bullying involves a desire to hurt through a harmful action in a context of power imbalance. Typically, bullying is unwanted, repetitive and intentional aggressive behaviour, usually among peers and can involve a real or perceived power imbalance with evident enjoyment by the aggressor and generally a sense of being oppressed on the part of the victim. Examples of bullying include insults or taunts, physical intrusions (pinching, punching), humiliation, making threats, spreading rumours or falsehoods, attacking someone physically or verbally and deliberately excluding someone.



### **II . 1 . 2. Hazing**

Hazing is usually a normative requirement for acceptance into a club or team and part of a rite of passage handed down semi-covertly from one sport generation to the next, sometimes in the presence of coaches. Many hazing practices at team initiations or the start/end-of-season celebrations involve extreme insults, feats of endurance, deprivation, alcohol consumption and promiscuous or illegal sexually explicit/abusive behaviour against individuals or groups.

### **II . 1 . 3. Cyber Harassment and Abuse**

Cyber harassment and abuse come in a variety of forms:

- Sending or receiving sexual messages or images, known as 'sexting'.
- Use of camera phones to take illicit photographs, including inside sports facilities and use of the images for sexual exploitation (sometimes called 'sextortion').
- Receiving unwanted negative content such as hate messages, exposure to sexual and violent content, and proself-harm or proeating disorder/body dysmorphia sites.
- Risk to an individual's reputation from the sharing of inappropriate content, perhaps from false online profiles, which may impersonate the individual.
- Theft of personal data, which may constitute a criminal offence.

### **II . 2. Physical abuse**

"Physical abuse" refers to any deliberate and unwelcome act, such as punching, beating, kicking, biting and burning, that causes physical trauma or injury. Such act can also consist of forced or inappropriate physical activity (e.g. age or physically inappropriate training loads, when injured or in pain), forced alcohol consumption, or forced doping practices.

Physical abuse may be inflicted both on and off the field of play. It is often perpetrated by individuals in positions of power and trust, such as coaches and athlete entourage members, as well as family and friends, peer athletes and sports fans.

The potentially devastating effects of physical violence include physical injury, death, developmental impairments, other organic health problems, mental illnesses, and social, emotional and cognitive impairment. Physical consequences are especially serious for child or adolescent athletes due to the growth and development processes associated with their age.

Physical abuse does not include professionally accepted coaching methods for skill and performance enhancement, physical conditioning, team building, or appropriate discipline, generally seen within combat sports and martial arts.

### **II . 3. Sexual harassment**

"Sexual harassment" means any verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature, which is unwelcome, or where consent is coerced, manipulated or cannot be given. Sexual harassment can take the form of sexual abuse.

### **II . 4. Sexual abuse**

Sexual abuse is any conduct of a sexual nature, whether non-contact, contact or penetrative, where consent is manipulated or is not or cannot be given.

Sexual harassment and abuse in sport stem from abuses of power facilitated by an organisational culture that ignores, denies, fails to prevent or even tacitly accepts such problems. Sexual harassment and abuse can be targeted at any athlete regardless of age, sport ability, gender, nationality, race or ethnicity, social class, education level, sexual orientation or disability.



Sexual abuse is usually preceded by a 'grooming' process whereby the perpetrator prepares and desensitises their victim and entices them to submit. Grooming (persuasion) is a tool the abuser may employ to gain a position from where to carry out the abuse. This may continue for years, without the person who is object of the attention being aware that an ever stronger bond is being tied between him or her and the "abuser", until he or she is "caught" in a kind of net and unable to withstand the abuser's sexual wishes. Research has shown that this often occurs in a relationship between young athletes and coaches who are a bit older, or other individuals the athletes trust and who have built up a relationship with the athlete that may be compared to a child/parent relationship.

Athletes with disabilities and LGBT athletes are more likely to be at risk of experiencing sexual abuse. Entourage members, in positions of power and authority, are often perpetrators of abuse, but peer athletes are far more likely to be perpetrators of sexual harassment than are coaches. Males are more often perpetrators of sexual abuse than females.

## **II . 5. Neglect**

Neglect means the failure of a coach or another person, with a duty of care towards the athlete, to provide a minimum level of care to the athlete, which thus causes harm, allows harm to be caused, or creates an imminent threat of harm.

There are many reports of sport incidents that result in preventable illness, injury or death. In these cases, negligence and breaches of health and safety legislation or guidance, are to blame. It is important to distinguish between the duty of care required for athletes under the age of 18 and that required for adults.

Neglect can also be defined as the failure of parents or care givers to meet a child's physical and emotional needs or the failure to protect a child from exposure to danger. This definition also applies to coaches and athletes' entourage members.

## **III. IMPACTS OF NON-ACCIDENTAL VIOLENCE**

### **III . 1. Impact on Athletes**

All ages and types of athletes are vulnerable to these problems, but as well as being victims, athletes can also be perpetrators.

The personal cost of non-accidental violence to athletes can be long term and extremely damaging. The impact of such experiences extends to affect family, friends, colleagues and peers, in home, work and leisure environments. The impact can persist long after the athlete has left his or her role in sport.

Non-accidental violence in sport can also have serious negative impacts on athletes' physical, social and psychological health. The various types of abuse described above may impair performance, be associated with doping, increase athletes' willingness to cheat and result in a variety of other problems including psychosomatic illnesses, eating disorders, sleeping problems, lack of trust in others, anxiety, depression, feelings of guilt and shame, poor self-esteem and self-confidence, physical stress reactions, substance abuse, quitting sports activities, self-harm and even suicide.

### **III . 2. Impact on Karate Sport**

Harassment and abuse in Karate could lead to athlete dropout and attrition. This would not only reduce the number of competitors, but it would also have an adverse economic impact on our sport. Damage to Karate's reputation, caused by negative publicity from potential cases of harassment or abuse would lead to the termination of sponsorship contracts. It would also undermine the confidence and trust that athletes, their entourage, families and fans, place in the WKF and would therefore, result in the loss of athletes and fans from the sport.



## **IV. EDUCATION AND PREVENTION OF HARASSMENT AND ABUSE**

### **IV . 1. Responsibility of the WKF**

The IOC Prevention of Harassment and Abuse in Sport (PHAS) initiatives have been established by the IOC's Athletes', Athletes' Entourage, Medical and Scientific, and Women in Sport Commissions, in collaboration with NOCs, IFs and subject matter experts. The WKF took these foundations, along with the [IOC Safeguarding Toolkit](#), into account, during the development of this policy.

The WKF is responsible for implementing a safeguarding policy and for creating the safest and fairest conditions for Karate athletes. The policy applies to all individuals affiliated with the WKF, without any exception. This vast and important task must be endorsed by all the WKF Stakeholders, Officials, Referees, Coaches, Medical Staff, WKF Staff, Athletes, all Athlete Entourage members, WKF Continental Karate Federations and Unions (AKF, EKF, OKF, PKF, UFAK, Mediterranean Union, Arab Karate Union, etc...), WKF affiliated National Federations and Karate Club members. All the above stakeholders must adhere to this WKF Safeguarding Policy and implement an aligned policy, at their level, to safeguard athletes against any kind of harassment or abuse, in line with any legislation that may apply.

As stated in the above mentioned references of the IOC and the WKF, but more specifically in the IOC Agenda 2020 - Recommendation 18, the "IOC Consensus Statement : Harassment and Abuse in Sport" (2007 and 2016), the IOC Code of Ethics (Article 1.4) and the WKF Disciplinary and Ethics Code, our International Federation will not tolerate any kind of harassment. Harassment is unacceptable as it is deemed harmful. The WKF recognises the serious negative impact of all types of harassment on personal dignity, individual and group development and performance, enjoyment of sport and in some cases, personal safety. It is the full responsibility of each WKF member and stakeholder to ensure that all contexts, whether that be at the Club, Continental, Union or National level, are free from any harassment or abuse.

In order to fully inform all the WKF Stakeholders, Officials, Referees, Coaches, Medical Staff, WKF Staff, Families, Athletes, all Athlete Entourage members, WKF Continental Karate Federations and Unions (AKF, EKF, OKF, PKF, UFAK, Mediterranean Union, Arab Karate Union, etc...), WKF affiliated National Federations and Karate Club members, about the nature of harassment and abuse and how to prevent it, this Policy will be available in two different places on the WKF website: [WKF Statutes & Rules](#) & [WKF Athletes' Entourage Commission](#). A short presentation on harassment and abuse will also be available on the WKF Athletes' Entourage Commission webpage with links and recommendations to visit the "[IOC Athlete Learning Gateway](#)" and the "[Course on Safeguarding Athletes From Harassment and Abuse](#)".

Other measures that will be taken by the WKF are:

- Sending this Policy to all Affiliated National Federations, the WKF Continental Karate Federations and Unions, with the recommendation to duly inform their Clubs and members;
- Informing the WKF Congress, the Executive Committee members, athletes, coaches and referees during their scheduled meetings and briefings about their responsibilities in the event of a harassment and abuse case;
- Having information about harassment and abuse available on the WKF Stand, or the joint Athletes' Commission and Athletes' Entourage Commission desk, during competition time at the World Championships, Karate Premier League, Karate Series A and other WKF events.



The WKF is responsible for discouraging and preventing harassment and investigating all informal and formal complaints. In order to duly safeguard athletes, the WKF is committed to nominating a "Safeguarding Officer" who will be the person to receive any complaint and conduct all the necessary stages of investigation, following up on the issue until its end. This Officer can be assisted, if necessary, by one or two "Investigation Officers". Assistance will also be provided by members of the Athletes' Entourage Commission, the Athletes' Commission Chairman and the Medical Commission Chairman. The "Safeguarding Officer" will serve in a neutral, unbiased, independent capacity, and report directly to the WKF President.

The WKF will also facilitate the complaint procedure, for those victims and witnesses of harassment, abuse or any other kind of misconduct, via the WKF Official Complaint Form available on the WKF website. For further assistance, the complainant will be able to contact the "Safeguarding Officer" by filling out a self-explanatory form and by emailing it directly to the "Safeguarding Officer". Reports of harassment and abuse are highly encouraged in order to prevent this behaviour from undermining the sport of Karate.

During competition at the World Championships, Karate Premier League, Karate Series A, Karate Youth League, Youth Camp and all other WKF events, cases of harassment and abuse will be reported directly to the "Safeguarding Officer", the WKF Athletes' Entourage Commission members and the Chairmen of both the Athletes' and Medical Commission. In all cases, the "Safeguarding Officer" will remain the central point of the investigation process, which must remain confidential.

The WKF is responsible for protecting and assisting not only all victims of harassment and abuse, but also those who are victims of false accusation. There is very little evidence of false allegations of misconduct in sport, but concerns about this issue mean that protection of coaches, officials and entourage members must feature as a dimension in any successful policy.

In addition, the WKF has a responsibility to recognise and refer any athlete who displays signs or indicators of harassment or abuse.

There are, therefore, three major dimensions of protection to implement:

- providing a safeguarding mechanism to allow the free and safe practice of Karate, without fearing violation of personal rights;
- protecting athletes from harassment and abuse by coaches, peer athletes, friends, trainers, doctors, families and others entourage members;
- protecting coaches, peer athletes, friends, trainers, doctors, families and other entourage members from false allegations. This involves a fair process, including the right to a hearing and a thorough investigation preventing any unjust sanctions from occurring. Signed Codes of Conduct protect those in sport from false allegations as these Codes stipulate very clearly all unacceptable conduct.



## **IV . 2. Education and Athlete Responsibility**

In order to facilitate the implementation of the WKF Safe Sport Policy, athletes must:

- Know their rights and responsibilities regarding the prevention and reporting of non-accidental violence;
- Visit "[IOC Athlete 365-Safe Sport](#)" for the best information about their right to respect and safety;
- Identify their support systems within and beyond entourage members;
- Support their peers and encourage them to speak out if they witness or experience non-accidental violence;
- Respect the rights, dignity and worth of all participants regardless of their ability, gender and cultural background;
- Control their temper;
- Refrain from making derogatory or demeaning remarks about other people;
- Refrain from making racist or sexist jokes;
- Refrain from making undesired sexual comments that offend, intimidate or humiliate;
- Avoid intimate and unprofessional behaviour with their coach;
- Negotiate for a voice in decision-making about their own protection;
- Report all cases of harassment which they are victim to or witness;
- Report any suspected breach of this Policy.

## **IV . 3. Responsibility of Coaches & Athletes' Entourage**

In order to facilitate the implementation of the WKF Safe Sport Policy, coaches and athletes' entourage members must:

- Treat everyone with respect;
- Refrain from any form of behaviour that may be perceived as offensive;
- Avoid body contact that may be perceived as unwanted;
- Not look at, speak to or make contact with athletes in a manner, which is unwelcome, intrusive, abusive, discriminatory or inappropriate;
- Avoid all types of verbal intimacy that may be perceived as sexually charged;
- Avoid expressions, jokes and opinions that relate to the athlete's gender or sexual orientation in a negative way;
- Make it clear to team members that any unlawful discrimination based upon age, sex, race, physical or intellectual impairment will not be tolerated;
- Seek to have both genders represented in the athlete support system;
- Avoid contact with athletes in private spaces unless there are several people present, or in agreement with parents/guardians;
- Show respect for the athletes' and entourage members' private life and dignity;
- Be fair, considerate and honest in all dealings with others;
- Always act in a fair manner and in such a way as to ensure good relations within and between teams;
- Not engage in excessive sledging during competition;



- Avoid intimate relationships. If a relationship is established, the situation should be raised and clarified openly;
- Do not offer any form of reward with the aim to demand sexual services in return;
- Take action and report any breach of this Policy.

#### **IV . 4. Confidentiality**

The WKF understands the sensitive nature of harassment and abuse issues, in particular, that it can be hard to come forward with a complaint, and that equally, it is hard to be wrongly accused or convicted of harassment and abuse. The WKF recognises the interests of both the complainant and respondent in keeping any matter confidential. Therefore, the WKF will not disclose the name of the complainant or respondent to outside parties, unless it is required by a disciplinary, legal or other remedial process.

### **V. HARASSMENT AND ABUSE COMPLAINT PROCEDURES**

#### **V. 1. Assistance to those Concerned**

The WKF Safeguarding Officer and the Athletes' Entourage Commission members, unless specially trained and qualified in this field, should not attempt to evaluate or treat athletes reporting harassment or abuse but should refer all cases to relevant experts in social work, the Medical Commission Chairman, and the Disciplinary and Legal Commission Chairman, for further physical and/or psychological investigation and treatment. The WKF Safeguarding Officer, the Investigation Officers (including both male and female officers) and members of the Athletes' Entourage Commission will have all the necessary information and training about the prevention and treatment of harassment and abuse in order to best conduct the whole process, offering any affected party the best help to solve an issue.

#### **V. 2. Informal Complaint Procedure**

Informal procedures focus on resolution rather than factual proof or substantiation of a complaint. Informal processes seek to resolve human rights issues without investigating or assessing the merits of the allegations (for example, by facilitating communication between the people involved). This type of informal process is generally not appropriate where there are serious or systemic allegations. If an informal process is used, it must still be clear that the complaint will be taken seriously and discussed with the people who are responsible.

Given that there may be power imbalances, safety issues, or fear of reprisal, a complainant does not have to address the matter directly with the potential respondent before using the Safeguarding Officer's complaint mechanism. This process ensures that any steps taken do not penalise the complainant for making the complaint and any concerns regarding the complainant's safety are treated with the utmost seriousness.

Informal ways of dealing with non-accidental violence that do not involve criminal allegations can include the following actions:

1. A person who experiences harassment is encouraged to make it clearly known to the harasser that the behaviour is unwelcome, offensive and contrary to WKF policies and the Code of Conduct.
2. If it is inappropriate to approach the harasser, a victim can confidentially inform and seek advice or support from a coach, official, colleague or any other senior person he or she trusts.



3. In order to protect the victim from any form of threat or reprisal, a mediation or arbitration can be conducted by the WKF Safeguarding Officer between the complainant and the respondent if the latter recognises his or her misconduct and is amenable to an informal resolution.
4. If it is not possible to confront the harasser, or if after confronting the harasser the harassment continues, the complainant should contact the WKF Safeguarding Officer and then make a written complaint to start a formal procedure.

### **V. 3. Formal Complaint Procedure**

1. The first step of the formal complaint procedure begins with a written complaint from the complainant to the WKF Safeguarding Officer. The complainant will fill out the self-explanatory WKF Official Complaint Form available on the WKF website. If necessary, he or she can request help to fill it out.
2. Once contacted by a complainant, the role of the WKF Safeguarding Officer is to assist in a neutral and unbiased capacity, from receiving the complaint to providing to him or her with all the necessary assistance.
3. If an entourage member or a peer athlete witnesses the harassment or abuse of another athlete and reports this via the WKF Official Complaint Form, the Safeguarding Officer will meet the complainant and the alleged victim and proceed in accordance with this process.
4. If the WKF Safeguarding Officer believes there is sufficient evidence to warrant a formal complaint, but the complainant does not wish to do so, perhaps for fear of reprisal, the Safeguarding Officer may still make a formal complaint and proceed in accordance with this process.
5. If a formal complaint is made, within 15 days of its receipt, the WKF Safeguarding Officer will submit a report to the WKF President with recommendations on further action to be taken. Subject to absolute confidentiality and according to the necessary requirements during the investigation, the WKF Safeguarding Officer will be assisted throughout the process by the Investigation Officers, the Medical Commission Chairman, the Athletes' Commission Chairman and the Disciplinary and Legal Commission Chairman.
6. The purpose of the investigation is to establish whether harassment and abuse occurred and, if so, what action should be taken to resolve the matter.
7. Investigations, where necessary, should involve the relevant resources within the community. If any criminal activity is suspected, whether directed towards an adult or minor, law enforcement agencies must be informed as soon as possible.
8. The role of the WKF Safeguarding Officer, or the Investigation Officers, is to inform the alleged harasser, interview both parties separately, confidentially, and impartially, keep accurate records of the process, attempt mediation and conciliation where appropriate, reach a satisfactory resolution and follow-up with disciplinary action. The WKF President will be kept informed during each step of the process for any follow-up, recommendation or decision required by the WKF Executive Committee.
9. If there are indications of unlawful activity, then the relevant national or public authorities will be informed. The criminal component will be investigated, during which and on a case by case basis, the WKF may or may not need to put their internal processes on hold, pending the outcome of the public investigation into the unlawful activity.



10. All cases of sexual harassment and abuse will be considered unlawful and therefore, inappropriate for the WKF Safeguarding Officer to attempt resolution. In such cases, the WKF President will be immediately informed and reports will be referred to the WKF Disciplinary and Legal Commission Chairman who will deal with all the necessary legal requirements, including the involvement of all the relevant public authorities and legal entities working with the WKF.
11. If the complainant chooses not to pursue or to withdraw the complaint, the WKF still has a legal responsibility to maintain a harassment-free sport environment. The WKF Safeguarding Officer must therefore determine whether the alleged harassment is serious enough to warrant an investigation.
12. If the complaint, after investigation carried out by the WKF Safeguarding Officer, is unfounded or does not constitute a case of harassment or abuse as defined in this Policy, then the matter will be closed.

## **VI. DISCIPLINARY ACTION**

1. Any person against whom a complaint of harassment or abuse is substantiated will be severely disciplined in accordance with the WKF Disciplinary and Ethics Code by the WKF Executive Committee, based on the findings and recommendations made by the WKF Safeguarding Officer and the WKF Disciplinary and Legal Commission.
2. The prevention of any form of harassment and abuse, and the WKF's willingness to create a safe environment for athletes, is clearly stated in the WKF Disciplinary and Ethics Code, in the Ethics Principles (Articles 5.1.1; 5.1.2; 5.1.4 & 5.1.7 on page 5). The relevant sanctions for individuals found guilty of harassment and abuse are clearly described in Article 7.1 on page 8 (Disciplinary Measures). The WKF is committed to taking all the necessary legal actions to resolve the complaint in the best possible way for the victim.
3. In addition to the legal action above, the WKF will take all the necessary measures, on an international level, with the concerned Continental Karate Federation or Union, National Federation or Club, in order to definitively resolve the issue, and prevent it from occurring there or anywhere else, again.
4. In the event that unlawful behaviour is suspected, towards either an adult or minor, law enforcement agencies must be informed as soon as possible. The WKF Disciplinary and Legal Commission, along with the WKF President and law firm working with the WKF, will take this issue to the relevant public authorities.
5. There must be no summary judgement or hasty punishment. The investigation process and resolution of any complaint of harassment must be fair to all parties, allowing adequate opportunity for the presentation of a defence to the charges.
6. Measures and sanctions must respect the principle of proportionality and be consistent with applicable laws. The following factors should be taken into consideration when determining proportionality: the nature and severity of the violations, the number of violations, any other relevant circumstances (e.g. when the abused or harassed person is a minor).
7. Nevertheless, in order to both protect the athletes' entourage members (coaches, peers, friends, staff, physicians, trainers and family) from wrongful accusations which may occur, as well as the reputation of the WKF, anyone found to be making a complaint which is clearly false or malicious will be subject to discipline.



8. The disciplinary action determined by the WKF will be final and binding for the complainant, the harasser and the WKF. Unless otherwise stated, it will take effect immediately. The Medical Commission may be asked to follow up with the complainant to ensure all necessary psychological, emotional and medical support is provided.
9. If the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of the investigation or disciplinary action, the complainant will be reminded of their right to file a complaint to an external jurisdiction.

## **VII. POLICY APPLICATION**

The "WKF Safe Sport Policy" will apply to all WKF Stakeholders, Officials, Referees, Coaches, Medical Staff, WKF Staff, Families, Athletes and all the other Athletes' Entourage members, WKF Continental Karate Federations and Unions (AKF, EKf, OKF, PKF, UFAK, Mediterranean Union, Arab Karate Union, etc...), WKF affiliated National Federations and Karate Club members. This policy must serve as a model for Continental Federations and Unions and above all, WKF National Federations. All these entities must agree with this Policy and use it as a foundation to implement their own Policy for safeguarding athletes against any form of non-accidental violence. As this issue is so important, the WKF requires the collaboration of all the above-mentioned organisations.

The WKF looks to its National Federations to deal with the day-to-day follow up of harassment and abuse for all athletes around the world. For this Safe Sport Policy to be most effective, the following framework will be applied:

- National Federations will deal with the day-to-day application of the Policy
- The WKF will apply the Policy during WKF events - the "WKF Competition Time Framework"

### **VII. 1. Application by National Federations**

- **Implementation of the Policy:** National Federations will implement a similar policy, based on the WKF Safe Sport Policy, they will nominate a National Safeguarding Officer and they will work with an independent and external law firm to deal with any cases of harassment and abuse.

In the event of any reports of unlawful behaviour, such as sexual harassment and abuse, the police and all other relevant national authorities must be informed. The NOC and the Ministry of Sport must also be involved in the handling of the issue.

- **Failure in the Policy application:** In the event that a National Federation has no policy or procedures or does not want to do anything to help a complainant of harassment and abuse (for instance, when Federation Management is directly involved), the victim or witness of such behaviour will be able to speak directly to the WKF during competition time. However, in an urgent and serious case, the victim or the witness must not wait and must involve the WKF Safeguarding Officer immediately. This Officer will write to the National Federation, urging them to resolve the matter internally and follow up on this with the WKF. If necessary, the WKF will involve the NOC and the National Ministry of Sport asking them to manage the issue between the NF, victim and offender.

### **VII. 2. Application by the WKF – "The WKF Competition Time Framework"**

#### **VII. 2. Objectives of the Competition Time Framework**

The "IOC Games Time Framework" has been developed by the IOC Athletes', the Athletes' Entourage, Medical and Scientific and Women in Sport Commissions, in accordance with the Olympic Agenda 2020, Recommendation 18 (Strengthen support to athletes), and the 2015 7th IOC International Athletes Forum. It is also supported by Article 1.4 of the IOC Code of Ethics.



The "WKF Competition Time Framework", is aligned with the IOC, and is intended to help safeguard athletes and other participants from harassment and abuse during the WKF Competitions, including but not limited to, the World Championships, the Karate Premier League, Karate Series A, the Youth Camp and Youth League Competitions. Continental Federations and Unions will adopt the same format as the WKF for Continental events.

The WKF Events Organisers will be asked to add a warning into each WKF Event Bulletin: "*WKF events must be safe for all athletes and participants and entirely free from any form of non-accidental violence, namely, harassment and abuse. Any such behaviour will not be tolerated*". They will also be requested to add the contact details of the Safeguarding Officer should an individual require any information regarding the Safeguarding Management System.

## **VII. 2. 2. WKF World Championships and Youth Camps:**

- **General Information:** the Athletes' and Athletes' Entourage Commissions will share a stand to act as a "helpdesk" where information will be available as well as the WKF Official Complaint Form. The Athletes' Entourage Commission members and the Athletes' Commission Chairman will be on hand to help fill out this form. At the Youth Camp, the Athletes' Commission Chairman will act as the "Event Safeguarding Officer".

Referees and coaches will be informed about harassment and abuse during their briefings from the WKF Referees Commission Chairman (or the nominated RC member) and the WKF Organising Committee Chairman. Athletes will be briefed by the Athletes' Commission Chairman (or the nominated AC member).

- **Case of physical or verbal harassment or abuse in the competition area:** the Chief Referee of the event will stop the offender's behaviour and take the necessary action, including a warning, the withdrawal of his or her accreditation card or the restriction of further access to the competition area. A report must be made to the WKF Safeguarding Officer or a member of the Athletes' Entourage Commission.
- **Case of physical or verbal harassment or abuse elsewhere in the competition venue:** a member of the WKF Athletes' Entourage Commission, the WKF Safeguarding Officer or the WKF Organising Committee Chairman should be informed. They will deal with the issue to resolve it internally, if possible. According to the severity of the case, event security, the National Federations concerned and the WKF Medical and Disciplinary and Legal Commissions will be involved, and the appropriate measures will be taken.
- **Case of sexual harassment or abuse:** the WKF Official Complaint Form will be filled in and a preliminary hearing involving the victim or witness and the offender will be carried out by the Safeguarding Officer and the Investigation Officers. The Organising Committee Chairman and the Medical Commission Chairman will also be involved. According to the severity of the case, the local National Federation President, the National Federations concerned, the local national authorities and the WKF Disciplinary and Legal Commission Chairman will also be required to deal with the issue.

## **VII. 2. 3. WKF Karate Premier Leagues, Series A and Youth Leagues:**

- **General Information:** the "Event Safeguarding Officer" will be the "WKF Event Supervisor". The Officer's contact details (phone number and email address) will be available to all participants in the Event Bulletin. The Event Safeguarding Officer will report to the WKF Safeguarding Officer.



Referees and coaches will be informed about harassment and abuse during their briefings from the WKF Referees Commission Chairman and the WKF Supervisor or representative.

- **Case of physical or verbal harassment or abuse in the competition area:** the Chief Referee of the event will stop the offender's behaviour and take the necessary action, including a warning, the withdrawal of his or her accreditation card or the restriction of further access to the competition area. A report must be made to the Event Safeguarding Officer.
- **Case of physical or verbal harassment or abuse elsewhere in the competition venue:** the Event Safeguarding Officer should be informed. They will deal with the issue to resolve it internally, if possible. According to the severity of the case, event security, the Chief Doctor of the event, the National Federations concerned and the WKF Disciplinary and Legal Commission will be involved, and the appropriate measures will be taken.
- **Case of sexual harassment or abuse:** the WKF Official Complaint Form will be filled in and a preliminary hearing involving the victim or witness and the offender will be carried out by the Event Safeguarding Officer. The Chief Doctor of the event will be involved and according to the severity of the case, the local National Federation President, the National Federations concerned, the local national authorities, the WKF Safeguarding Officer and the WKF Disciplinary and Legal Commission Chairman will also be required to deal with the issue.

#### **VII. 2. 4. For Continental Federations and Unions:**

**General Information:** Continental Federations and Unions must nominate a "Continental Safeguarding Officer" who will be in contact with the WKF Safeguarding Officer. Any case that occurs must be solved at Continental level, with a report to the WKF.

Referees and coaches will be informed about harassment and abuse during their briefings from the Continental Referees' Commission Chairman and the Continental Organising Committee Chairman or representative.

- **Case of physical or verbal harassment or abuse in the competition area:** the Chief Referee of the event will stop the offender's behaviour and take the necessary action: including a warning, the withdrawal of his or her accreditation card or the restriction of further access to the competition area. A report must be made to the Continental Safeguarding Officer or the Continental Organising Committee Chairman.
- **Case of physical or verbal harassment or abuse elsewhere in the competition venue:** the Continental Safeguarding Officer or the Continental Organising Committee Chairman should be informed. They will deal with the issue to resolve it internally, if possible. According to the severity of the case, event security, the WKF Medical Commission, the National Federations concerned, and the Continental Disciplinary and Legal Commission will be involved, and the appropriate measures will be taken.
- **Case of sexual harassment or abuse:** the WKF Official Complaint Form will be filled in and a preliminary hearing involving the victim or witness and the offender will be carried out by the Continental Safeguarding Officer. The Organising Committee Chairman and the Medical Commission Chairman will be involved and according to the severity of the case, the local National Federation President, the National Federations concerned, the local national authorities the Continental Disciplinary and Legal Commission Chairman will be required to deal with the issue.

The WKF Safeguarding Officer is central to any incident and must be kept fully informed of any issue, even if it is resolved locally.



## **VIII . 1. The WKF Safeguarding Officer**

The WKF Safeguarding Officer will be responsible for following up on all reported incidents of non-accidental violence. This Officer will be also responsible for:

- a) liaising with the WKF Organising Committee, the Medical Commission and the Disciplinary and Legal Commission;
- b) documenting all reports of harassment and abuse during WKF Competitions, together with the "Event Safeguarding Officer", the Investigation Officers and the Medical Commission Chairman;
- c) coordinating the submission of reports to the WKF President and the WKF Disciplinary and Legal Commission;
- d) ensuring local authorities have been duly notified by the Host Country, as appropriate and where necessary, in accordance with the local law. (For clarity, the local authorities are responsible for determining whether to conduct a criminal investigation in relation to an alleged incident);
- e) providing support to any concerned party.

## **VIII . 2. Reporting Procedure for Incidents of Harassment and Abuse**

### **VIII.4. 1. Reporting**

- a) Anyone may report an incident of harassment and abuse.
- b) In the event of an incident involving a minor as the alleged perpetrator of harassment and abuse, the parents or legal guardian of such minor (National Federation, Coach) must be informed.
- c) In the event of an incident involving a minor as the alleged victim or third-party witness of harassment and abuse, the parents or legal guardian of the minor (National Federation, Coach), should be informed, providing that by doing so, the minor's safety or welfare is not put at risk.
- d) In the event that informing the parents or legal guardian is considered a risk to the minor's safety or welfare, another person, acting in an official capacity (preferably medical or legal), within the same delegation as the minor, must be informed, providing that by doing so, the minor's safety or welfare is not put at risk.
- e) Any participant who witnesses or suspects an incident of harassment or abuse against a minor during a WKF Competition must report such incident through the reporting channels detailed below.
- f) Reporting channels, through which any alleged incident of harassment or abuse must be reported, are as follow:
  - 1. the "Event Safeguarding Officer";
  - 2. the Athletes' and Athletes' Entourage Commissions' stand, if available;
  - 3. the WKF Athletes' Entourage Commission members;
  - 4. the Medical Commission members;
  - 5. the " WKF Official Complaint Form" on the WKF website.



- g) A complaint made through any of the reporting channels will be referred to the WKF Safeguarding Officer.
- h) Reports of harassment and abuse may be made in writing or in person. The "Event Safeguarding Officer" will ensure that such reports are documented, including the name, title, address, contact information and signature of the complainant. The report should also include information regarding the reasons and basis for the complaint, including any evidence which might suggest that harassment and abuse has occurred.

#### **VIII.4. 2. Procedure**

- a) If an alleged incident of harassment or abuse has occurred between individuals belonging to the same National Federation, the incident will be resolved by the said National Federation, provided that this Federation has established an appropriate procedure for safeguarding athletes, including minors. This will also be the case for any incident taking place before an event but reported at the event.
- b) In all other cases of alleged harassment or abuse, including at an event itself, occurring between individuals belonging to:
  - 1. different organisations;
  - 2. the same National Federation, which has an appropriate procedure for safeguarding individuals, but is deemed unsatisfactorily implemented by the WKF;
  - 3. the same National Federation, which does not have an appropriate procedure for safeguarding individuals,

the WKF will take the appropriate action in order to safeguard the concerned individual, including taking any disciplinary action, if necessary.

For more details, refer to paragraph "V. Harassment Complaints and Procedures", on page 9.

#### **VIII . 3. Disciplinary Procedure**

Any alleged incident of harassment and abuse during a WKF Competition must be treated following the process described in paragraph "VI. Disciplinary Action", on page 11. The "Event Safeguarding Officer", following the process described above, will conduct all the necessary local and onsite requirements, keeping the WKF Safeguarding Officer fully informed, who in turn will follow up with the WKF President, the WKF Medical and Disciplinary and Legal Commissions.

#### **VIII . 4. Confidentiality**

- a) All matters concerning an alleged incident of harassment and abuse, in particular, where the report came from, the personal information of the concerned parties, other information gathered during investigation and the results of investigation ("Confidential Information") will be regarded as confidential and handled in accordance with applicable laws.
- b) The WKF may disclose the Confidential Information to the appropriate people or authorities (subject to applicable laws) if:
  - 1. a failure to disclose such information may cause harm to an individual;
  - 2. such information relates to potential criminal behaviour.



- c) Decisions from the Disciplinary Procedure will, in principle, include the Confidential Information, which will be publicly disclosed by the WKF. When communicating such decisions, the WKF will:
1. not include any of the victim's personal information without obtaining prior consent;
  2. Take into consideration other concerned parties' wish to remain anonymous and omit their personal information, in certain cases.



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