

Safeguarding Policy Statement



Protecting Children, Youth, and Vulnerable Persons in Athletics

Version 1.0

Effective Date: 2 October 2025

Approved by: AAF/AAB Board of Directors

Official Federation of Aruba for World Athletics

AAF Safeguarding Policy Summary

Purpose: Public Awareness & Stakeholder Communication

This summary outlines the core values, responsibilities, and reporting mechanisms defined in the Aruba Athletics Federation's (AAF) official Safeguarding and Protection Policy. It is intended for use in public communication, athlete and stakeholder awareness, and as a simplified reference to the full policy.



1. AAF's Commitment to a Safe Sporting Environment

The Aruba Athletics Federation (AAF) is fully committed to promoting and protecting the rights, safety, and well-being of everyone involved in athletics. This includes children, young people, and vulnerable adults who may be at greater risk of harm or exploitation. We believe that all athletes and stakeholders regardless of age, gender, background, or ability have the right to participate in athletics in a safe, respectful, and inclusive environment.

Safeguarding is not just a legal obligation; it is a moral responsibility that applies to every person connected to our sport. This includes athletes, coaches, technical staff, volunteers, parents, officials, and board members. AAF's approach is proactive, preventive, and athlete centered. We follow the standards set by World Athletics and apply them in a way that fits the cultural and legal context of Aruba.

2. Understanding Safeguarding

Safeguarding involves taking all reasonable steps to protect individuals from any form of abuse, neglect, harassment, or exploitation whether physical, emotional, sexual, or psychological. It also means fostering a culture of openness, trust, and accountability within our federation and its affiliated clubs. Through this policy, we seek to prevent harm before it occurs and to respond quickly and appropriately when concerns are raised.

3. Types of Abuse Covered

The AAF Safeguarding Policy addresses a wide range of harmful behaviors, including physical violence, inappropriate sexual contact or grooming, bullying, verbal intimidation, neglect of athletes' basic needs, and the misuse of power or authority. It also includes digital misconduct and abuse that may occur online or through social media. We recognize that harm can be caused by adults, peers, or those in positions of trust, and that any concern must be taken seriously.

4. Reporting Concerns

Any member of the AAF community who witnesses or suspects a safeguarding issue is expected to report it immediately. Reports can be made confidentially to the designated AAF Safeguarding Officer via safeguarding@aaf.aw. Reports do not require proof; a reasonable suspicion is enough to trigger a response.

The Safeguarding Officer will assess the concern and determine the appropriate action, which may include internal investigation, support for the individual affected, or referral to external authorities such as the police or social services. All reports are handled sensitively, with respect for privacy and the rights of all involved.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

In addition to reporting responsibilities, all AAF members are expected to actively uphold the values and principles of safeguarding in their behavior and conduct. Coaches and technical staff must maintain clear boundaries and act professionally at all times. Athletes are encouraged to speak up



when something doesn't feel right. Parents and guardians should stay informed and involved. Officials and volunteers must serve as role models, promoting safe and fair participation.

6. Codes of Conduct

The AAF Safeguarding Policy is supported by clear Codes of Conduct for each role within the federation. These codes define acceptable and unacceptable behavior and apply to all official activities, including training, competitions, travel, and online communication. All members must read, understand, and agree to follow these codes as part of their affiliation with AAF.

7. Education and Certification

To strengthen this culture of safety, all members are required to complete two steps: first, they must attend an in-person safeguarding awareness session; second, they must complete the official online safeguarding course approved by AAF and World Athletics. Certification will only be granted once both steps are completed.

8. Reference to Full Policy

This Safeguarding Policy Summary represents our public commitment to athlete protection and ethical conduct in sport. The complete AAF Safeguarding Policy (2025 Edition) provides detailed procedures, definitions, sanctions, and contact protocols, and is available through the federation upon request. All stakeholders are encouraged to review it and join us in building a safer future for athletics in Aruba.