



## **POLICY – Human Resources**

### **Policy Number 03-020 – Member Protection Policy -Part D - Pregnancy Policy**

#### **Document Control**

#### **Version Control**

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#### **Approval**

Delegation required for approval: Chief Executive Officer

Name: Anna Carroll      Position: Chief Executive Officer

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "A Carroll".

Signature:

Date: 19<sup>th</sup> May 2014

#### **Purpose and Background**

Women are increasingly seeking to continue participation in sports, such as netball, throughout their pregnancy.

There are many positive outcomes from continuing physical activity during and after pregnancy, however as maternal and foetal responses to exercise can vary with pre-gestational maternal fitness levels, co-existing medical conditions and/or pregnancy complications all women are encouraged to seek individual medical advice before participating.

Netball Queensland is committed to providing an inclusive sporting environment for pregnant women involved in netball. Netball Queensland expects everyone who is bound by this Policy to treat pregnant women with dignity and respect and to remove any unreasonable barriers to participation in our sport that disadvantage them. Netball Queensland will not tolerate any unlawful discrimination or harassment against pregnant women or women who may become pregnant.

Netball Queensland will take reasonable care to ensure the safety, health and well being of pregnant women and their unborn children. Netball Queensland will advise pregnant women that there may be risks involved, and encourage them to obtain medical advice about those risks. Pregnant women should be aware that their own health and wellbeing, and that of their unborn children, are of utmost importance in their decision making about the extent and manner in which they participate in netball.

Further information, The Australian Sports Commission, Pregnancy in Sport, Guidelines for the Australian Sporting Industry

<http://www.ausport.gov.au/participating/women/resources/pregnancy> .

The Netball Queensland Pregnancy Policy forms one part of the Netball Queensland Member Protection Policy, and as such, should be read in conjunction with the Member Protection Policy.

### **Policy Statement**

Netball Queensland is committed to providing a safe and enjoyable environment for all its members, including pregnant players. Netball Queensland encourages all pregnant players to discuss their decision to continue playing during their pregnancy with their medical practitioner.

### **Applicability**

This policy applies to Netball Queensland and persons identified in Member Protection Policy Clause 3.

### **Definitions**

Descriptions of some of the types of behaviour that could be regarded as pregnancy discrimination or harassment are provided in the Definitions section at (Clause 20) of the Netball Queensland Member Protection Policy.

### **Legislative Requirements**

In Australia, Commonwealth, State and Territory legislation exists in relation to discrimination. This anti-discrimination legislation makes it unlawful to discriminate against a female on the basis of pregnancy, subject to specific exemptions.

There are a number of legal issues to be considered regarding the participation of pregnant players including providing reasonably safe playing environments, privacy of the pregnant participant and responsibility of the pregnant player for inherent and obvious risks.

### **Procedure**

If any person feels they are being harassed or discriminated against by another person or organisation bound by this Policy, please refer to the complaints procedure outlined in the Netball Queensland Member Protection Policy- Part G (Complaint Handling Policy).

This will explain what to do about the behaviour and how Netball Queensland will deal with the problem.

We encourage all pregnant women to consult with their medical advisers, make themselves aware of the facts about pregnancy in sport, and ensure that they make informed decisions about participation in particular sporting activities. Women will not be required to undertake a pregnancy test.

The following guidelines may assist Region/ Associations/Clubs when a pregnant player is involved:

- 3.1 A Pregnant Player should:
  - 3.1.1 Be aware that her own health, and the wellbeing of her unborn child, is of utmost importance in her decision about whether to continue playing sport.
  - 3.1.2 Obtain expert medical advice as to the risks associated with playing sport when pregnant. She should ensure she understands this advice and where necessary question the advice until she is sure she understands the risks taken in participating in netball.
  - 3.1.3 Have regular antenatal reviews with her doctor, including ongoing review of her exercise participation.
  - 3.1.4 Take into account her changed physical condition, use common sense and not take unnecessary risks.
  - 3.1.5 Remember that the ultimate decision to participate in netball will always be hers, whilst having regard to all the circumstances.
- 3.2 Netball Queensland should:
  - 3.2.1 Evaluate the precautions she/he can take to avoid harm to all players, including pregnant players.
  - 3.2.2 Be aware of Commonwealth, State and Territory anti-discrimination legislation and its application in netball and review the rules, regulations and constitution of Netball Queensland with respect to the relevant anti-discrimination legislation.
  - 3.2.3 Seek professional advice, (including medical and/or legal,) if a situation arises where it is not clear what steps should be taken in a given circumstance.

- 3.2.4 Ensure that the organisation's insurance (including public liability and player injury insurance) is up to date and that it provides appropriate cover.
  - 3.2.5 Promote adherence to the rules of the game.
  - 3.2.6 Create a playing environment that is reasonably safe for all players.
- 3.3 A Coach should:
- 3.3.1 Further information, The Australian Sports Commission, Pregnancy in Sport, Guidelines for the Australian Sporting Industry  
<http://www.ausport.gov.au/participating/women/resources/pregnancy> .
  - 3.3.2 take reasonable measures to ensure that all athletes are aware of the issues related to participation in netball during pregnancy.
  - 3.3.3 respect and support the player's right to make her own decisions in relation to her participation or non participation in netball whilst pregnant.
  - 3.3.4 with the agreement of the player, advise the pertinent team/club/association/member organisation officials that you are coaching a pregnant player.
- NOTE: Coaches, trainers and others who give pregnant athletes advice on how to train during their pregnancy must be very careful that they are not placing themselves in the position of medical experts. They should not speak outside their scope of knowledge as they could face legal action for negligent advice. A consultative approach between athlete, coach and medical expert is recommended.
- 3.4 The Match Officials should:
- 3.4.1 Apply the rules governing the sport equally and fairly to all participants.
- 3.5 Other Players should:
- 3.5.1 Respect and support a pregnant athlete in the same way as they would any other participant.

### **Related Document**

Netball Queensland Member Protection Policy