



NSWFA WORKPLACE SAFETY POLICY

Workplace safety legislation which took effect in NSW from 1 January 2012 covers the NSW Fencing Association and Affiliated/Registered Clubs.

The NSW Work, Health & Safety Act 2011 is part of the Australian Government's model Work, Health and Safety legislation which is intended to set a national standard in workplace safety law.

The NSW law covers volunteer workers involved in sport and other community activities. If an Association employs anyone, then it and all affiliated clubs are subject to the law with regard to volunteer work. NSWFA has employees so the law applies to both the Association and to Affiliated/Registered clubs.

The law imposes a duty on NSWFA and Affiliated/Registered Clubs to take all reasonable precautions to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health and safety of workers, including volunteers, engaged in work for the business or undertaking.

What is 'reasonably practicable', is defined as: that which is, or was, reasonably able to be done in relation to ensuring health and safety, taking into account all relevant factors. It is important to note that a volunteer official cannot be prosecuted for failing in that duty, however a volunteer official can be prosecuted for failing in his or her role as a volunteer worker (this relates to the worker's responsibility to take reasonable care for their own health and safety and take reasonable care that their actions do not adversely affect the health and safety of other workers).

What this means for the NSW Fencing Association

1. NSWFA will appoint a Safety Officer and publish Safety Rules.

What this means for Affiliated Clubs:

1. Clubs should appoint a Safety Officer or an elected official of the Club should be nominated as responsible for safety.
2. The Club should develop Safety Rules based on general principles and matters specific to the Club and ensure all Club members are aware of them. Interim Draft Safety Rules for Affiliated Clubs, for guidance, are attached.

Specific Safety Rules for the NSW Fencing Centre at Alexandria are here: [Download PDF](#)

Further information about the model Work, Health and Safety legislation as it applies to volunteer organisations is here:

<http://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/AboutSafeWorkAustralia/WhatWeDo/Publications/Pages/VolunteerOfficersAndTheirDutiesFactSheet.aspx>

NSW Affiliated and Registered Fencing Clubs should:

1. Appoint a Safety Officer who may be a member of the Club executive committee or another member of the Club.
2. The Safety Officer should be familiar with the requirements of the NSW Work, Health and Safety Act and develop a set of Safety Rules in the context of the Club's activities which are approved by the Club executive committee.
3. The Club Safety Rules should be communicated to club members and posted on a notice board where they can clearly be seen by members.
4. The Club Safety Rules should include, but not be limited to, the following:
 - a. Before fencing activities commence, the premises should be checked for hazards, e.g. obstacles that may cause trip and fall incidents, wet and slippery floors.
 - b. All fencing activities should be supervised by a responsible adult, usually a club coach or member of the executive committee.
 - c. Children under the age of 16 must be supervised by a responsible adult at all times.
 - d. Weapons must only be used for fencing on the piste or in practice drills. Off the piste, fencers should carry weapons with tip to floor and with care they do not hit anyone.
 - e. Fencers must be properly attired with a mask secured by a tang and an elastic strap, under plastron, jacket, fencing breeches or long track suit pants, fencing shoes or trainers and a glove. Women and girls should wear breast protectors. It is recommended that men and boys should wear groin protectors.
 - f. Fencing equipment must be in good condition with no severely bent or broken blades and without rough or sharp edges on weapons. The protective mesh on masks should be in good condition without rust or dents. The seal around the mesh should not have any holes or gaps.
 - g. Broken blades must be disposed of carefully – keep a container for this purpose.
 - h. Electrical equipment must be in good condition with no damaged cords or connections.
 - i. Electrical cords should be kept tidy by cable ties, taped to the floor or covered by protective covers.
 - j. Fencing bags should be stored away from pistes and practice areas so they are not a trip hazard.
5. The Club should encourage members to be qualified in first aid and the names of qualified members should be displayed on a notice board.
6. Contact numbers and addresses for St John Ambulance and the nearest medical centres and hospital casualty departments should be kept on the club notice board.
7. Any accidents or safety incidents should be noted in a register and advised as soon as possible to secretary@nswfa.com.au
8. For assistance with the development and implementation of club safety policies, please contact: secretary@nswfencing.org.au