

ECB Guidance on Appointing and Training a Club Welfare Officer

It is a mandatory requirement that every ECB affiliated club recruit, identify, appoint and train a Club Welfare Officer.

This is essential firstly, to provide a “first point of contact” for everyone within the club and the ECB for child safeguarding matters, and secondly, to ensure the club is adopting, and implementing, the various safeguarding activities necessary for it to demonstrate its duty of care for children.

When appointing a new Club Welfare Officer, clubs must remember to refer to the ECB policy on appropriate recruitment for individuals who work with children, as well as the guidance notes on the recruitment and appointment of volunteers/staff found elsewhere in this Kit Bag.

The role of Club Welfare Officer is regarded as Regulated Activity, for the purposes of the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012. This means that the club MUST ensure the individual is properly vetted and that he or she is not barred from working with children. See ‘ECB guidance on Roles in Cricket that Require a Vetting Check’ and ‘How to Determine which Roles in Cricket are Regulated Activity’

Recommended process

- The Club Chairman must personally ensure the Club Welfare Officer has been through the ECB’s vetting process
- Written references on the prospective Club Welfare Officer (which are required in accordance with the ECB appointment and recruitment guidelines) need to be taken up by the Club Chairman, and any concerns raised by those providing the reference should be referred by the Chairman directly to the County Welfare Officer
- The name and contact details for the appointed Club Welfare Officer must be communicated to your County Welfare Officer, and County Cricket Board Office
- Once the Club Welfare Officer has been appointed, they must attend training in accordance with the details shown later in this guidance under the heading of “Training”. Once trained, where possible, the club should display the Club Welfare Officer’s training certificates on the club notice board
- The Club Welfare Officer’s name and contact details must be made known to club members, and other persons associated with the club, and these should also be displayed on the club notice board
- The Club Welfare Officer should be present at welcome events / registrations sessions and should inform people of his or her role at these events. It is best practice for the Club Welfare Officer to have a presence during Junior sessions and matches.

Who should be a Club Welfare Officer?

The person selected for the role of Club Welfare Officer must be able to:

- Satisfy the requirements of the core skills and knowledge areas
- Be prepared to complete the core tasks
- Be prepared to undergo the training required

Where possible, the person selected for the role of Club Welfare Officer should not be someone who already has a high profile role within the club.

NB Many clubs have as members (or members' partners/parents or associates), people who, in their professional lives, have experience of child safeguarding policies and procedures.

The ECB understands the problems clubs may face in securing volunteers to perform such a role. However the importance of selecting the right person cannot be over-stated. The person selected may well be privy to some of the most private aspects of club members lives and must show they are able, and experienced enough, to handle confidential matters.

Role Description – Club Welfare Officer

Core tasks

- Promote good practice in safeguarding and protecting children in their club, working with the coaching teams, club committee and club members to create a welcoming and child centred environment with a proactive safeguarding culture.
- To encourage and promote an environment where children and parents' views are actively sought and acted upon.
- To help safeguard and protect children by assisting in the promotion and implementation of the Safeguarding Children Policy at the club

- To be the first point of contact for all club child safeguarding issues
- To act as a source of advice on current best practice and provide support to the Club Management Committee and the members of the club on safeguarding issues and procedures
- To attend Club Management Committee meetings as a member of that Committee by right of the role. To ensure safeguarding is a mandatory standing item on the committee agenda and that safeguarding is considered the primary driver in junior cricket decisions
- To advise the Management Committee in establishing which roles within the club require the post holder to undertake the ECB vetting process, and ensure such vetting applications are completed
- To work closely with the Volunteer Co-ordinator, where one is in place, ensuring vetting checks and training are completed as required
- To maintain accurate records and keep all documentation in a secure fashion
- To ensure matters of a possible child safeguarding nature are reported/referred appropriately to the ECB and/or Statutory Agencies in a timely fashion, and in accordance with ECB procedures

Core areas of knowledge

- To be aware of the ECB process for reporting incidents to the ECB and the Statutory Agencies
- To have a basic knowledge of the different forms of abuse that can occur within, and outside of sport, which are harmful to children
- To have a basic understanding of the Statutory Agencies and their role in child safeguarding
- To be aware of ECB safeguarding policies and procedures as set out in "Safe Hands"

Core skills

- Experience of child safeguarding either at work or in other volunteering, for example as a teacher, social worker, police officer, charity organiser
- Empathy with children
- Excellent communication skills, including the ability to advocate the benefits of safeguarding
- Able to collate and administer paperwork and information received in a confidential and secure manner

Training the Club Welfare Officer

The ECB requires all Club Welfare Officers to attend the following training to support and equip them for the role:

- A “Safeguarding and Protecting Children” (SPC) workshop. This is a basic awareness course and is required before attending the detailed training for Club Welfare Officers. A vocational basic awareness course (such as LSCB courses for social care workers, health professionals and designated child protection officers in education) can replace the SPC workshop, if evidenced by a certificate of attendance and as agreed by the County Welfare Officer.
- The ‘Safe Hands Workshop’ and the ‘Safe Hands Refresher’ courses every 3 years. These relate directly to the cricket Club Welfare Officer role and are delivered by ECB trained educators and County Welfare Officers.

Before attending the Safe Hands workshop, trainee Club Welfare Officer must have been vetted and attended a basic awareness safeguarding course such as SPC or equivalent as agreed by the County Welfare Officer.

All Club Welfare officers MUST attend the Safe Hands workshop, and a refresher every 3 years.

The training enables the Club Welfare Officer to:

- Explain the role and responsibility of the Club Welfare Officer and how this relates to other key roles in cricket
- Review club processes regarding good safeguarding practice and duty of care
- Identify legislation and government guidance relevant to the Club Welfare Officer role, including the Club Welfare Officer’s need to have a working knowledge of children’s social care, the police, LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) and so on
- Apply the “Safe Hands” safeguarding policy when managing concerns
- Create an ongoing action plan to support the implementation of “Safe Hands” in the club
- Understand what support is available and how to access this.