



Netball NSW

Pregnancy Policy

Adopted by New South Wales Netball Association Ltd at its Board Meeting held on 11 August 2020

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1 Purpose and Background

- 1.1 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.
- 1.2 Further information on Pregnancy and Sport may be gained from:
 - 1.2.1 Australian Sports Commission
'Pregnancy in Sport – Guidelines for the Australian Sport Industry', 2002
www.ausport.gov.au
 - 1.2.2 Sports Medicine Australia's 'Pregnancy Statement, Pregnancy & Exercise Fact Sheet and Guidelines on the participation of the Pregnant Athlete in contact and collision sports.'
www.sma.org.au
- 1.3 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.
- 1.4 There are a number of legal issues to be considered in relation to pregnant participants, these include:
 - 1.4.1 providing reasonably safe playing environments,
 - 1.4.2 privacy of the pregnant participant, and
 - 1.4.3 responsibility of the pregnant player for inherent and obvious risks.

2 Policy Statement

- 2.1 Netball NSW is committed to providing a safe and enjoyable environment for all its members, including pregnant participants.
- 2.2 Netball NSW adopts and endorses the position that any pregnant participant should be given the opportunity to decide for herself, in consultation with her medical advisers, whether or not to participate in netball whilst pregnant and for how long.
- 2.3 Netball NSW encourages all pregnant participants to discuss the risks involved and their decision to continue participating in netball during their pregnancy with their medical advisers. As the risks involved may vary at different stages of the pregnancy, Netball NSW encourages all pregnant participants to have such discussions with their medical advisers on an ongoing basis.

- 2.4. This Policy applies to:
- a) Netball NSW and its members
 - b) Affiliates and their members;
 - c) Individuals sitting on Boards, committees and sub-committees of Netball NSW and/or its Affiliates;
 - d) All employees, volunteers, independent contractors and other workplace participants;
 - e) Any other person or organisation that is an Individual member of or affiliated with Netball NSW;
 - f) Parents, guardians, spectators and sponsors and any other person or organisation to the fullest extent possible;
 - g) Any other person who has agreed to be bound by this Policy.
- 2.5 This Policy applies:
- a) at any Netball NSW or Affiliate competition or event;
 - b) during paid or voluntary activities, including dealing with members, media, sponsors, other support employees, volunteers, independent contractors and other participants in Netball in NSW;
 - c) during all netball related activities including games, training events and camps;
 - d) at all times when providing services on behalf of Netball NSW or an Affiliate; and
 - e) at all times when acting in any capacity, whether voluntary or paid on behalf of Netball NSW or an Affiliate.
- 2.6 This Policy should be read together with the Netball NSW Member Protection Policy (MPP).
- 2.7 A breach of this Policy may constitute a breach of the MPP and should be dealt with in accordance with the MPP and the Complaint Handling Procedures set out in Attachment B to the MPP.

3 Jurisdiction

- 3.1 The Netball NSW Board of Directors (“Board”) has adopted this Policy in accordance with the NSW Netball Association Limited Constitution.
- 3.2 Affiliated Associations and Clubs are required to comply with this Policy where applicable and relevant.
- 3.3 The Policy is effective from 11 August 2020 and will operate until replaced. This Policy may be amended from time to time by resolution of the Netball NSW Board.

4 Guidelines: Pregnant Participant (Player or Umpire)

- 4.1 The following guidelines may assist Associations and Clubs when a pregnant participant is involved. A Pregnant participant is encouraged to:
- 4.1.1 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.

- 4.1.2 Obtain expert medical advice as to the risks associated with playing netball 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.
- 4.1.3 Have regular antenatal reviews with her doctor, including ongoing review of her netball participation.
- 4.1.4 Take into account her changed physical condition, use common sense and not take unnecessary risks.
- 4.1.5 Remember that the ultimate decision to participate in netball will always be hers, whilst having regard to all the circumstances.

5 Guidelines: Sports Administrator

- 5.1 The following guidelines may assist Associations and Clubs when a pregnant participant is involved. A Sports Administrator should:
 - 5.1.1 Evaluate the precautions she/he can take to avoid harm to all participants, including pregnant participants.
 - 5.1.2 Develop protocols and procedures to communicate with participants regarding participation in netball during pregnancy, including:
 - a) Providing participants with the opportunity to advise of their pregnancy should they wish to do so.
 - b) Adding pregnancy advice and risk information to registration forms and prominent places where participants may view it. (*Note: legal advice about the form and wording of documents should be obtained*).
 - c) Being aware of Commonwealth, State and Territory anti-discrimination legislation and its application in netball and review the rules, regulations and constitution of the Team / Club / Association with respect to the relevant anti-discrimination legislation
 - d) Seeking 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. This situation may arise where a Sports Administrator is aware that a pregnant participant has not obtained medical advice or is acting contrary to the advice received. At no stage should the Sports Administrator seek to provide medical advice they are not qualified to give.
 - e) Ensuring that the organisation's insurance (including public liability and player injury insurance) is up to date and that it provides appropriate cover.
 - f) Promoting adherence to the rules of the game.
 - g) Create a playing environment that is reasonably safe for all participants.

6 Guidelines: Coach

6.1 The following guidelines may assist Associations and Clubs when a pregnant participant is involved. A Coach should:

6.1.1 Be aware of the professional medical advice should the pregnant participant wish to share this information.

6.1.2 Take reasonable measures to ensure that all participants are aware of the issues related to participation in netball during pregnancy.

6.1.3 Respect and support the participant's right to make her own decisions in relation to her participation or non-participation in netball whilst pregnant.

6.1.4 With the agreement of the participant, advise the pertinent Team/Club/Association Officials that you are coaching a pregnant player.

6.2 Coaches, trainers and others who give pregnant participants 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 participant, coach and medical expert is recommended.

7 Guidelines: Match Official

7.1 The following guidelines may assist Associations and Clubs when a pregnant participant is involved. A Match Official should:

7.1.1 Apply the rules governing the sport equally and fairly to all participants.

8 Guidelines: Other Participants

8.1 The following guidelines may assist Associations and Clubs when a pregnant participant is involved. Other Participants should:

8.1.1 Respect and support a pregnant participant in the same way as they would any other participant.

9 Related Documents

- Netball NSW Constitution
- Netball NSW Member Protection Policy
- Netball NSW Codes of Behaviour