



## Gaelic Games Associations' – Child Safeguarding Risk Assessment & Safeguarding Statement 2025

### Club Guidance

A Chairde,

As you have been made aware, all units must conduct a Risk Assessment & Child Safeguarding Statement to be submitted by 12<sup>th</sup> May 2025. These documents are to be completed via [Foireann](#).

All responses must be submitted by **5.00pm 12<sup>th</sup> of May 2025**. From the 14<sup>th</sup> of May 2025, non-compliant clubs will be in breach of legislation & policy and the closure of clubs for underage activity shall be considered by the National Child Safeguarding Committee.

Clubs should be reminded that under Sanction 5.14, the Safeguarding Non-Compliance Sanction that;

*“The Child Safeguarding Committee shall also have the authority to order that a team, unit, or member, deemed to be safeguarding non-compliant, may not participate in any competitions, games, or activities during their period of non-compliance. This is a temporary measure and is separate to the process involving a Code of Behaviour Hearings Committee and shall be subject to the same appeals procedure as would any sanction imposed under the Code.”*

**Please note, the onus is on the Club completing the form to ensure that all information supplied through the Risk Assessment & Child Safeguarding Statement is true & accurate. Information supplied may be subject to quality assurance follow up by the Gaelic Games Associations or statutory authorities.**

If there are any questions not covered in this handbook or the supporting resources, please contact the relevant association below:

GAA: Catherine Hibbitt [safeguardingriskassessment@gaa.ie](mailto:safeguardingriskassessment@gaa.ie) / [catherine.hibbitt@gaa.ie](mailto:catherine.hibbitt@gaa.ie)

Camogie: Roberta Farrell [roberta.farrell@camogie.ie](mailto:roberta.farrell@camogie.ie)

LGFA: Aislinn Harkin [aislinn.harkin@lgfa.ie](mailto:aislinn.harkin@lgfa.ie)

Rounders: Craig Davis [childrensofficer.rounders@gaa.ie](mailto:childrensofficer.rounders@gaa.ie)

Handball: David Britton [david.britton.handball@gaa.ie](mailto:david.britton.handball@gaa.ie)

Le meas,

*National Child Safeguarding Committee*

The Gaelic Games Association's and Clubs operate as a provider of a 'relevant service for children' under Section 11 (1) of the Children First Act 2015 and under the joint [Child Safeguarding Policy](#) (previously named Code of Behaviour (Underage)), which is enshrined in our rules and the content of which reflects how we address our Association, legal and statutory safeguarding obligations. The requirement to conduct a Risk Assessment and to display a Child Safeguarding Statement is mandatory by Law (26 Counties). Risk Assessments and Child Safeguarding Statements are a Rule requirement for all including the 6 Counties and Britain, and mandatory under the joint Child Safeguarding Policy.

A Club Child Safeguarding Risk Assessment considers the potential risks for harm to come to children and young people while they are availing of your service. The risk in this context is from a safeguarding perspective and not general health and safety risks. It is an exercise where a club examines whether there are features of their service that have the potential to put children at risk. The process includes identifying possible risks and the policies and procedures in place to mitigate against those risks. Your Clubs subsequent Child Safeguarding Statement 2025 (Section 11 (1b) Children First Act 2015) is based on the Clubs completed/updated risk assessment. The Child Safeguarding Statement is mandatory by Law (26 Counties), are a rule requirement for all, and mandatory within the joint Child Safeguarding Policy.

The Gaelic Games Associations must always ensure that we are vigilant and constantly aware as to the potential for harm that may come to a child when they are attending or participating in our games, training, or other activities. Members and parents should be aware that we have adopted excellent safeguarding polices, codes, guidelines, training, and other practices that address the risk of harm.

We depend however on our coaches, parents, children, and other club personnel to ensure that they are not only aware of these procedures but ensure they are also implemented.

### [Risk Assessment](#)

The Child Safeguarding Risk Assessment is an exercise that requires each of our units to examine all aspects of our services, e.g., coaching, training, games, social activities, Scór etc. from a safeguarding perspective, and to establish whether there are practices or features in place that have the potential to put children at risk. As previously highlighted, the risk in this context is the risk of harm and not general health and safety risks.

### [Child Safeguarding Statement](#)

Before preparing your Child Safeguarding Statement, you must undertake and complete an assessment of any potential for harm to a child availing of your service, i.e., the 'risk assessment' as outlined above.

The next step is to produce a Child Safeguarding Statement, and the Association issues a template to assist in this process. 'The Statement' is a written statement that specifies the (safeguarding) service being provided by our Associations and our units and the principles and procedures to be observed in order to ensure, as far as practicable, that a child availing of our service is safe from harm. It should set out any potential risk of harm to a child that you have identified in your risk assessment, and the procedures that are in place to reduce the identified risks.

Units may amend the Child Safeguarding Statement template insofar and for example as it relates to facilities, named personnel, additional procedures or services that may be in place but must retain certain sections of the template that outline Association policies, procedures, and legal requirements.

Upon completion, the Child Safeguarding Statement must be agreed by the relevant Club/County Executive or Committee, signed by the Children's Officer, and must be displayed in a prominent place, e.g., in the clubhouse, noticeboard etc.

As the Child Safeguarding Statement included in the Risk Assessment document is intended as a template, please be aware that the specific details of the club/county need to be included in the document (see 'highlighted areas' on the Statement template). It is important for each club/County that adopts this template to include the name and contact details of the relevant person (i.e., Children's Officer) applicable to the club or County.

### [Relevant policy/procedures links](#)

[Child Safeguarding Policy](#)

### Instructions for completion of the Risk Assessment:

- ❑ **Step One:** The Risk Assessment Template is a printable document. Take note that the risk assessment document provides a populated example of risks under each heading.
- ❑ **Step Two:** During a Club Executive meeting and using your printed risk assessment document (or Foireann Risk Assessment website page open on a laptop) each identified risk must be discussed, assessed, and ranked as either Low, Medium, or High (High as in a high likelihood of happening and not as highly achieved). All columns must be completed. Foireann will not accept and display an incomplete Risk Assessment.
- ❑ **Step Three:** As an individual club, you may identify additional risks that are specific to your club. Make note of any additional risks identified.
- ❑ **Step Four:** The completed risk assessment document must now be signed by your Club Chairperson and the Club's Children's Officer.
- ❑ **Step Five:** The Club Executive discussion, completion and subsequent signing of the Risk Assessment must be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.
- ❑ **Step Six:** The Club should make a copy of the fully completed Risk Assessment document available upon request.
- ❑ **Step Seven:** The Club Children's Officer **must complete a final version of the Child Safeguarding Risk Assessment 2025 online on Club Foireann page by 5. 00 pm on 12<sup>th</sup> of May 2025.**
- ❑ **Step Eight:** Following completion of the final Risk Assessment on Foireann, the Club must now complete their Club Child Safeguarding Statement (2025 version available as a download on Foireann once the Risk Assessment has been completed).

### Please be reminded:

- ❑ Be aware that the Club Executive have the ultimate responsibility for the Club Child Safeguarding Risk Assessment.
- ❑ Both the Risk Assessment and Child Safeguarding Statement must be completed using a laptop or PC. They are not fully accessible via a phone, due to the level of detail required. To assist you in completing the Risk Assessment, a **Save Draft** option is available.
- ❑ As a mandatory requirement of the Children First Act 2015, and the joint Child Safeguarding Policy, the Club Child Safeguarding Statement 2025 must be signed and dated by the Relevant Person responsible for the Statement, usually the Club Children's Officer. Please also include your Club Crest.

- ❑ As a mandatory requirement of the Children First Act 2015, and the joint Child Safeguarding Policy, the Club must display their Child Safeguarding Statement in a prominent public place (clubhouse/website/social media).
- ❑ The Club is advised that information supplied on the Risk Assessment may be subject to a compliance review by the Gaelic Games Association or statutory authorities.
- ❑ At the time of completion, Clubs who are registered on Foireann under a 'One Club Model' must complete the Risk Assessment as a One Club Model club. It must be evident on Foireann that your Club is registered as a 'One Club Model.' Clubs who are registered as GAA, LGFA, Camogie, Handball or Rounders only, must complete their own Risk Assessment. Independent/Amalgamated teams are not required to complete a Risk Assessment as their 'parent club' will account for them as part of their Risk Assessment.
- ❑ A glossary of terms and an explanation of each heading is contained at the end of the Risk Assessment document which may assist you when completing this requirement, this Guidance document and a Frequently Asked Questions Document will be circulated to all clubs.
- ❑ Final Risk Assessments & Safeguarding Statements **must be completed on Foireann**. If there are any questions not covered in the supporting resources, please contact the relevant association below:

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