

CLUB SAFEGUARDING OFFICER

All Cycling Ireland clubs with young members (under 18 years old) must have a club Club Safeguarding Officer (CSO).

The role of the CSO is to ensure that the welfare of young people is upheld within the club and that children are safeguarded from any risks that may arise through the young person's involvement with cycling. The CSO should also act as a listening ear for any child who has concerns about something that is happening to them in other settings like school or the family home.

It is important that the CSO also acts as an advocate for young people in ensuring that young riders have a voice in the running of their club. The CSO must be attentive in using their ears and eyes to listen to, and look out for, any concerns that the young riders may have. Ultimately, the CSO should prevent any risk of harm to young riders and promote a safe, fun and inclusive environment for young riders within their club.

In Cycling Ireland, the CSO also acts as the club **Designated Liaison Person (DLP)**. The role of the DLP is to raise any concerns regarding the welfare of young or vulnerable persons to the relevant statutory authorities.

Remember, as your club's Safeguarding officer you should make yourself known to your club members. This includes young riders, parents/guardians, coaches, leaders and board members. If you have a club house, why not post a picture of yourself on the wall? Or maybe you could introduce yourself on your club's Facebook group. It is important to take the time to engage with your club members at spins, races or other meetings to find out how your young riders are getting on.

Section three of the Cycling Ireland Safeguarding Policy outlines the Roles and Responsibilities of the Club Safeguarding Officer. [Layout 1 \(cyclingireland.ie\)](https://www.cyclingireland.ie)

Questions and Answers:

- Is the Club Safeguarding Officer different to the club Child Protection Officer?

The term Club Safeguarding Officer has replaced the term Child Protection Officer. Any person in the position of Child Protection Officer in a Cycling Ireland club will now be referred to as the Club Safeguarding Officer.

Safeguarding is a broader and more encompassing term. Safeguarding includes child **protection**, which is an important aspect of the role. However, safeguarding also includes the **prevention** of any risk of harm to young people and vulnerable adults and the **promotion** of a safe, inclusive and enjoyable environment with a child-centered ethos.

- Does my club need a Club Safeguarding Officer?

If your club has young or vulnerable adult members, then you must appoint a Club Safeguarding Officer.

The Club Safeguarding Officer must be a registered club member. They



will form part of your club committee.

Details of your Club Safeguarding Officer must be recorded on your club membership system.

- What training do I need as a Club Safeguarding Officer?

As a Club Safeguarding Officer, you must attend the following training (as per your jurisdiction):

Rep. of Ireland:

Safeguarding 1 =Basic Awareness

Safeguarding 2 =Club Childrens Officer

Safeguarding 3 – Designated Liaison Person

This training is available through your Local Sports Partnership (LSP). Click ([Local Sports Partnerships | Sport Ireland](#)) to find your LSP.

In addition, Cycling Ireland delivers Safeguarding Level 1 training. Contact the National Safeguarding Officer (safeguarding@cyclingireland.ie) for more information on this.

Northern Ireland:

1. Safeguarding Children and Young People in Sport
2. Designated Safeguarding Children’s Officer.

This training is available through Sport NI. ([Modules and Workshops | Sport NI](#))

In addition, Cycling Ulster delivers Safeguarding Children and Young People in Sport training. Contact the Cycling Ulster Lead Safeguarding Officer for more information.

Cycling Ireland also advise CSOs to attend:

Rep. of Ireland:

Disability Awareness Training (CARA)

Disability Inclusion Training (CARA)

Northern Ireland:

Inclusion Workshop (Disability Sport NI)

As Club Safeguarding Officer, you should be familiar with the Cycling Ireland Safeguarding Policy ([Layout 1 \(cyclingireland.ie\)](#))

- What are the core duties of a Club Safeguarding Officer?

Below are some of the core duties of a Club Safeguarding Officer (CSO).

The CSO should work with club management and leaders to ensure the following;

Positive atmosphere

- All children are treated fairly and with respect.
- Promote an inclusive atmosphere within the club, especially for members from minority groups or with a disability.
- Ensure a positive atmosphere is maintained in youth sessions. Feedback should be given on a constructive basis.
- Act quickly and appropriately if bullying is identified. Adopt a 'no blame' approach.
- Encourage positive parental involvement within your club.
- Ensure inappropriate language, gestures or behaviour does not go unchallenged.

Raising concerns***

- Be available to young riders, parents, coaches or leaders who have concerns relating to child welfare.
- Report any concerns regarding the welfare of young people, including any possible risk of abuse, to the relevant statutory authorities. These authorities include **Tusla** (The Child and Family Agency) and **An Garda Síochána** in the Rep. of Ireland, and the **Social Service** and **PSNI** in Northern Ireland.
- Co-operate as required with the statutory authorities (as above) if any disclosures or concerns of abuse regarding a club member arise within the club.
- Operate with and encourage a strict code of confidentiality within the Club, including any matters concerning a child occurring outside the Club environment

Safe recruitment

- Follow appropriate recruitment procedures within the club for adults engaging with young people. This includes vetting checks (Garda Vetting / Access NI). The CSO may validate the identity of persons in their club completing a vetting check.
- Have clear knowledge of the principles behind the Code of Conduct and ensure it is communicated to all persons. Retain records of those who have signed up to agree to the code including Cycling Leaders, Parents and Young People within the club.

Risk Assessment and Child Safeguarding Statement

Ensure their club fulfils the requirements of the Children First Act 2015 by completing a Risk assessment and Child Safeguarding Statement in line with Cycling Ireland policies and procedures.

Safe cycling

- Ensure the club adheres to appropriate supervisory ratios in youth sessions.



Remember that a minimum of 2 adults is required at all times.

- Ensure young riders are riding at a level that is suitable to their age and stage of development.
- Advise all members to follow guidelines in relation to appropriate protective gear.
- Ensure parental consent forms and medical information / details of special requirements are taken for all young riders and held securely and in line with data protection.

Represent children on club committee

- Attend club meetings to promote a child-centered approach in all decisions within your club. Act as a link between young riders and adult members of the club.
- Act as an advisory resource to the Club Committee and all other leaders on best practice in children's sport. Prepare reports for the club executive on a regular basis and formally for AGM.
- Monitor changes in membership and follow up any unusual dropout, absenteeism or club transfers by children, leaders or teachers/coaches.
- Liaise with the National Safeguarding Officer in looking for advice in dealing with concerns that arise within the club.
- Report persistent poor practice within the Club/ Cycling Ireland to the National Safeguarding Officer

*****Remember*****

The CSO does not have the responsibility to investigate or validate child protection allegations or concerns within the Club. Rather, it is their responsibility to report any concerns to the relevant bodies, as detailed above. The concern will be investigated by trained professionals in the relevant authorities who will decide on any further action required.

- What qualities should a Club Safeguarding Officer have?

First and foremost, the CSO must have a child-centered focus and a committed understanding of the welfare of the child as paramount. In addition, a CSO should also have the following qualities:

Good active listener

Observant

Empathetic

Proactive in ensuring the welfare of children

Approachable to young members, parents and other club members and officials



Knowledge of [Children First](#) ([Children First Guidance and Legislation Tusla - Child and Family Agency](#)) or other relevant legislation for your jurisdiction [Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People in Northern Ireland | Department of Health \(health-ni.gov.uk\)](#)

Knowledge of CI Safeguarding Policy for Young and Vulnerable Cyclists

Understand and respect the confidentiality requirements of their role

- What support is available to me as Club Safeguarding Officer?

You are not on your own as Club Safeguarding Officer. Your club committee should work with you to ensure that that well-being and enjoyment of your young riders is of priority in your club. It also important to work with parents and guardians, and to involve them in any decisions that you make regarding their children and young people.

In addition to this,

The National Safeguarding Officer,
Donal Gillespie, and the

Cycling Ulster Lead Safeguarding Officer,
are available to advise you on any issues relating to safeguarding in your club.
You can contact these officers by the following details;

Donal Gillespie
m: 086 0447735
e: safeguarding@cyclingireland.ie

Sport Ireland have designed an app, [The Code of Ethics Safe Sport App](#), which is an information and guidance tool for everyone involved with sport for children and young people. This will be an excellent resource for you in your role as CSO and we advise that you tell parents, coaches, young riders and other club members to download and use this tool.

[SafeSport App | Sport Ireland](#)

Finally, in the **Rep. of Ireland**, if you have any child protection concerns, you may have an informal consultation with TUSLA (the Child and Family Agency). Your local duty social worker may be able to advise whether your concern reaches the threshold of making a formal report to TUSLA. See [Duty Social Work Teams/ Dedicated Contact Points Tusla - Child and Family Agency](#) for more details on how to contact your local duty social worker. In the case of an emergency, or if you cannot contact a social worker, contact An Garda Síochána at 112 / 999.



In **Northern Ireland**, you may contact your regional Gateway Team in the Health and Social Care (HSC) Trust, who also have a regional emergency social work service or the [NSPCC Helpline](#) for advice and support. Additionally the NSPCC Child Protection in Sport Unit provide valuable information on Safeguarding Children in Sport. [NSPCC Child Protection in Sport Unit | CPSU \(thecpsu.org.uk\)](#))

Below are details for contacting your Gateway Team:

Northern HSC Trust: 0300 123 4333
South Eastern HSC Trust: 0300 100 0300
Southern HSC Trust: 0800 783 7745
Belfast HSC Trust: 028 9050 7000
Western HSC Trust: 028 7131 4090

Out of hours - Regional Emergency Social Work service. Available 5.00 PM – 9.00 AM Monday to Thursday and 5.00 PM on Friday to 9.00 AM on Monday. There is a 24 hour cover over public holidays: 028 9504 9999

In the case of emergency, or if you cannot contact a social worker, contact the PSNI at 999.

- Does the Club Safeguarding Officer have the responsibility to investigate child protection concerns?

No. The Club Safeguarding Officer does not have the responsibility to investigate or validate child protection allegations or concerns within the Club. Rather, it is their responsibility to report any concerns to the relevant bodies, as detailed above. The concern will be investigated by trained professionals in the relevant authorities who will decide on any further action required. You may be required to co-operate with the statutory authorities if any disclosures or concerns of abuse regarding a club member arise within the club.