Persons in Positions of Authority – Your Responsibilities

At Surf Life Saving Queensland (SLSQ), many members hold roles where they have influence, leadership, or responsibility over others — particularly children and young people.

These roles are considered Positions of Authority (PPA) and come with clear expectations and obligations.

Who is a Person in a Position of Authority?

You are a Person in a Position of Authority if you hold roles such as:

- Club or Branch Committee Members (e.g. President, Vice President, Junior Activities, Member Protection),
- Coaches and Team Managers,
- Trainers, Assessors, and Facilitators,
- Patrol Captains and Vice Captains,
- Age Managers,
- Officials and Event Supervisors,
- Youth Leaders or Program Coordinators, or
- Any member responsible for supervision, instruction, decision-making, or welfare of others.

If your role involves guiding, supervising, managing, or influencing members (especially children and young people), these expectations apply to you.

Your Obligations

As a Person in a Position of Authority, you must comply with:

- SLSA Policy 6.04 – Child Safe
- SLSA Policy 6.05 – Member Protection
- SLSA Chid Safe Codes of Conduct
- SLSQ Child Safety Commitment Statement
- SLSQ Code of Conduct
- SLSQ Blue Card Screening Policy
- SLSQ Regulations

These are not optional — they set the minimum standard of behaviour expected across Surf Life Saving.

What This Means in Practice

1. *You Must Lead Safe Environments*

- Actively create a safe, inclusive, and respectful culture,
- Ensure children feel safe, supported and heard, and
- Make decisions with a child-first and young people approach.

2. *You Must Maintain Professional Boundaries*

- Keep relationships with children and young people appropriate and within your role,
- Avoid private, social, or personal relationships outside SLS activities, and
- Never show favouritism or give special treatment.

3. *You Must Use Your Position Appropriately*

- Never misuse your authority, influence, or trust,
- Do not place yourself in situations where a child or young person may feel uncomfortable or unsafe, and
- Avoid one-on-one or unsupervised situations wherever possible.

4. *You Must Communicate Appropriately*

- Use professional, transparent communication (including online),
- Avoid private messaging with children where possible — include parents/guardians or group channels,
- Never ask a child to keep secrets, and
- Identify and communicate with all persons who have responsibility for the care of children and young people within SLSQ.

5. *You Must Meet Screening Requirements*

- Hold a valid Blue Card as per the Blue Cards Policy,
- Comply with all screening, training, and onboarding requirements, and
- Notify your Club/Branch of any changes to your eligibility.

6. *You Must Act on Concerns*

- Report any concerns, suspicions, or disclosures of harm,
- Follow the correct reporting pathways,
- Do not ignore or attempt to manage serious matters informally, and
- Identify any conflicts of interest arising from your interaction with children and young people and report formally via the correct reporting pathways.

What You Must Never Do

As a Person in a Position of Authority, you must never:

- Engage in behaviour that is abusive, inappropriate, or harmful,
- Develop inappropriate relationships with children or young people,
- Use your role to influence, control, or intimidate others, and
- Ignore or dismiss concerns raised by a child or member.

These behaviours are breaches of Child Safe and Member Protection policies and may result in disciplinary action.

Why This Matters

Positions of Authority carry trust and responsibility.

Your actions directly impact:

- The safety and wellbeing of children and young people,
- The culture and integrity of your Club, and
- The reputation of Surf Life Saving.

Final Reminder

If you are in a Position of Authority, the standard of behaviour is higher.

- Know your responsibilities,
- Follow the policies, and
- Lead by example.

If in doubt — seek guidance and report concerns.