

Safeguarding Children Update, April 2007

Important Information for FA staff, County FA CPO's and all County Staff, County FA CPO's and all F A L Safeguarding Children Tutors

Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (SVGA), 2006

New legal requirements for anyone working in a role with children and vulnerable adults from September 2008

1. Implications

The SVGA will impact in the following way:

a) Youth football (football for U18` s):

Youth football will be a 'regulated activity'. A regulated activity is defined as paid and unpaid work that involves certain close contact with children (e.g. caring for, training, supervising or being in sole charge of children, or where people are in a position to influence policy relating to children's football). This includes referees, coaches, manager's welfare officers and medics.

b) Disabled and vulnerable adults:

Football for disabled and vulnerable adults is also defined as a 'regulated activity'. This is defined as work that is paid and unpaid, which involves certain close contact with vulnerable adults (e.g. any form of training, teaching or instruction provided wholly or mainly for vulnerable adults).

c) Football organisations

Where football is provided as described in a) and b) above, The FA, CFAs, Leagues, Clubs and other football providers are regulated activity providers under SVGA.

d) Individuals

From September 2008, it will be a criminal offence for anyone to be in a paid or unpaid role, working with children or vulnerable adults as described in a) and b) above, if they have not completed an enhanced C R B disclosure and been 'accepted' in to football. This means that any such person is not to engage in regulated activity unless they are 'subject to monitoring' e.g. have completed a C R B disclosure and been 'accepted' in to football.

e) Enforcement

It will be a criminal offence if an individual as described in a) and b) above engages in a regulated activity and they are not subject to monitoring. It will also be a criminal offence if a regulated activity provider: i) permits an individual to engage in regulated activity from which that individual is barred, ii) or if a regulated activity provider knows or has reason to 'believe that an individual is barred from that activity, and the individual engages in the activity. We will need to do all we can to ensure that everyone is clear on their own responsibilities at club, league, county and national level.

2. The FA`s Response:

The FA is pursuing a four fold strategy, to ensure SVGA requirements are communicated & met:

a) We will continue to consult with the Home Office, CRB and the Vetting and Barring Service:

- . We are involved in ongoing consultation regarding the implementation of SV the SVGA and looking at the impact of this on our policy and practices in football's work with children and vulnerable adults
- . This consultation includes seeking clarity on the impact of the legislation for those working in open-age football.

b) We will communicate the implications of the SVGA to key football stakeholders in relation to action that needs to be taken to meet these requirements:

- The FA Board and Council will be advised of the requirements of the legislation and action being taken
- All staff and football authorities will be advised of the requirements of the legislation and action being taken
- Specific information is being developed for www.TheFA.com and County FA websites, as well as for CFA's and their Council members on the requirements of the legislation and the action youth clubs and leagues need to take
- Targeted information is being developed for clubs, coaches, managers, referees, medics, welfare officers etc on action individuals need to

c) *We will work collectively to deliver:*

Youth League and Club Welfare Officers

- Following the NGB meeting earlier this month, it is likely that a mandate for Youth League and Club Welfare Officers will be approved for the 08-09 season
- Youth League and Club Welfare Officers are essential to ensure that leagues and clubs are compliant with the legislation - to roll out the CRB checks and to help focus on dealing with the poor touchline behaviour.
- The club affiliation process for 07-08 season carries a request for clubs to identify their Welfare Officer contact details and flags the requirement under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 for everyone working with children to have a CRB check - (via The FA CRB Unit)
- Further training is being planned to train more Welfare Officer Workshop Tutors to assist in the training of Welfare Officers (May-June)

County FA`s

- A review has been undertaken of the current CFA CPO role and recommendations have been made. These recommendations are being addressed as part of the business plan to support the National Game Strategy (NGS).
- The impact of increased administration in counties has been reviewed and is being taken in to account as part of the business plan for the NGS.
- Counties have been consulted via the ROMs on the content of the NGS & the need for YLWO`s/CWO`s & paid staff with a focus on safeguarding work in the county.

Professional Game

- We are advising The FA Board and Council and working through the Child Protection Forum, which consists of The FA, The FA PL, FL, FF, FITC, PFA and LMA to address the requirements of the SVGA in the professional game

National Game Strategy (NGS)

- The draft new NGS incorporates CRB checks for all those working in youth football and with vulnerable adults, mandatory Youth League and Club Welfare Officers and the need for appropriate re-sourcing to support the implementation of these safeguarding requirements

There will be further briefings to follow this initial update.

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