

Practical Sword

Member and Customer Protection Policy

Version 1.0 Practical Sword

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www.practicalsword.com

1. Introduction

I. Practical Sword

Practical Sword exists to train people in Historic European Martial Arts (HEMA) particularly focused on dark ages and medieval fighting. We aim to create a safe friendly training environment and to train our students in effective and safe fighting techniques. This policy supports this goal.

II. Regulatory Framework

This policy is governed by and must be interpreted in accordance with:

- **Australian Consumer Law (ACL):** Specifically the *Competition and Consumer Act 2010* and the *Fair Trading Act 2012 (Vic)*.
- **Victorian Child Safe Standards:** Mandatory for any organization providing services to children.
- **Privacy Law:** The *Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)* and the *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 (Vic)*.
- **Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic):** Protecting members from discrimination and harassment.
- **Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012 (Vic):** Incorporation law.

It draws upon and seeks to be consistent with the the National Integrity Framework (NIF) for sporting entities <https://www.sportintegrity.gov.au/what-we-do/national-integrity-framework>

III. Revue

This policy will be reviewed every two years. The next review is 2028.

2. Member & Customer Protection Policy

I. Purpose & Scope

The purpose of this policy is to ensure a safe, fair, and transparent environment for all members and customers. This applies to all staff, volunteers, contractors, and participants associated with Practical Sword.

Specifically it seeks to:

- protect all people associated with Practical Sword activities
- keep our sport safe and fair
- deal with integrity threats and manage complaints
- hold people who do the wrong thing accountable

II. Consumer Guarantees & Rights

Practical Sword commits that:

- **Services** will be provided with due care and skill, fit for the specified purpose.
- **Products** will be of acceptable quality, match their description, and be fit for purpose.
- **Transparent Pricing:** All transaction-based charges (e.g., card surcharges, delivery) must be disclosed upfront.
- **Subscription Protections:** For any member subscriptions will be renewed annually with no auto subscriptions.

III. Member and Customer Safety & Conduct

- **Anti-Discrimination:**
 - We maintain a zero-tolerance policy for discrimination, bullying, or harassment based on protected attributes (age, race, gender, disability, etc.) under the *Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic)*.
- **Child Safety:**
 - Practical Sword adheres to the 11 Victorian Child Safe Standards. We are committed to active prevention of child abuse.
 - Children under the age of 16 must be supervised at all times by a responsible adult. We endeavour to provide an appropriate level of supervision at all times.
 - Taking Images of Children, it is the default condition that parents or guardians consent to images of their child being taken and used for social media posts.
 - All staff and instructors will require a current Working with Children check.
 - All staff and instructors will familiarise themselves with child safe practices listed by the Sport Integrity Australia (SIA) and review this annually (see <https://www.sportintegrity.gov.au/dos-and-donts>).
 - All staff and volunteers working with children must complete the **Protecting Children – Mandatory Reporting** training. (see <https://www.vic.gov.au/mandatory-reporting-training>)
 - **Suspected incident** - In the event of an child abuse incident at a club event follow the following actions.
 - ensure everyone's immediate safety
 - call 000 for: police, and ambulance if medical assistance is needed
 - use exact address
 - Main address is *Melbourne Salle 12/62-64 Oakover Rd, Preston NE corner of car park*
 - separate, supervise and support those involved
 - use trauma informed response i.e. neutral emotional support for all parties
 - preserve evidence

- When able record incident on the [Practical Sword incident and complaint record sheet](#)
 - See <https://www.vic.gov.au/respond-emergency>
- **Inclusion:**
 - Measures are in place to ensure all members, including those with disabilities, can access services equitably.
- **Code of conduct and safety rules**
 - Fencers must adhere to the current Practical Sword “Safety Rules” as listed on our website.
 - Fencing must adhere to the “Practical Sword - Safe Operating Procedures” as listed on our website. See <https://www.practicalsword.com/policies-and-safety.html>
- **Emergencies**
 - If an emergency occurs instructors must endeavour to do the following:
 - ensure everyone’s immediate safety
 - call 000 for: police, ambulance, fire
 - use exact address Melbourne Salle 12/62-64 Oakover Rd, Preston NE corner of car park

IV. Privacy & Data Security

- **Data Collection:** We only collect personal information necessary for our functions.
- **Transparency:** At the time of collection, members will be informed *why* the data is being collected and *who* it may be shared with.
- **Security:** Reasonable steps will be taken to protect data from unauthorised access or disclosure.

3. Regulations & Operating Procedures

To give effect to the policy above, the following regulations must be followed by management and staff:

A. Mandatory Reporting (Child Safety)

- Any suspicion of child abuse must be reported immediately the instructor group and, where required by law, to Victoria Police or the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH).

B. Refunds and Cancellations

- Customers if they chose to cancel their services will be provided with a pro rata refund of any services paid in advance i.e. for a training for a term, Event fees are non refundable by 48 hours prior to the event.

C. Fair Contract Terms

- Contracts must not include "unfair terms" (e.g., terms that allow the organization to change the price without notice while the member is locked in).

D. Complaint Handling & Dispute Resolution

1. **Notice of Dispute:** Customers may lodge a dispute verbally or in writing.
2. **Timeline:** Acknowledgment within 10 business days; resolution attempt within 20 business days.
3. **Escalation:** If unresolved, members must be informed of their right to escalate to **Consumer Affairs Victoria (CAV)** or the **Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT)**.

Attachment 1.1: MEMBER PROTECTION DECLARATION

The Club has a duty of care to all those associated with our club and to the individuals and organisations to whom this policy applies. As a requirement of our Member Protection Policy, we must enquire into the background of those who undertake any work, coaching or regular *unsupervised contact* with people under the age of 18 years.

I _____ (name) of _____

_____ (address), state of birth ____ / ____ / ____

sincerely declare:

1. I constitute a fit proper person to engage in a training of students for practical sword.
2. do not have any criminal charge pending before the courts.
3. I do not have any criminal convictions or findings of guilt for assault of any kind, acts of violence, or [add other crimes you consider relevant e.g. offences relating to children for clubs with children involved].
4. I have not had any disciplinary proceedings brought against me by an employer, sporting organisation or similar body involving sexual misconduct or harassment, other forms of harassment or acts of violence [add other crimes you consider relevant e.g. narcotics, child abuse for clubs with children]
5. To my knowledge there is no other matter that the club may consider to constitute a risk to its members, employees, volunteers, athletes or reputation by engaging me.
6. I will notify the President of the club immediately upon becoming aware that any of the matters set out in clauses 1 to 4 above has changed.

Declared in the State/Territory of _____

on ____ / ____ / ____ (date) Signature _____.

Parent/Guardian Consent (in respect of a person under the age of 18 years)

I have read and understood the declaration provided by my child. I confirm and warrant that the contents of the declaration provided by my child are true and correct in every particular.

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____