

TIFAM Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment and Safeguarding Policy

1 Purpose

The Irish Foundation for Archery and Mentorship, referred to as TIFAM, provides traditional field-archery activities for children and adults.

Activities may include:

- coaching and training;
- competitions and courses;
- educational sessions;
- demonstrations;
- team participation;
- travel connected with events;
- social activities connected with TIFAM;
- online communication connected with TIFAM activities.

TIFAM aims to provide every child with a safe, respectful and age-appropriate sporting experience.

2 Safeguarding commitment

The welfare of the child takes priority over competition results, reputation, convenience or personal interests.

TIFAM follows:

- the Children First Act 2015;
- Children First: National Guidance;
- applicable Sport Ireland safeguarding guidance;
- applicable Garda-vetting legislation;
- the TIFAM Safeguarding Policy;
- the TIFAM Code of Conduct;
- the TIFAM Disciplinary Procedure.

Every officer, coach, instructor, referee, volunteer, contractor and affiliated club working with children must follow the safeguarding arrangements established by TIFAM.

3 Safeguarding roles

TIFAM shall appoint the following persons:

Relevant Person:

The person who receives questions about this Child Safeguarding Statement.

Designated Liaison Person:

The person responsible for receiving child-protection concerns and following the reporting procedure.

Deputy Designated Liaison Person:

The person who acts where the Designated Liaison Person is unavailable.

Children's Officer:

The person who promotes child-centred practice and supports the implementation of safeguarding standards.

The names and contact details of these persons shall be made available to members, clubs, coaches, volunteers, parents and guardians.

A mandated person retains their individual statutory reporting duty.

4 Safeguarding procedures

TIFAM shall maintain procedures covering:

- reporting child-protection concerns;
- responding to disclosures;
- allegations involving coaches, officers, volunteers or contractors;
- safe recruitment;
- Garda vetting;
- safeguarding training;
- supervision of children;
- communication with children;
- photography and recording;
- transport and collection arrangements;
- online activity;
- complaints and disciplinary action;
- protection against retaliation;
- secure safeguarding records.

Detailed requirements appear in the TIFAM Safeguarding Policy and related procedures.

5 Reporting a concern

A person receiving a disclosure or concern shall:

- remain calm;
- listen carefully;
- avoid leading questions;
- record the words used and relevant facts;
- reassure the child that speaking was appropriate;
- pass the concern promptly to the Designated Liaison Person;
- leave investigation to Tusla or An Garda Síochána.

Immediate danger requires reasonable protective action and contact with emergency services through 999 or 112.

A promise of secrecy must not be given. Information shall be shared only with persons responsible for safeguarding, fair procedure or legal compliance.

6 Allegations involving TIFAM personnel

An allegation involving a coach, officer, volunteer, referee, contractor or other TIFAM representative shall follow the safeguarding procedure.

TIFAM may impose a temporary restriction where protection of a child requires it.

A temporary restriction:

- protects the child and the process;
- carries no finding of wrongdoing;
- shall remain proportionate;
- shall receive review where it continues for an extended period.

Tusla or An Garda Síochána investigates suspected child abuse.

TIFAM may later consider whether its Code of Conduct was breached, provided that the internal process remains fair and avoids interference with a statutory investigation.

7 Safeguarding risk assessment

This assessment identifies possible risks of harm to children using TIFAM services.

Each affiliated club and event organiser must also assess risks arising from its own location, activity and participants.

Risk 1: unsuitable person obtains a child-related role

Possible harm:

A person unsuitable for work with children gains access through incomplete recruitment checks.

Controls:

- clear role description;
- application process;
- identity verification;
- references;
- qualification checks;
- Garda vetting where relevant work applies;
- safeguarding training;
- induction;
- initial supervision;
- periodic role review.

Risk 2: child left alone with an adult

Possible harm:

A child becomes isolated during coaching, meetings, transport or course activity.

Controls:

- coaching in open or observable areas;
- avoidance of one-to-one situations where practical;
- clear supervision arrangements;
- parent or guardian involvement;
- group communication channels;
- agreed collection and transport arrangements.

Risk 3: poor supervision during shooting

Possible harm:

A child receives unsuitable instruction or enters an unsafe shooting area.

Controls:

- suitable adult supervision;
- safety briefing;
- controlled shooting commands;

- age-appropriate distances and equipment;
- marked routes;
- supervision suited to age, experience and ability.

Risk 4: unsuitable physical contact

Possible harm:

Physical contact occurs without a clear coaching or safety purpose.

Controls:

- contact limited to an identifiable coaching or safety need;
- explanation before contact where circumstances permit;
- use of the least contact required;
- contact occurring openly;
- respect for a child's discomfort or refusal.

Risk 5: bullying, humiliation or discrimination

Possible harm:

A child experiences ridicule, threats, exclusion, harassment or discriminatory treatment.

Controls:

- Code of Conduct;
- clear reporting route;
- adult supervision;
- prompt intervention;
- safeguarding or disciplinary referral;
- protection against retaliation.

Risk 6: harmful digital communication

Possible harm:

A child receives secret, sexualised, threatening or excessive communication.

Controls:

- approved group communication channels;
- inclusion of a parent or guardian where appropriate;
- prohibition on secret contact;
- communication limited to legitimate TIFAM activity;
- safeguarding referral for concerning messages.

Risk 7: misuse of photographs or recordings

Possible harm:

A child's image is used improperly or published with excessive identifying information.

Controls:

- clear photography arrangements;
- recording of preferences or consent where required;
- exclusion of home address, school and unnecessary personal details;
- prohibition on photography in toilets, changing areas or personal-care settings;
- prompt consideration of removal requests.

Risk 8: unsafe transport or collection

Possible harm:

Responsibility for a child becomes unclear during travel, arrival or collection.

Controls:

- written travel information;
- agreed collection times;
- named responsible adults;
- parent or guardian contact details;
- clear arrangements for delayed collection;
- safeguarding standards applying during travel and accommodation.

Risk 9: lack of privacy

Possible harm:

A child experiences intrusion in toilet, changing or personal-care areas.

Controls:

- suitable privacy;
- access by adults only for a clear welfare or safety reason;
- age-appropriate arrangements;
- prohibition on recording devices;
- supervision that protects dignity.

Risk 10: child becomes separated from the group

Possible harm:

A child becomes lost on a woodland course or during travel.

Controls:

- attendance records;
- group lists;
- marked routes;
- agreed meeting points;
- course maps;
- emergency contact arrangements;
- immediate stopping of shooting where a person enters or leaves a controlled area unexpectedly.

Risk 11: concern handled poorly**Possible harm:**

Delay, repeated questioning, gossip or poor records increase harm.

Controls:

- prompt referral to the Designated Liaison Person;
- factual recording;
- secure storage;
- limited information sharing;
- investigation left to statutory authorities;
- safeguarding training for relevant personnel.

Risk 12: retaliation after a report**Possible harm:**

A child, parent, witness or reporting person experiences threats, exclusion or hostility.

Controls:

- prohibition on retaliation;
- disciplinary consequences;
- communication restrictions where needed;
- temporary protective measures;
- confidential handling.

Risk 13: participation beyond suitable ability**Possible harm:**

Equipment, shooting distance or expectations exceed a child's ability.

Controls:

- age-appropriate coaching;
- suitable equipment;
- current T.A.I. age classes;
- progressive instruction;
- suitable supervision;
- right to stop or modify an activity.

Risk 14: public access to an active course**Possible harm:**

A member of the public enters a shooting area while children are participating.

Controls:

- course inspection;
- signs and marked routes;
- suitable target direction;
- controlled group movement;
- emergency stop commands;
- monitoring of public paths and access points.

8 Responsibilities of affiliated clubs

Each affiliated club working with children shall:

- follow this statement;
- follow the TIFAM Safeguarding Policy;
- appoint required safeguarding personnel;
- complete a local safeguarding risk assessment;
- provide safeguarding information to coaches and volunteers;
- maintain suitable parental consent and emergency information;
- report concerns through the correct route;
- review controls after an incident or material change.

9 Availability

This statement shall be available to:

- children;
- parents and guardians;
- members;
- coaches and volunteers;
- affiliated clubs;
- Tusla;
- members of the public.

10 Review

TIFAM shall review this statement and risk assessment:

- at least every two years;
- following a safeguarding incident;
- following a material change in activities;
- following a change in law or official guidance;
- where existing controls appear inadequate.

TIFAM Safeguarding Policy

Purpose

TIFAM aims to provide a safe, respectful environment for every participant.

This policy applies to all TIFAM officers, instructors, referees, volunteers, contractors, members, parents, guardians, spectators and participants. It covers TIFAM-sanctioned courses, competitions, training sessions, meetings, travel and online communication.

TIFAM follows the Children First Act 2015, Children First: National Guidance, Sport Ireland safeguarding guidance and the National Vetting Bureau legislation.

2. Safeguarding principles

Every child and adult at risk has the right to:

- participate in a safe environment;
- receive respectful and fair treatment;
- have concerns heard and taken seriously;
- receive protection from abuse, neglect, bullying, harassment, discrimination or exploitation;
- take part in activities suited to their age, ability and experience.

The welfare of the child or adult at risk takes priority over sporting results, reputation or personal interests.

3. Safeguarding responsibilities

TIFAM shall appoint a Designated Liaison Person responsible for receiving safeguarding concerns and following the reporting procedure.

Every person involved in TIFAM must:

- follow this policy and the TIFAM codes of conduct;
- report safeguarding concerns promptly;
- maintain suitable boundaries with children and adults at risk;
- cooperate with safeguarding enquiries;
- protect the privacy and dignity of every participant.

A person who raises a genuine concern in good faith shall receive fair treatment and support.

4. Safe conduct

During TIFAM activities:

- coaching should take place in open or observable areas;
- one-to-one situations between an adult and a child should be avoided where practicable;
- physical contact must serve a clear safety or coaching purpose, be explained beforehand and occur openly;

- parental or guardian consent must cover participation, medical assistance, transport, photography and other relevant arrangements;
- private messaging between an adult and a child through personal accounts is prohibited;
- communication with children should use approved group channels, with a parent or guardian included where appropriate;
- bullying, sexualised behaviour, humiliation, threats, discriminatory conduct and corporal punishment are prohibited;
- changing areas, toilets and personal-care arrangements must protect privacy;
- alcohol or intoxicating substances are prohibited before or during duties involving children or adults at risk;
- photographs or recordings require appropriate consent and must serve a legitimate TIFAM purpose.

5. Reporting a concern

A safeguarding concern may arise from a disclosure, an allegation, an injury, unusual behaviour, poor supervision or information received from another person.

Anyone receiving a disclosure must:

1. remain calm and listen;
2. reassure the person that speaking was the correct action;
3. record the words used, relevant observations, date, time and persons present;
4. pass the concern promptly to the Designated Liaison Person;
5. leave questioning and investigation to Tusla or An Garda Síochána.

Promises of secrecy are prohibited. Information shall be shared with the people or authorities responsible for protecting the person concerned.

Where a child faces immediate danger, the person present must take reasonable protective action and contact An Garda Síochána through **999 or 112**.

The Designated Liaison Person shall consider whether reasonable grounds for concern exist and shall report qualifying child-protection concerns to Tusla. Any mandated person retains their separate statutory reporting duty under the Children First Act 2015.

Concerns involving an adult at risk may be referred to the HSE Safeguarding and Protection Team or An Garda Síochána, according to the circumstances and wishes of the adult concerned.

6. Allegations involving TIFAM personnel

An allegation involving an instructor, official, volunteer or other TIFAM representative shall follow the same safeguarding procedure.

TIFAM may restrict or suspend the person's duties while enquiries proceed. Such action serves as a protective measure and carries no finding of wrongdoing.

The child or adult at risk shall receive immediate protection. The person facing the allegation shall receive fair procedures, appropriate information and an opportunity to respond at the proper stage.

7. Recruitment, vetting and training

Roles involving relevant work with children or vulnerable persons require Garda vetting before duties begin. Vetting forms one part of the recruitment process and does not replace references, role descriptions, supervision or safeguarding training.

TIFAM shall ensure that relevant personnel:

- receive appropriate safeguarding training;
- understand the reporting procedure;
- know the identity of the Designated Liaison Person;
- work within defined roles;
- receive suitable supervision.

8. Records and confidentiality

Safeguarding records shall contain factual information, dates, actions taken and reports made.

Records must be stored securely, with access restricted to authorised persons. Information shall be retained and shared according to legal, safeguarding and data-protection requirements.

Rumour, informal circulation and discussion through social media are prohibited.

9. Child Safeguarding Statement

Where TIFAM provides a relevant service to children, it shall complete a child-safeguarding risk assessment and maintain a separate Child Safeguarding Statement.

The statement must identify possible risks of harm, describe the procedures used to control those risks, be available to staff and volunteers, and be displayed or supplied as required. A new relevant service must prepare its statement within three months of commencing.

10. Review

The TIFAM committee shall review this policy annually, following a safeguarding incident, or when legislation or official guidance changes.