



Fencing Victoria Age Verification Policy

1. Purpose

To codify Fencing Victoria's existing policy on eligibility for age group competitions and to provide for the imposition of sanctions with the intention of protecting the sanctity of competitions, and the safety of fencers.

2. Scope

- (1) This policy applies to events operated by Fencing Victoria.
- (2) This policy applies to all age group competitions.
- (3) The policy comes into effect as of 1 January 2024.

3. Definitions

- (1) Definitions to key terms contained within this policy are outlined below.

Administrative suspension means a period of time in which a fencer is ineligible to fence in Fencing Victoria competitions or train at registered clubs, or where responsible adults or coaches are unable to attend Fencing Victoria competitions or training at registered clubs.

Age group competition means a competition where eligibility of entry is regulated by the age of the fencer on 1 January 2023.

Coach means anyone registered as such with Fencing Victoria.

Competition means a single category within the scope of an event.

Database means Fencing Victoria's register of fencers, kept electronically.

Designated certifier means an individual assigned by Fencing Victoria to determine the validity of proof of age documents provided by fencers or responsible adults, and will most often comprise of either a Fencing Victoria Board Member, or the General Manager of Fencing Victoria.

Eligible means a fencer who is permitted to fence in a certain age group competition by virtue of meeting the requirements of this policy.

Event means a collection of competitions taking place either on one day or across multiple days.

Fencer means a participant in any Fencing Victoria event.

Proof of age documents means documents that verify the birthdate of a fencer, inclusive of birth certificates, passports, or other official documentation including both name and date of birth.

Registered member means an individual who has completed Fencing Victoria's registration process at the start of a given calendar year.

Responsible adult means a parent, guardian, or other party with custody and care over a fencer entering an event.

- (2) Where there is any inconsistency or lack of clarity in any term defined above or subsequently in the policy, this is to be interpreted in line with Clause 1 ('Purpose').

4. Age Group Eligibility

- (1) A fencer is eligible to compete in age group competitions in which they meet the requisite age threshold.
- (2) A fencer's eligibility for the purposes of age group competitions is determined by their age on 1 January of the relevant year.
 - (a) A fencer aged 15 on 1 January is eligible to compete that year in Under 17 competitions.
 - (b) A fencer aged 15 on 1 January is NOT eligible to compete that year in Under 15 competitions.
- (3) This policy applies to any fencer born on 1 January, with their age determined on the same basis as all other fencers.

5. Age Verification Process

- (1) A fencer and or their responsible adult must provide proof of age documents to Fencing Victoria.
- (2) Proof of age documents must be physically shown to a designated certifier, who will confirm the information contained on the documents and record in Fencing Victoria's database that the fencer's age has been certified.

- (3)** A designated certifier will be available at certain competitions located at the State Fencing Centre.
 - (a)** A designated certifier will be present at Fencing Victoria events at least once every three (3) months, and at least six (6) times per year.
 - (b)** The events where a designated certifier will be present will be announced in advance, and clearly indicated on the competition calendar.
 - (c)** A designated certifier may be available on other dates, inclusive of State Squad training sessions and other events, as Fencing Victoria determines appropriate.
- (4)** No physical or digital images will be retained by the designated certifier of the proof of age documents, nor by Fencing Victoria.
- (5)** Once a fencer's age has been certified, they will never again be required to provide proof of age documents.

6. Breach of Policy

- (1)** It is a breach of this policy to intentionally provide information that is incorrect, inaccurate, or in any way altered.
- (2)** A fencer that breaches this policy will be subject to the following sanctions:
 - (a)** Administrative suspension from fencing for a period of at least 12 months; and
 - (b)** Retroactive disqualification from all competitions entered since becoming a registered member of Fencing Victoria, regardless of whether entry into any specific competition breached Clause 4(1); and
 - (c)** Mandatory return of any medals or trophies awarded from all competitions entered since becoming a registered member of Fencing Victoria, regardless of whether entry into any specific competition breached Clause 4(1).
- (3)** A responsible adult that breaches this policy will be subject to the following sanctions:
 - (a)** Administrative suspension from fencing for a period of at least 12 months.
- (4)** A coach that breaches this policy will be subject to the following sanctions:
 - (a)** Administrative suspension from fencing for a period of at least 12 months.
- (5)** The length of any administrative suspension is to be determined by the Fencing Victoria Board, but shall be no less than 12 months.

(6) A coach that breaches this policy may be subject to the following further sanctions:

(a) Removal from Fencing Victoria's register of coaches.

(7) Where the head coach or administrators of a club breach this policy, the club as an entity is taken to have breached the policy.

(8) A club that breaches this policy may be subject to the following sanctions:

(a) Removal from the Fencing Victoria Star Club Program; or

(b) Deregistration as a club.

(9) Any breach of this policy and any penalties awarded will be communicated to the Australian Fencing Federation, and they may elect to reciprocate or award further penalties in accordance with their own policies.

7. Determination Process

(1) Where an allegation of a breach of Clause 4(1) or Clause 6(1) is communicated to Fencing Victoria, the subjects of the allegation will be provided the opportunity to explain the situation.

(a) The subjects of an allegation may include the fencer, responsible adults, coaches, and the club.

(2) This opportunity will be in the form of a presentation before the Fencing Victoria Board, or in the form of sworn written statements provided to the Fencing Victoria Board.

(3) The Fencing Victoria Board will determine the appropriate sanctions, if any, following the review of any information provided.

(4) Fencing Victoria's decision is final and binding on all parties.