

TÜRKİYE PARALYMPIC COMMITTEE

ATHLETE SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Child Protection and Athlete Wellbeing Directive

Gold Copy — 2026

Athlete Safeguarding, Wellbeing and Child Safeguarding

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Document Control	
Institution	Turkish Paralympic Committee (TMPK)
Status	In force
Scope	All Paralympic sport activities, personnel and stakeholders
Frameworks	IPC Safeguarding · Turkish Penal Code / Child Protection Law · UNCRPD · UNCRC
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1. DECLARATION ON THE NATURE OF THIS POLICY

This Policy adopts a rights-based approach centred on the safety, dignity and empowered participation of athletes in Paralympic sport environments. Within this framework, vulnerability is understood not as an inherent characteristic of the individual, but as a safeguarding risk arising from environments, systems and relationships. The Policy therefore requires risks to be actively identified, prevented and systematically eliminated rather than passively tolerated.

This is not an accessibility policy. Accessibility asks whether a person can enter and move through a space. This Policy asks whether, once there, the person is genuinely safe, empowered,

protected, heard, and able to participate as a full human being whose rights are inalienable. That is a fundamentally different question, requiring a fundamentally different framework.

This Policy operates at the intersection of safeguarding, disability rights, trauma-informed practice and participatory governance; an area that requires integrated implementation across existing international frameworks.

This is not a static or closed document. It is a living participatory-governance system, continuously shaped by the voices, lived experience and leadership of Functionally Diverse athletes and designed to evolve as new risks, insights and standards emerge. It must not be treated as a compliance exercise.

Institutional commitment: TMPK is committed to ensuring that every Functionally Diverse athlete has not only access, but also safety, dignity and the uncompromised right to be recognised for the extraordinary athlete they are.

2. INTRODUCTION AND TERMINOLOGY

This Policy is founded on the principle that the inherent dignity of persons participating in sport with physical, sensory, intellectual and functional differences (Functionally Diverse) is inviolable and constitutes an inalienable human right.

The Policy seeks to protect athletes, ensure that they participate as rights-holders and active participants within inclusive and socially integrated sporting environments, and secure their equal, full, effective and meaningful participation in sport. It establishes a holistic framework addressing values capable of affecting participants' lives.

A safe sport environment encompasses physical, psychological, cultural and institutional safety. The Policy also recognises intersecting identities and circumstances, including gender, age, ethnic origin, socioeconomic status and other characteristics, and requires fair and equitable implementation.

The Policy is grounded in the Constitution of the Republic of Türkiye, Law No. 5378 on Persons with Disabilities and other applicable national legislation, together with the principles of the UNCRPD and UNDIS. It establishes institutional accountability, inclusive governance, data-informed monitoring, measurable performance indicators and continuous-improvement mechanisms as organisational responsibilities.

The Policy is aligned with the ethical principles of the International Paralympic Committee, SafeSport principles and recognised safe-sport standards. It prioritises non-discrimination, equal opportunity, athlete wellbeing and psychological safety, recognises power imbalances in sport, seeks to reduce the risk of re-traumatisation and integrates trauma-informed practice into institutional processes.

Providing a safe sport environment is both an institutional and individual duty of care. All stakeholders are responsible for doing no harm, reducing risk, fulfilling reporting obligations and applying protective measures. These provisions are mandatory, not advisory, for all natural and legal persons operating within the Turkish Paralympic system.

Terminology and Rights-Based Framework

This Policy uses ****Functionally Diverse**** as its preferred descriptive terminology for athletes and individuals with physical, sensory, intellectual or other functional differences. The terminology is

intended to centre dignity, participation and individual identity rather than perceived deficit. Where legislation, regulations, court decisions or authoritative international instruments use established legal terminology, including "persons with disabilities," that terminology is retained when referring to the relevant legal or regulatory source. The preferred terminology of this Policy does not alter or limit any legal protection.

Term	Definition
Functionally Diverse	Rights-based, socially informed terminology for persons with physical, sensory, intellectual and functional differences. Disabled/Impaired Individuals doing sports.
Child	A person under 18 years of age, in accordance with the UNCRC and Turkish law.
Children in Vulnerable Situations	Children with disabilities; refugees; minority-group children; children living in poverty; children receiving alternative care; or children in conflict with the law.
Paralympic Athlete	An athlete eligible to compete under IPC classification criteria and who has a physical, sensory or intellectual difference.
Paralympic athlete perspective	Paralympic athletes are not defined by physical, intellectual or functional losses. Their performance reflects developed strength, adaptability and resilience. This Policy recognises Functionally Diverse athletes as leaders of excellence at a global level.

ARTICLE 1 — PURPOSE

The purpose of this Directive is to establish the structure, duties, powers and operating principles of the TMPK Athlete Wellbeing and Child Safeguarding Board; establish Athlete Wellbeing and Child Safeguarding principles for Functionally Diverse persons in sport; and strengthen institutional responsibility.

The Directive establishes preventive and protective measures for a safe, inclusive and empowering sporting environment, defines mechanisms for meaningful athlete participation, and regulates the steps, disciplinary procedures and processes to be followed when its principles are breached.

ARTICLE 2 — SCOPE

This Directive applies to TMPK, affiliated federations, clubs, sports schools, national teams, training camps and all national and international Paralympic activities conducted under TMPK coordination.

- Institutional structures: TMPK bodies, board members, commissions, federations, clubs, managers and employees.
- Paralympic athletes: amateur, professional and national-team athletes with physical, sensory, intellectual or functional differences.
- Support and technical personnel: coaches, technical staff, health personnel, referees, classifiers, observers and competition officials.

- Event and operational personnel: competition/event committees, camp and tournament staff, volunteers, chaperones and persons accompanying athletes, including family members.
- Digital and online environments: all persons connected to Paralympic activities through social media and other digital platforms or messaging channels.
- Other stakeholders: all natural and legal persons connected with Paralympic sport, whether registered or not, including sponsors, event companies and subcontractors.

The Directive applies across all physical, digital and online environments in which Paralympic activities take place, including events, camps, travel, accommodation and communication.

ARTICLE 3 — DEFINITIONS

3.1 General Concepts

Concept	Definition
Paralympic Safeguarding	The set of institutional policies and measures that enable Functionally Diverse persons to participate in a dignified, equitable and safe sporting environment.
Consent	A conscious, informed and voluntary permission given without coercion. It may be withdrawn at any time and is never unlimited or permanent.
Informed Consent	Clear information provided before a procedure and permission given freely on the basis of that information.
Photo Consent	Annual signed consent for use of images in non-private sporting contexts. General or indefinite consent is invalid.
Trauma-Informed Practice	An approach that recognises the effects of previous trauma on behaviour, emotions and performance and minimises the risk of re-traumatisation.
Psychological Safety	A condition in which a person can express feelings, views and experiences without fear of punishment.
Safe Reporting	Receiving reports of abuse, violations, neglect or bullying in accordance with confidentiality, impartiality and safety principles.
Non-Retaliation	The right not to suffer any sanction, disadvantage or adverse treatment because of a complaint, report or testimony.

3.2 Types of Abuse and Violations

Type	Definition and scope
Abuse	Any act causing physical, psychological, sexual or economic harm, including neglect or maltreatment.
Violation	A deliberate or repeated crossing of safety boundaries or conduct that exposes a person to exploitation or abuse.
Exploitation	Using power over a person's rights or safety to place that person at a disadvantage or obtain an unfair benefit.
Physical Abuse	Hitting, kicking, shaking, damaging equipment, withholding medication or administering medication by force.

Type	Definition and scope
Sexual Abuse	Sexual conduct with or without physical contact, sharing pornography, or coercive/pressuring conduct even where apparent consent is asserted.
Emotional / Psychological Abuse	Systematic conduct that causes a person to feel worthless, frightened, humiliated, socially excluded or persistently criticised or belittled, or otherwise undermines dignity.
Economic Abuse	Misuse of social support, forced begging, or obtaining benefit from an athlete's image or identity for campaigns or fundraising.
Digital Abuse	Threats, humiliation, sexual solicitation, hate speech, accessibility violations, impersonation or unauthorised content-sharing in digital environments.
Neglect	Failure to meet basic needs or developmental requirements, including disregard of medical, emotional or care needs.
Bullying	Repeated intimidation, exclusion, ridicule, insult or reputational harm involving a power imbalance.
Negligent Practice	Failure to exercise the required level of care to protect safety and rights, including failure to take reasonable preventive measures.
Medical / Functional Manipulation	Changing, exaggerating or concealing a health or functional condition for classification or sporting advantage, including manipulation to obtain an advantage.
Grooming	A process in which an adult or person in a position of authority systematically gains the trust of a child or person in a vulnerable situation, progressively crosses boundaries, creates isolation and imposes secrecy for the purpose of abuse. It may occur online or in person. Indicators include: 'keep this between us' messages; gifts, money or opportunities; 'I understand you / I chose you' language; late-night private communication; isolating an athlete from family, coach or team; requests for photographs or videos; false coach/sponsor profiles; and systematic attention designed to increase dependence. See Appendix G.

3.3 Institutional and Process Concepts

Concept	Definition
Preventive Action	All policy, training, environmental-design and operational measures intended to reduce risks and prevent violations from occurring.
Protective Action	The institutional response and procedural system activated after an incident or case to ensure an effective, appropriate and victim-centred response.
Risk Identification	Systematic identification and anticipation of risks arising from spaces, operations, policies or individual practices affecting Functionally Diverse athletes.

Concept	Definition
Risk Mitigation	Proactive measures to address weaknesses and gaps identified through risk assessment and to implement preventive and protective controls.
Case	An incident involving an alleged violation, abuse, bullying, concern, complaint or other allegation, including any good-faith report assessed as presenting a concrete risk.
Power Imbalance	A structural difference in authority in coach–athlete, manager–athlete, health professional–athlete or chaperone–athlete relationships; such authority creates a heightened duty of care for the person holding power.
Restorative Intervention	A post-case process intended not only to impose consequences, but to restore the affected person's safety, provide psychosocial support and enable institutional learning.
Care-Dependency-Based Abuse of Power	Misuse by a person providing daily care, communication or transport support of the structural power created by that dependency to control, isolate or abuse an athlete.
Functionally Diverse Privacy Violation	Recording, photographing, sharing or commercialising an athlete's body, prosthesis, orthosis, assistive device, personal care, changing of clothes or health information without consent.
Transport Safety	Full implementation during transport of all technical and safety standards contained in TMPK accessibility, guidance and tournament directives.

ARTICLE 4 — FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES OF ATHLETE WELLBEING AND SAFEGUARDING

The following principles have priority in all TMPK directives, decisions, operational practices and events. No practice may conflict with them.

4(a) Rights-Based and Inclusive Approach

- **Human Dignity and Equality:** The dignity of Functionally Diverse persons is inviolable, inherent and inalienable. No person may be discriminated against, excluded or stigmatised.
- **Meaningful Participation:** Participation is not merely consultation; it is a structural basis that strengthens the legitimacy of decisions.
- **Best Interests of the Child:** In all decisions concerning children, the best interests of the child shall be the primary consideration in accordance with UNCRC Article 3.
- **Non-Discrimination:** No differential treatment based on disability, gender, age, ethnic origin, cultural identity or performance level.
- **Social Integration and Inclusion in Sport:** Functionally Diverse athletes shall be enabled to participate alongside other athletes. Mixed training, mentoring and integrated activities are encouraged.
- **Trauma-Informed Safety:** Trauma-informed practice shall be embedded as an organisational standard across all stakeholders.
- **Functionally Diverse -Friendly Environments:** Reasonable adaptations shall be made to provide accessible environments, and personnel shall complete mandatory training.

4(b) Establishing a Safe Sport Environment

- **Zero Tolerance:** Where signs of abuse, neglect, bullying or maltreatment are identified, action shall be taken immediately. Performance shall never take priority over safety.
- **Psychological Safety:** Athletes may express feelings and experiences without fear of punishment.
- **Cultural Safety:** Ethnic, linguistic, religious and cultural differences shall be treated as diversity, not grounds for exclusion.
- **Physical Safety:** Physical integrity shall be protected. Medical intervention shall be undertaken with informed consent where required, while emergencies shall be managed in accordance with applicable law, clinical standards and the athlete's best interests. Tactile sensitivities of Functionally Diverse persons shall be respected.
- **Power-Imbalance Awareness:** Structural power differences in coach–athlete relationships shall be recognised; those holding power carry heightened responsibility.
- **Non-Retaliation:** No sanction may be imposed because of a report or complaint.
- **Safe Reporting Mechanisms:** Accessible reporting options shall be established for Functionally Diverse persons.
- **Rapid Communication with Authorities:** Systems shall enable prompt contact with law enforcement, health and judicial authorities when required.
- **Trauma-Informed Practice:** Discipline, education and interventions shall take account of trauma's effects on behaviour and performance.
- **Trauma-Safe Spaces:** Practices likely to cause re-traumatisation shall be prevented; coercive or shaming interventions shall be avoided.
- **Empowerment Priority:** The individual benefit and empowering effect of sport take precedence over performance targets.
- **Restorative Intervention:** Following a case, safety shall be restored, psychosocial support provided and institutional learning undertaken.

4(c) Institutional Responsibility and Accountability

- **Accessibility:** Physical environments and communication processes shall be made accessible across all channels, taking individual differences into account.
- **Privacy and Personal Data Protection:** Personal data, health information and device/prosthesis information shall be protected.
- **Accountability:** Processes shall be documented and conducted in an auditable manner. The Board shall prepare annual activity reports and make them publicly available.

4(d) IPC-Aligned Standards

- **Mandatory Reporting:** Cases exceeding the applicable seriousness threshold and the annual report shall be reported to the IPC; responsibility rests with the TMPK Athlete Wellbeing and Child Safeguarding Board.
- **Training Certification:** All personnel working directly with athletes shall complete mandatory safeguarding training, with refresher training every two years.
- **Independent Investigation:** Cases involving senior management or coaching staff shall be investigated by an external investigator.
- **Principled Compliance:** IPC mandatory protocols, UNCRC Article 3 and UNCRPD Article 4(3) shall guide implementation.

4(e) Independent Oversight

Effectiveness shall be assessed at least annually by an independent oversight body. The review shall include case records, training certification, reporting/intervention timelines and participation of the Sensory Advisory Committee. Reports shall be made public.

ARTICLE 5 — FUNCTIONALLY DIVERSE-INCLUSIVE SAFEGUARDING PRINCIPLES

TMPK is committed to building a culture of inclusion and dignity across all sporting environments, tournaments and institutional processes. These principles do not prescribe a fixed operational model. They provide the framework within which institutions, teams and individuals develop safeguarding systems that respond to the lived realities of Functionally Diverse athletes. Safeguarding needs are dynamic rather than static and must be addressed through planned processes and real-time responsiveness. Conventional risk-mitigation methods may be insufficient because of functional differences; therefore these principles guide activity-specific safeguarding.

Accessibility is essential, but accessibility alone addresses whether athletes can enter and exit a space safely. These principles go further: they ensure that athletes can exercise their individual rights and freedoms with dignity and wellbeing once they are there. All principles are grounded in the UNCRPD and apply across disability categories.

The Article 5 implementation guide contains practical examples and forms. Implementers may develop these further with the knowledge and advice of SAC members.

The athlete is not the subject of these principles. The athlete is their purpose.

Principle 1 — Minimise Situational Vulnerability

Situational vulnerability describes circumstances in which a person becomes helpless for reasons beyond their control. Vulnerability does not arise from disability itself; it arises from operational planning, environments and systems that fail to account for it. Institutions and individuals shall assess spaces, equipment and operational practices for disability-specific risks; establish activity-specific behavioural expectations and minimum standards for each stakeholder group; use visual supervision systems and programme-flow design as preventive safeguarding tools; continuously strengthen organisational capacity through physical, emotional and functional good practice; and make dignity, safety and accessibility the foundational standards of operational decisions.

Principle 2 — Minimise Sensory Risk and Eliminate Fear of Misperception

Athletes with sensory differences may face specific safeguarding vulnerabilities where communication is not clear and safe. Misperception, loss of orientation and communication barriers are direct safeguarding risks. Institutions and individuals shall adapt environments and communication so athletes can rely on their senses; use tactile signage, visual contrast, auditory cues and individualised strategies; prepare logistics that enable each athlete to perceive and interact with their environment safely and accurately; and integrate SAC feedback into real-time decisions. Planning shall account operationally for sensory shifts and changes in sensory conditions, with SAC input treated as essential.

Principle 3 — Minimise Dependence and Encourage Self-Sufficiency

Dependence is not inherent to Functionally Diverse status; it can be produced by systems that fail to empower the individual. Autonomy is a core UNCRPD right, and self-sufficiency is a safeguarding outcome. Support shall be provided only where necessary; adaptations shall be athlete-centred and give the athlete genuine control; independent personal-care support shall be available on request; and Functionally Diverse athletes shall be visible and central at every level of governance, operational planning and policy development. Accurate information about each athlete's capabilities shall be obtained and assistance provided only where requested or necessary. A generic understanding of disability is insufficient; individual sensitivity is required.

Principle 4 — Minimise Unnecessary Emotional Fluctuation and Overstimulation

Emotional and sensory overstimulation can impair decision-making, increase vulnerability and cause lasting harm. This principle provides a basis for environments and institutional practices that protect emotional safety with the same rigour as physical safety. Institutions, Safeguarding Officers and individuals shall apply Universal Design principles; provide accessible sensory spaces and quiet areas at events; require trauma-informed and person-centred care for all accredited persons; and ensure relevant personnel are trained in de-escalation, crisis management and response to anxiety and panic attacks.

Principle 5 — Remove Barriers to Basic Necessities

Access to food, water, medical care, toilets, quiet space and basic facilities is a right, not a privilege. Physical, procedural or information barriers to such access are safeguarding failures. Institutions and individuals shall ensure continuous and dignified access in all event and operational environments; address barriers in an athlete-centred manner that protects dignity, privacy and autonomy; provide visible guidance to support resources and Safeguarding Officers; and implement UNCRPD principles of equal access and non-discrimination as operational standards.

ARTICLE 5A — TMPK SENSORY ADVISORY COMMITTEE (SAC)

The SAC is not a consultative courtesy. It is a structural safeguarding mechanism and living governance instrument through which the principles of Article 5 are continuously evaluated, challenged and strengthened. Its foundation is a simple but radical recognition: athletes who navigate these environments every day are their foremost experts. Their voice is not supplementary to safeguarding; it is central to it. Professional expertise must be complemented by the lived experience of those who navigate these environments every day.

Purpose and Composition

The SAC is established to meaningfully integrate Paralympic athletes' voices into decision-making, assess the effectiveness of accessibility, minimise risks and strengthen athlete wellbeing. It includes representatives of different disability categories, young athletes, former Paralympic athletes, and trainers or managers with experience working and communicating with persons with disabilities.

Minimum composition: at least eight members, including the Chair. No disability category may dominate the Committee. Reasons for member changes shall be recorded in writing.

Duties and Rights

- **Expert Voice:** Members are experts in their own sensory and environmental experiences and provide a continuous, trusted channel for Functionally Diverse athletes to raise concerns and recommendations without fear of adverse consequences.
- **Shared Institutional Responsibility:** The TMPK Safeguarding Lead and SAC operate as active partners rather than through hierarchy. SAC is a supporting governance body, not a subordinate committee, and contributes knowledge and lived experience needed for sound decisions.
- **Policy Advice:** SAC is an expert advisory body for the development and monitoring of TMPK policies and practices. Recommendations shall be recorded, considered at the relevant governance level and responded to.
- **Real-Time Feedback:** During events, members have the organisational authority to provide spontaneous verbal feedback to reduce potential risks. Each member is primarily responsible for communicating the communication, operational or physical needs of their own and other Functionally Diverse groups and expects the Safeguarding Officer to work toward a solution.
- **Bridge Function:** SAC may bridge communication and functional differences among Functionally Diverse groups and, where needed, provide mediation or interpretation to support accommodation and consensus.
- **Written Right of Objection:** Where a practice or decision fails to serve Functionally Diverse persons, causes harm or is inadequate, SAC may formally object. Objections are submitted to the Safeguarding Coordinator and referred to the relevant institutional unit. A response shall be provided within seven working days and retained in the institutional accountability record.

This right of objection is not a formality. It is an enforceable safeguarding tool.

Meaningful Participation, Social Integration and Continuous Improvement

- Functionally Diverse athletes shall participate genuinely and effectively in decision-making. SAC shall be consulted before decisions affecting athlete wellbeing, and implementation shall be quality-checked. The SAC Chair may also provide approval.
- Mixed activities bringing athletes with and without disabilities together are encouraged, including opportunities for athletes to work with coaches with and without disabilities in the same sport.
- All events shall be physically accessible (venue, transport and disability-related arrangements) and digitally accessible (websites, content and communication tools). Positive capabilities and achievements of Functionally Diverse athletes shall be represented.
- Empowerment-based training shall be organised in accordance with SAC recommendations, certified and followed by mandatory refresher training.
- TMPK shall actively integrate SAC feedback into operational and policy decisions at all organisational levels and shall demonstrate that its advice is taken seriously.
- SAC may be strengthened through cooperation with disability organisations, accessibility specialists and international Paralympic structures.

Closing Statement — Articles 5 and 5A: These principles and the governance body responsible for them arise from the recognition that safeguarding must be designed with athletes, not merely for athletes. Together, Articles 5 and 5A represent TMPK's binding institutional commitment to this principle as an operational, enduring and living form of governance rather than an aspirational

goal. Every decision under these Articles ultimately returns to one question: Does this decision serve the athlete?

ARTICLE 6 — SAFE RECRUITMENT AND TRAINING REQUIREMENTS

Recruitment Documentation

All paid or voluntary personnel who will work with children or athletes must provide the following before appointment:

- Current criminal record certificate, renewed annually.
- Proof of residence.
- Reference letter, where available, from previous employers using TMPK forms.
- Written declaration of previous roles and reasons for leaving.
- Psychological assessment/participation declaration where deemed necessary, conducted in accordance with ethical principles and professional standards.
- Three-month probationary period and induction/orientation for new personnel.
- Written undertaking to comply with TMPK Athlete Wellbeing and Child Safeguarding principles.

Mandatory Training

- Training content shall align with IPC certification standards and be grounded in trauma-informed practice.
- Personnel who have not completed required training may not be appointed or participate in sporting activities.
- Training materials shall be accessible to all participants, including Braille, plain language, large print and digital formats.
- The curriculum shall be reviewed and updated annually by the Committee.

ARTICLE 7 — TMPK ATHLETE WELLBEING AND CHILD SAFEGUARDING BOARD

- The Board consists of seven persons: one Chair and six members. At its first meeting it elects a Deputy Chair and a Coordinator. Additional members or expert advisers may be appointed by TMPK Board decision where necessary.
- Collectively, the Board should include expertise in child safeguarding, law, health, law enforcement, psychology, disability rights or inclusion, and sport. Members should have qualifications and professional experience appropriate to their appointed responsibilities. Where specialist expertise is not held by a Board member, the Board may appoint an independent expert adviser without compromising its independence.
- Selection shall consider expertise in child health, personal-data confidentiality, secure technology access and trauma-informed practice.
- Members serve for the term of the TMPK Board. Reasons for member changes shall be recorded in writing.
- Decisions are made by a simple majority of members present; in the event of a tie, the Chair has the casting vote.
- The Board meets at least monthly and may meet extraordinarily when necessary.
- Members shall not participate in cases in which they have a direct or indirect interest; conflicts of interest shall be recorded in writing.

- The Board is independent. Its decisions and assessments may not be directed by any person or body, and members may not be subjected to pressure or retaliation because of their duties.

ARTICLE 7A — ATHLETE IDENTIFICATION KIT AND MISSING ATHLETE PROTOCOL

Competition travel increases the risks of separation, disorientation and loss of communication for Functionally Diverse athletes. An Athlete Identification Kit shall be prepared for every athlete competing at a competitive level and held by the TMPK Safeguarding Officer.

- The Kit is MANDATORY for all minors and adult athletes with communication or cognitive disabilities and strongly recommended for other adult athletes.
- At minimum it contains a current photograph and physical description; identity information; emergency contacts; disability classification; current medication list; and medical alerts. Depending on the athlete profile, it also includes an AAC communication document, prosthesis/assistive-device information and behavioural profile.
- Biometric or forensic identifiers shall not form part of the routine Athlete Identification Kit. Where such information is exceptionally necessary for a lawful and specific safeguarding or identification purpose, it shall be collected only under a separate legal and data-protection assessment, with explicit informed consent where legally required, strict access controls and a defined retention period.
- The Kit is held only by the TMPK Safeguarding Officer. No person may access Kit materials without written authorisation. Kits are updated at least every six months.
- The Missing Athlete Protocol is activated without a waiting period when a minor or an athlete with communication/cognitive disability cannot be located, or when the location of any athlete has been unknown for more than 15 minutes.
- When activated: a search begins with at least two staff members; the Safeguarding Officer is contacted; the Identification Kit is obtained; if the athlete is not found within 15 minutes, law enforcement is notified; emergency contacts are immediately informed.
- Search procedures are adapted to the athlete's disability profile using AAC documentation, communication boards and behavioural profiles. An incident report is completed within two hours of resolution and a written post-incident review within seven days.
- Failure to comply with this Article constitutes a disciplinary matter under Article 11.

ARTICLE 7B — MEDICAL READINESS

- Before every competition trip, the responsible Safeguarding Officer shall fully complete and sign a Medical Readiness Checklist for each athlete.
- The checklist covers verification of the Athlete Identification Kit, medication management, allergies and emergency medical information, assistive-device/prosthesis checks, AAC preparation for athletes with communication barriers, and the available health services and emergency medical arrangements at the event location.
- An identified omission may prevent travel or participation. Any omission shall immediately be reported to the Safeguarding Officer.
- Completed checklists shall be retained by the Safeguarding Officer.

ARTICLE 7C — ACCOMMODATION AND AWAY-TRAVEL STANDARDS

- Accommodation and away-travel facilities shall be assessed for suitability for Functionally Diverse athletes at least 72 hours before travel. Travel may not proceed until the pre-assessment is completed.
- If the competition venue or accommodation is unsafe, a decision may be made to withdraw from the competition prioritising athlete safety. Such a decision may not be used as a basis for discipline or loss of eligibility.
- An adult staff member who is not a relative of the athlete may not share a room with an athlete. Room and bed arrangements shall be checked jointly by two authorised persons. Athletes with similar disability profiles and compatible communication needs should be roomed together.
- At the start of accommodation, the Safeguarding Officer shall be introduced to all athletes; the daily schedule shall be provided in print; and digital safety, emergency exits and reporting channels shall be explained.

ARTICLE 7D — ATHLETE MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS PROTOCOL

A mental health crisis is not a weakness; it is a health condition requiring an appropriate response.

- In all mental-health crises, including panic attacks, depressive crises, trauma activation, psychosis and refusal to enter competition, athlete safety and dignity always take precedence over performance.
- A Designated Crisis Lead shall be appointed for every event and introduced to all personnel. During a crisis, the athlete shall be moved to a calm and safe area, shall not be left alone, and the Crisis Lead shall be called immediately.
- No athlete may be forced to compete because of a mental-health crisis. Such a decision may not constitute grounds for discipline, loss of eligibility or removal from the squad. Each competition squad shall have at least one reserve athlete available.
- Where suicide risk or psychosis is present, emergency psychiatric support shall be called immediately.
- An incident report shall be completed within two hours and a written review within seven days.

ARTICLE 7E — TRANSPORT SAFETY STANDARDS

- No athlete may travel alone and unsupervised with an adult staff member in a private vehicle. At least two persons must always be present in the vehicle. This rule is without exception.
- Drivers' valid licences, vehicle maintenance documentation and criminal-record checks shall be verified before travel. All vehicle personnel shall read and sign the Functionally Diverse conduct standards: respectful language, no unauthorised touching, no ridicule and no leaving an athlete alone.
- Vehicles shall have appropriate accessibility boarding equipment, suitable seat belts and wheelchair restraint systems. Safe routes shall be preferred and speed limits observed.
- In the event of vehicle breakdown or an accident, the Safeguarding Officer shall be contacted immediately; athletes shall not leave the vehicle until the environment is made safe; and family shall be informed.

ARTICLE 7F — OVERNIGHT TOURNAMENT AND AWAY-TRAVEL STANDARDS

Planning and Access Assessment

- At least seven days before departure, the Safeguarding Officer shall prepare a written away-travel plan and obtain approval from the TMPK Coordinator.
- The plan shall cover accessibility of accommodation for Functionally Diverse athletes, transport arrangements, emergency-exit and evacuation procedures, the daily programme and chaperone responsibilities.
- For minors, written parental/guardian consent, a reachable communication copy for the journey and emergency family contact details must be collected before travel.

Accommodation Standards

- No athlete may share a room with an unrelated adult staff member. Room and bed arrangements shall be jointly checked by two authorised persons and documented on a signed form.
- At the beginning of accommodation, all athletes shall be introduced to the Safeguarding Officer, shown emergency exits, informed of reporting channels and given the daily programme in print. The briefing shall be documented by a written attendance record.
- Overnight duty staff shall be assigned. At least one authorised person shall be visibly positioned on the relevant corridor/floor. The duty roster shall be prepared before travel and communicated to the TMPK Coordinator.
- An athlete count shall be conducted every morning and evening, recorded and signed. A missing athlete immediately triggers Article 7A.
- Failure by officials, coaches, chaperones or staff to comply with these standards triggers disciplinary proceedings under Article 11.

ARTICLE 7G — MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS COMMUNICATION AND REPORTING

- Information concerning an athlete experiencing a mental-health crisis shall be restricted to those with a need to know. Crisis information is shared only with the Crisis Lead, Safeguarding Officer and TMPK Coordinator.
- Family notification is made only by the Safeguarding Officer. Coaches or other personnel may not contact family without the athlete's consent, subject to applicable safeguarding and legal duties.
- Where suicide risk or psychosis is present, emergency psychiatric support shall be called and the matter reported in writing to the TMPK Coordinator within 24 hours.
- No statement about the athlete may be made to media, social media or other external stakeholders during the crisis. Breach triggers Article 11.
- Post-crisis follow-up shall continue for at least three months under the coordination of the Safeguarding Officer, with regular documented risk assessment.

ARTICLE 8 — REPORTING, COMPLAINTS AND APPLICATION PROCEDURES

All persons covered by this Directive, including coaches, technical personnel and chaperones, must immediately report to the competent authorities where they suspect that a child or person with a disability has been abused, in accordance with Law No. 5395 on Child Protection and the Turkish Penal Code. Failure to fulfil this duty may result in institutional disciplinary action and

individual criminal liability where the relevant offence is established. The Safeguarding Board shall record and monitor whether required reporting has occurred.

- Violations or risks within the scope of this Directive may be reported to the Board through Appendix 1 or the TMPK website. Reports are assessed under confidentiality, psychological safety and non-retaliation principles.
- The Board may request information and documents from relevant institutions and persons. Proceedings are conducted confidentially, impartially and in a trauma-informed manner.
- Where no judicial investigation has been opened, the Board shall notify the competent judicial authorities.
- The Board has authority to issue direct correspondence and formal notifications.
- Where a report presents a serious and concrete risk, the Board may impose temporary administrative protective measures during an investigation.
- Protective measures are notified to the person concerned and their organisation, with a right of appeal to the Disciplinary Board.
- While a protective measure is in force, the person may not participate in competitions or perform refereeing or event-organisation duties.
- Clubs and legal entities must provide information and documents necessary for the Board to perform its duties.
- The Board submits review and investigation reports to the TMPK Disciplinary Inspectorate.
- The physical, psychological and social wellbeing of the affected person shall be restored, taking disability type and individual adaptations into account.
- In cases of sexual abuse, serious physical violence or imminent risk, the Board conducts a preliminary assessment within 48 hours and notifies judicial authorities where required.
- Reports may be submitted anonymously and will be assessed on the basis of concrete risk.
- Support for the affected person shall be monitored for at least three months, with regular assessment of risk and psychosocial needs.

ARTICLE 8A — REPORT ASSESSMENT AND PROTECTION OF THE AFFECTED PERSON

All time limits and alert thresholds are defined with priority given to the affected person's rights and psychological safety. Failure to meet prescribed time limits constitutes a procedural violation under Article 11A.

Stage	Process	Timeframe	Alert
1	REPORT / NOTIFICATION — Appendix A, TMPK website or Safeguarding Officer; anonymous reports accepted.	Day of report	REPORT
2	PRELIMINARY ASSESSMENT — confidential Board review; immediate protective measures where urgent risk exists.	3 working days	3 DAYS

Stage	Process	Timeframe	Alert
3	OPEN INVESTIGATION / ARCHIVE — formal investigation where concrete risk is identified; otherwise reasoned closure and written notice.	5 working days	5 DAYS
4	INVESTIGATION — parties interviewed, documents collected, independent investigator where required; psychological safety prioritised.	30 working days (extendable)	30 DAYS
5	RIGHT TO RESPOND — allegations notified in writing; written defence permitted. Failure to meet the deadline does not itself constitute exoneration.	10 working days	10 DAYS
6	REPORT AND DECISION — investigation report submitted to Disciplinary Inspectorate; Disciplinary Board issues reasoned decision.	15 working days	15 DAYS
7	APPEAL — concerned person may appeal to Disciplinary Board; appeal does not automatically suspend the decision.	1 week	10 DAYS
8	FINALISATION AND IMPLEMENTATION — licensing actions, notification to the Ministry responsible for sport and criminal complaint where required.	Immediately	IMMEDIATE

Rights and Protection of the Affected Person

- Written confirmation that the report has been received within three working days.
- Right to be accompanied or represented by a support person or lawyer at every stage.
- Identity and statement shall not be shared outside the investigation without explicit consent, subject to mandatory legal disclosure requirements.
- Psychosocial support and, where necessary, legal referral throughout the process.
- Regular updates on the progress of the investigation upon request.

Board Measures in Response to Risk

- Temporarily suspend activities, restrict access or remove the person concerned.
- Provide written reasons for the protective measure to the person, their club and the TMPK Disciplinary Inspectorate.

- An appeal does not automatically suspend the protective measure.

ARTICLE 9 — TMPK ATHLETE WELLBEING AND CHILD SAFEGUARDING COORDINATOR

- A Coordinator may be appointed to carry out the Board's administrative and operational work.
- The Coordinator works under the Board Chair and performs duties in accordance with confidentiality, impartiality and psychological safety.
- If subjected to pressure or threats, the Coordinator shall report the matter to the Board in writing.
- No sanction or retaliation may be imposed because of a report made by the Coordinator in this capacity.

ARTICLE 10 — SAFEGUARDING OFFICER

- Federations, branch representatives and national-team organisations within TMPK must appoint at least one Safeguarding Officer.
- The Officer provides advice, reports risks to the Board and coordinates preventive work locally.
- Branch leads and tournament coordinators shall designate at least one Safeguarding Adviser representing Functionally Diverse persons.
- The Safeguarding Officer must participate in TMPK safeguarding training and IPC-aligned certification programmes.

ARTICLE 10A — CHAPERONES AND FAMILY CHAPERONES

Being a chaperone is not a right; it is a role carrying responsibility. This Article applies to all chaperones, including family members.

Definition and Scope

A chaperone is a person who provides an athlete with care, communication, transport or personal support during camps, competitions, travel, training and daily life. Family status does not remove any obligation under this Directive.

Chaperones are subject to all principles and rules of this Directive and must protect athlete wellbeing, dignity, privacy and psychological safety.

Appointment Conditions

- Before appointment, chaperones must provide a current criminal-record check, complete TMPK Athlete Wellbeing and Child Safeguarding training and sign a written undertaking to comply with the Directive.
- Roles and limits of authority during camps, accommodation and travel shall be clearly defined by the organisation.

Safe Practice Rules

- A chaperone must not be alone in a changing room with athletes other than their own athlete; a second adult must be present.

- Anyone wishing to assist another athlete must act only with prior authorisation and appropriate briefing.
- Physical contact shall be limited to necessary care and support; privacy and bodily boundaries must be respected.
- Chaperones shall cooperate with technical teams regarding the athlete's physical, psychological and functional needs.

Athlete Rights and Chaperone Boundaries

- An athlete is not required to receive assistance from their designated chaperone and may choose another person, communicating this verbally to management.
- Chaperones are responsibility-holders, not rights-holders on behalf of the athlete. They may advocate for institutional rights but may not override the athlete's own decisions.
- Any suspicion of abuse, bullying or rights violation shall be reported immediately. Chaperones who breach the Directive may be removed and subject to Article 11 disciplinary proceedings.

ARTICLE 10B — SAFEGUARDING AND ATHLETE WELLBEING TRAINING

- All TMPK personnel, coaches, technical staff, volunteers, chaperones and Safeguarding Officers must complete mandatory safeguarding training.
- Training shall align with IPC certification standards and cover trauma-informed practice, power-imbalance awareness, recognition of grooming and non-retaliation.
- Training shall clearly demonstrate complaint/reporting procedures, communication routes to the Safeguarding Officer and use of online reporting forms.
- Training shall be renewed periodically and attendance certificates retained.
- Training materials shall be accessible, including Braille, plain language, large print and digital formats.
- The curriculum shall be reviewed and updated annually by the Committee.

ARTICLE 10C — DIGITAL SAFETY, GROOMING AND SOCIAL MEDIA

- Personnel may not communicate with athletes through individual/personal social-media accounts. Official communication shall take place only through TMPK official pages or public official group channels. Breach constitutes a disciplinary matter under Article 11.
- For minors, relevant safeguarding communications shall include an appropriate parent, legal guardian or other authorised adult where required by law or safeguarding procedure. For adult athletes, communications shall remain private unless the athlete consents, the information is necessary for safeguarding, or disclosure is otherwise required or permitted by law. Where an athlete uses supported communication, reasonable communication support shall be provided without unnecessarily disclosing private information.
- Reports shall be made through the Safeguarding Officer, TMPK Coordinator or official online reporting form. Personal social media and private groups may not be used as reporting channels.
- Sharing photographs or videos containing prostheses, assistive devices, personal care or health information is strictly prohibited. Annual written consent is required for publication of any athlete photograph or video in any medium.

- Online grooming indicators — including secret one-to-one messaging, offers of gifts/money, 'keep this between us' messages, requests for athlete photographs and late-night private communication — shall be reported immediately to the Safeguarding Officer.
- All reports are assessed under confidentiality, impartiality, psychological safety and non-retaliation principles.

ARTICLE 10D — PHOTOGRAPHY, VIDEO AND MEDIA PROTOCOL

An athlete's image is not a promotional instrument; it is a personal and inalienable right.

- Annual written consent is required before an athlete's photograph or video may be published in any medium. For minors, parent/legal guardian signature is also required.
- The consent form must clearly specify the medium, purpose and duration of use. General or open-ended 'indefinite permission' is invalid.
- An athlete may withdraw consent at any time and without giving a reason. Withdrawal takes effect within 48 hours and removal from publication shall be initiated during that period.
- Images containing prostheses, assistive devices, personal care, changing clothes, medical procedures or health information are prohibited even where consent is given.
- Content may not portray an athlete through inadequacy, suffering or victimhood. Content shall foreground strength, achievement and human dignity.
- All images of minors shall be reviewed and approved by the TMPK Safeguarding Officer before publication.
- External press and media organisations shall sign the TMPK Media Access Form before publication; athlete and, where applicable, parental consent shall be obtained; and the filming area shall be designated with the Safeguarding Officer present.
- Personnel who breach this Article shall have press accreditation withdrawn and be subject to Article 11 disciplinary proceedings. Disciplinary measures continue until the offending content is removed.

ARTICLE 11 — DISCIPLINARY PROVISIONS

- Authority to conduct disciplinary proceedings for violations of this Directive rests with the TMPK Disciplinary Board.
- The provisions apply to athletes as well as coaches, technical personnel, managers, chaperones, volunteers and all officials.
- Conduct contrary to athlete wellbeing and child safeguarding principles may be subject to disciplinary investigation. The TMPK Disciplinary Directive applies according to the nature and seriousness of the violation.
- The Board may recommend temporary protective measures during an investigation, including temporary restriction of participation in sporting activities.
- Failure to comply with a protective measure may result in loss of eligibility, licence suspension or licence revocation.
- Disciplinary processes shall respect proportionality, the right to respond, the safety of the affected person, psychological safety and trauma-informed practice.
- These disciplinary provisions shall undergo legal review at least every two years and be updated with the views of SAC and the Safeguarding Board.

ARTICLE 11A — SANCTIONS

Category	Examples	Indicative sanction	Mandatory reporting	Alert
RED — SERIOUS VIOLATION	Sexual abuse; physical violence; systematic psychological abuse; placing a child at risk through neglect.	Licence revocation + criminal referral + permanent prohibition from duties	YES — IMMEDIATE	IMMEDIATE
ORANGE — MAJOR VIOLATION	Abuse of power; bullying; persistent boundary violations; attempted cover-up; Functionally Diverse privacy violation.	Licence suspension (1–2 years) + mandatory training + conditional reinstatement	YES — 24 HOURS	24 HOURS
YELLOW — MODERATE	Directive breach; inadequate supervision; failure to meet accessibility standard; failure to report.	Warning + mandatory training; repeated breach may lead to temporary licence suspension.	YES — 72 HOURS	72 HOURS
BLUE — PROCEDURAL	Failure to maintain records; missing training documentation; failure to complete forms; communication-standard breach.	Written warning \+ corrective action within 30 days.	NO — administrative record	30 DAYS

- Sanctions may be cumulative; multiple categories of violation may be assessed together.
- The Disciplinary Board may aggravate or mitigate sanctions based on the circumstances of the case; reasons shall be recorded in the decision.
- Legal entities, including clubs and federations, may also be subject to administrative fines and suspension of activities.
- Where disciplinary and judicial proceedings run concurrently, administrative sanctions may be imposed without awaiting the judicial outcome, subject to applicable law and due process.

ARTICLE 11B — APPEALS

- The appeal period against a Disciplinary Board decision is seven calendar days from notification, unless a longer period is required by applicable law or the governing disciplinary rules.
- An appeal must be reasoned and evidence-based and is reviewed by an independent Appeals Panel established within the TMPK Board structure.
- The Appeals Panel shall issue its decision within one month of receiving the appeal.
- Judicial review remains available; TMPK may not restrict this right.
- The appeal process shall protect the affected person's identity; grounds of appeal shall not be served directly on the affected person.
- Where an appeal is found to have been made for retaliatory purposes, separate disciplinary proceedings may be initiated against the applicant.

ARTICLE 11C — LIMITATION PERIODS

- The disciplinary limitation period is two years from the date the violation becomes known and, in all cases, five years from the date of the incident.
- Where the affected person was under 18, the limitation period begins when the person reaches 18.
- Sexual abuse and violence offences are not subject to limitation under this Directive.

ARTICLE 11D — WHISTLEBLOWER PROTECTION

- Persons reporting violations, abuse, neglect or bullying shall be protected under confidentiality and psychological-safety principles.
- No retaliation, loss of rights or disciplinary sanction may be imposed because of a report.
- The reporting person shall receive psychosocial support and guidance where necessary.
- Protection applies to all TMPK personnel, chaperones and Safeguarding Officers.
- The Board shall monitor implementation of protection; where a breach is identified, disciplinary proceedings shall begin immediately.

ARTICLE 12 — LEGAL AND REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

This Directive shall be interpreted and implemented consistently with the national legislation and international instruments listed below. Its provisions may not be interpreted below the minimum level of protection established by law; where there is a conflict, the more protective provision shall prevail.

Instrument	Relevant provisions	Scope
Constitution of the Republic of Türkiye	Articles 17, 41, 50, 90	Personal integrity; protection of children and family; primacy of international conventions
Law No. 5378 on Persons with Disabilities	General	Equal participation and protection rights of persons with disabilities
Turkish Penal Code	Articles 86, 96, 102–105, 109, 232	Physical violence; sexual offences; deprivation of liberty; maltreatment
Law No. 5395 on Child Protection	General	Child protection and mandatory reporting
Law No. 6698 on the Protection of Personal Data (KVKK)	General	Privacy and protection of personal data
Law No. 7405 on Sports Clubs and Sports Federations	General	Disciplinary responsibilities of sports organisations
UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)	Articles 3, 19, 34, 37	Best interests; protection from all forms of abuse
UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD)	General	Rights-based disability inclusion and protection
International Paralympic Committee framework	General	Safe-sport standards

ARTICLE 12A — INTER-INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION AND PROTOCOLS

TMPK shall protect athletes not only within institutional boundaries but through active cooperation with all relevant public, private and international institutions.

12A.1 Cooperation with Law Enforcement and Judicial Authorities

- The TMPK Safeguarding Officer is authorised to communicate directly with local police and prosecutors in cases of an urgent security threat or suspected crime.
- Cases of child abuse, sexual assault or serious physical violence must be reported to competent judicial authorities within 48 hours; TMPK disciplinary proceedings run concurrently with judicial proceedings.
- TMPK may enter memoranda/protocols with local gendarmerie and police for coordinated security operations.

12A.2 Cooperation with Health and Mental Health Services

- TMPK shall identify at least one referral medical centre and a psychiatric/psychological service provider in cities to which teams travel.
- Under the mental-health crisis protocol, a pre-established contact line shall be maintained with provincial mental-health services for emergency psychiatric support.
- Consultation mechanisms may be established with the Turkish Medical Association and relevant specialist associations on medical matters relating to disability classification.

12A.3 Cooperation with the Ministry of Family and Social Services

- For violation cases involving child athletes, reporting and coordination protocols with provincial directorates of the Ministry of Family and Social Services shall be activated.
- Ministry services and referral mechanisms shall be used to provide psychosocial support to affected athletes.

12A.4 Cooperation with IPC and International Organisations

- TMPK shall report all cases exceeding the seriousness threshold and the annual safeguarding report to the IPC.
- Recommendations and oversight findings of the IPC Safeguarding Monitoring Group shall be implemented by TMPK; monitoring responsibility rests with the Athlete Wellbeing and Child Safeguarding Board.
- TMPK shall maintain regular communication with the European Paralympic Committee and regional safeguarding networks for good-practice exchange and capacity development.

12A.5 Cooperation with Civil Society, Disability Organisations and Universities

- Civil-society organisations working in disability rights are recognised as independent sources of contribution to SAC and shall be included in policy-development processes.
- Partnership protocols with university departments of disability studies, sports sciences, psychology and law may be established for research, training and independent oversight.
- Accredited civil-society organisations may contribute expertise in trauma-informed practice, safeguarding training and case management.

12A.6 Protocol Management

- The Board shall maintain an inventory of all inter-institutional protocols and update it annually.
- Each protocol shall clearly specify communication channels, authority limits, confidentiality provisions and emergency activation procedures.
- Protocol non-compliance is subject to independent oversight under Article 4(e).

ARTICLE 13 — MATTERS NOT PROVIDED FOR IN THIS DIRECTIVE

Matters not regulated by this Directive shall be determined by the TMPK Board, taking into account the Directive's fundamental principles, the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the IPC safe-sport framework and Olympic SafeSport principles.

ARTICLE 14 — ENTRY INTO FORCE

- This Directive was adopted by decision No. dated of the TMPK Board and enters into force on the date it is published on TMPK's official website.
- This Directive is not merely a text for investigating violations or regulating disciplinary proceedings. It is the written expression of TMPK's institutional intention to strengthen and transform the culture of sport by placing human dignity, equality and safety at its centre.
- In Paralympic sport, athlete safeguarding is built on an empowerment-centred rather than victim-centred approach; restorative and rehabilitative rather than solely punitive processes; risk-based and preventive practice; and inclusive governance grounded in meaningful participation.
- The purpose is not to create a culture of fear, but a culture of safety. Institutional responsibility means not only responding after a violation, but establishing and maintaining structural safety systems that prevent violations from occurring.
- This document represents a commitment to sustain a human-rights-based, trauma-informed sporting environment aligned with international standards.

APPENDIX LIST — ATHLETE SAFEGUARDING POLICY

The following appendices form an integral and binding part of this Directive and shall be maintained as a separate operational volume.

Appendix	Title	Related Article
A	Athlete Identification Kit and Missing Athlete Protocol	Article 7A
B	Accommodation and Away-Travel Standards Checklist	Article 7C
C	Medical Readiness Checklist	Article 7B
D	Crisis Communication Decision Tree	Article 7D
E	Transport Safety Standards	Article 7E
F	Digital Safety and Online Grooming Protocol	Article 10C
G	Athlete Mental Health Crisis Protocol	Article 7D

Appendix	Title	Related Article
H	Overnight Tournament and Away-Travel Standards Checklist	Article 7F
I	Mental Health Crisis Reporting and Communication Form (Confidential)	Article 7G
J	Photography, Video and Media Consent Form	Article 10D

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