Victorian Athletic League
Change Room Policy

Approved By: The Victorian Athletic League Board
Date Approved: 14 September 2026
Review Date: 14 September 2027

---

1. Policy Purpose

This policy sets minimum requirements for the provision, supervision and use of change rooms at all Victorian Athletic League (VAL) sanctioned events.
It supports VAL's compliance with the Victorian Child Safe Standards by protecting privacy, reducing risk and promoting safe, respectful and inclusive conduct.

- Protection of athlete privacy and dignity
- Alignment with the Victorian Child Safe Standards
- Safe and respectful behaviour by senior men, senior women and junior athletes
- Consistency across all VAL venues

2. Policy Scope

This policy applies to all VAL clubs, athletes, coaches, officials, volunteers, contractors and visitors at VAL venues or facilities.

3. Definitions

- Senior Athlete: Any athlete aged 18 years or older.
- Junior Athlete: Any athlete under 18 years of age.
- Men's Change Room: Designated space for senior men and junior boys.
- Women's Change Room: Designated space for senior women and junior girls.
- Child Safety Officer: A VAL official responsible for child safety matters.
- Private Change Space: A screened or lockable area available on request where possible.

4. Change Room Allocation Requirements

- Separate change rooms must be provided for men and women at all VAL venues.
- Senior men and junior boys must use the men's change room, and senior women and junior girls must use the women's change room.
- Clear signage must be installed before athletes arrive.
- Where permanent facilities are limited, clubs must provide temporary measures that ensure adequate privacy.
- A private change space must be provided on request where practicable, with any alternative arrangement approved discreetly by the designated VAL official.

5. Access & Supervision Protocols

• Access to change rooms must protect the privacy, safety and dignity of all users.
• Where supervision of junior athletes is required under VAL child-safe procedures, it must be provided in a manner that respects privacy and avoids one-to-one situations.
• An adult must not be alone with a junior athlete in a change room unless responding to an immediate safety risk; any such incident must be reported promptly under VAL child-safe procedures.
• Supervision must comply with the VAL Child Safe Policy, Child Safety Officer protocols and relevant VAL Codes of Conduct.

6. Behaviour Expectations

• All users must behave respectfully and comply with the VAL Child Safe Policy and relevant VAL Codes of Conduct.
• Athletes, coaches and officials are forbidden from livestreaming, taking selfies, or recording audio/video inside the locker room to avoid accidentally capturing teammates in various states of undress.
• Alcohol consumption, smoking and vaping are prohibited in or near change rooms.
• Bullying, intimidation, racism, harassment and discrimination are prohibited and may result in disciplinary action.
• Senior athletes must model appropriate behaviour at all times.

7. Junior Athlete Protections

• Junior athletes must be supported to use change rooms safely and to report concerns through VAL child-safe reporting pathways.
• Parents and guardians may assist a junior athlete only where necessary, appropriate and consistent with VAL child-safe procedures.
• All users must take reasonable steps to protect junior athletes from unnecessary exposure to nudity.
• Concerns involving junior safety must be reported immediately to the VAL Child Safety Officer through the current role-based contact details published by VAL.
• Junior athletes must not use change rooms as unsupervised gathering spaces.

8. Facility Standards

VAL clubs and event organisers must:
• Provide adequate lighting, safe access pathways and clean, hygienic facilities throughout each event;
• Provide lockable or screened shower cubicles where practicable and hygiene disposal units in women's change rooms;
• Report, restrict access to and rectify identified hazards promptly.

9. Personal Belongings & Security

• Athletes are responsible for securing their belongings.
• Clubs and venues accept no liability for lost or stolen items.
• Athletes are advised not to bring valuables into change rooms.

10. Inclusive Practice

• VAL clubs must respect the diverse needs of all athletes, including Aboriginal children and young people, culturally and linguistically diverse children, children with disability and athletes of all gender identities.
• Athletes requiring alternative arrangements may request assistance from VAL officials.
• Requests must be handled discreetly and respectfully.

11. Breaches & Reporting

• Breaches must be reported to VAL officials.
• Serious breaches may result in removal, suspension or referral under VAL conduct or complaints procedures.
• Reports must be managed confidentially, promptly and fairly.
• Junior-related reports must use VAL incident templates and child-safe reporting pathways.

12. Responsibilities

• Athletes: Follow this policy and respect the privacy, safety and dignity of others.
• Coaches and officials: Model appropriate behaviour, support compliance, apply VAL child-safe procedures and report concerns promptly.
• VAL clubs and event organisers: Appoint responsible officials, verify facility readiness, document required checks and address issues promptly.
• VAL Board and staff: Maintain reporting contacts and procedures, provide oversight, promote awareness of child-safe obligations and review this policy annually.

13. Review Cycle

This policy will be reviewed:
• Annually
• After any incident involving change-room safety
• Following updates to the Victorian Child Safe Standards, VAL governance requirements or sector guidance