



OFFSIDE TAG
JUST HAVE FUN WITH IT

Offside Tag 'OST' Policy Manual

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1. Overview

Offside Tag (OST's) aim is to

1. Design a game players want to play and
2. Create a stronger community through sport

Our purpose is to create an inclusive recreational environment that focusses on

- Promoting physical fitness and reduced obesity through game play
- Emotional resilience via lessons learnt by participating, winning and losing
- Increasing social skills and self-confidence by fostering strong relationships
- Improve intellectual abilities supporting personal growth and leadership
- Cultural awareness building trust, reducing crime and having a sense of belonging

OST is dedicated to providing a secure and nurturing environment for all stakeholders involved in coordinating and participating in the sport. OST is committed to providing safe competitions, tournaments, venues and fields for its community. We strive to create a fun and safe environment for our players with the view of long-term player retention. Individual and group success can be achieved through game play and representing OST in form of social, or representative events and non-playing capacities i.e. refereeing, volunteering, officiating, coaching, game day duties, sponsors.

The OST Policy Manual is the blueprint for professional standards which are to be adhered to by participants directly or indirectly involved in the game. Should an applicable policy not be found within the Policy Manual, a judgement call 'in the spirit of the game' can be made by an OST representative, venue manager or governing body. The National Body can overrule and impose more lenient or harsher penalties for policy infringements, however, venue managers have the full support of the governing bodies to operate their events with the best interest of the game in mind.

2. Code of Conduct Policy

The Code of Conduct Policy outlines the expected standards in which all stakeholders associated within OST conduct themselves at any OST event. Items not categorised below fall under the 'Spirit of the Game' meaning; respect yourself, teammates, opposition and the game.

2.1 Players

Players should

- Shake hands after a game
- Be humble in victory and gracious in defeat
- Follow the rules
- Show respect to all players and officials
- Not slander or use provocative language
- Compete, but remember it is a social game

2.2 Parents

Parents should

- Not be negative towards other parents, players or officials
- Encourage all players to participate
- Remember it is just a game and win or lose, there are valuable life lessons to be had
- Be the role model you want your child to emulate
- Remember the positives of team sport i.e. social interaction, fitness, leadership
- Respect player culture, religion, and ability

2.3 Coaches

Coaches should

- Provide fair opportunity for players to enjoy the game
- Be positive
- Show compassion towards injured players
- Not use aggression or fear to emphasise point of view
- Be the leader that others aspire to be
- Remember it is just a game
- Coach within the spirit of the game

2.4 Selectors

Selector should

- Conduct themselves in a professional manner at all times
- Show no prejudice
- Make impartial selections
- Pick players not only on individual talent, but team camaraderie
- Use positive language and reinforcement

Failure to adhere to this code may result in formal consequences determined by local associations. Policies refer to Code of Conduct Policy - Players and Parents (Appendix 2.1/2.2) and Coaches and Selectors (Appendix 2.3/2.4)

3. Player Policy

The importance of regular participation in sports and physical activities for the health, development, and well-being of players is well recognized by OST. To ensure that players enjoy their experience and continue to participate, the player policy aims to provide a positive OST experience. OST promotes a fun and safe game, incorporating skill development and social interaction for all players from juniors to seniors, amateur to elite.

3.1.1 Player Registration Policy

All players must be registered to play OST. Players can register via [Offside Tag - Programs - Online Registration](#). Registration is required for insurance purposes, understanding OST terms and conditions and scheduling players in teams.

During local competitions, players may invite friends to join the team in a non-official capacity. These players must register to play and speak to the venue manager/game day administrator before playing. Players cannot play for the first time during 'finals' games unless they were registered at the start of the season and exceptional circumstances prevented the player from playing i.e. injury, family tragedy, unexpected absence. The venue manager will make final decisions in this instance. A game fee of \$15 is required. A player playing more than 2 casual games must pay full registration fees with \$30 being deducted from the overall cost. Venue Managers ultimately make the final decision 'in the spirit of the game' if a player can participate.

3.1.2 Player Refund Policy

Players

- Who have ordered and can not attend representative matches will not receive a refund
- players will receive a refund on uniform if they unable to play and a replacement player is able to wear their uniform (therefore the player not attending will not receive the playing uniform)
- registrations are not transferrable unless a player is injured, provides a medical certificate and a substitute player registers in their place
- not attending a game, game cancelled due to inclement weather or team (players team or opposing team) not present for their game, will not be refunded
- will receive a refund if they are shadow players and do not play

3.1.3 Age Selection Policy

Playing age is determined by the age the player will be at the calendar year of the event i.e. If a player is 11 at time of selection for an event, and it is not until the next calendar year, the player will trial for the Under 12's. Playing age groups are as follows

- 9's to 17's – Age group for each year, male and female
- Under 20's – Players 20 and under (no younger than 17), male and female and mixed
- Opens – Any age, male and female, male and female
- Over 30's - Player 30 and over, male, female and mixed
- Over 40's – Players 40 and over, male, female and mixed
- Over 50's – Players 50 and over, males

Note: Competitions and based on player numbers. Should demand increase/decrease, a variation of player age and gender teams can increase or decrease. Players 17 and under must have a parent or guardian complete the online registration process consenting for the child under their protection to play Offside Tag.

3.2 Junior Protection Policy

Players under the age of 18 must be treated as per the child protection legislation. This means those who are unsuitable to work with children must not apply for any positions in which will endanger the child or the game. OST representative including venue managers, coaches and staff are all required to be able to work with children. It is our policy to be informed if a member is unable to work with children. Children should not be exposed to any situation that could cause harm. This is in the form of but not limited to neglect, emotional, sexual and physical abuse. Communication to juniors should be kept strictly to direct game related activities and conversations outside of this should always be directed to their parent or guardian. If any form of abuse is suspected (regardless the age group), alert the venue manager and report to authorities i.e. police.

3.2.1 Blue Card Policy

Please refer to the Administration of medications in school procedure - <https://ppr.qed.qld.gov.au/pp/administration-of-medications-in-schools-procedure> for administering medication. Medication should not be administered without the consent of a junior players parent or carer. A qualified professional or parent/carer is most suited in providing assurance that junior players can receive medication. Written authority by a parent/carer should be sought prior to administering any type of medication or injection. If administering medication, the person responsibility should document the date, time, name of person receiving and administering medication, medication name, dosage amount, administering method and sign. Refer to the Administering Medication Register (Appendix 3.2.1)

3.2.2 Playing/Training Overuse

Physical activity is an important aspect to one's lifestyle, and one that OST promotes. Players should take responsibility for over training and playing. It is likely players will be involved in other physical forms of activity whether that is through school, work, gym, other sports or exercise. It is recommended for OST representatives to monitor player fatigue levels and communicate with the player about altering their physical exertion.

4. Policy Breach

Policy breaches can be in the form of not following policies stipulated in the policy manual or directly or indirectly affecting OST's rules, image or brand. Suspensions can be enforced if deemed justifiable by the venue manager or governing bodies. There is a right to appeal bans by submitting a written email regarding why the ban was given and why it should be uplifted. This should be submitted to the venue manager. The venue manager has a duty of care for its players and members, and all decisions are made in the spirit of the game. This includes but is not limited to, providing a safe, inclusive and fun environment for all members and affiliates. If members feel that punishment is unjust, a ban can be escalated to the governing body for review. Noting this, it is OST governing bodies duty to respect decisions made by local venue managers to act in the best interest of the game.

4.1 Policy Violations

It is considered a violation for any individual subject to this policy to

- Disregard sanctions imposed as a result of a policy violation
- File a fabricated complaint
- Act in contradiction to the guidelines outlined in this policy manual
- Release private and confidential OST information to external parties
- Engage in actions that dishonour to the sport or an OST Association

To ensure compliance with our policies, please adhere to the following guidelines when reporting alleged breaches:

- Local Venue Managers will handle all submissions
- The Head Office can aid Venue Managers
- Support is available in reporting a suspected breach
- Discretion is advised to enable a fair investigation
- Any individual is encouraged to report an alleged policy breach

Not all policy breaches warrant a formal review. This will be subject to the nature of the accusation. The accused will receive a right to reply if required. Should it be determined that a report was made in ill faith, consequences will apply. Appropriate representatives will be made aware of outcomes.

4.2 Suspension Policy

Major policy breaches will incur a minimum of 1 game, and a maximum indefinite suspension. This should be documented during a game or event by an official. The community is also encouraged to report breaches. Breaches should be presented in person, writing or both and escalated to the venue manager at the earliest opportunity. OST has strict policies around violence (No Striking Policy Appendix 4.2), harassment, bullying, discrimination or actions not within the spirit of the game. Suspensions can be reduced with 'community service'. This is the inclusion of assisting in referring games, setting up fields, coaching teams or providing administration support. Breaches to suspensions will result in increased suspensions.

Players who have made themselves eligible for selected OST tournaments and withdraws without proper reasoning will receive a representative ban up to 12 months. Coaches who selected ineligible players will also face a possible ban up to 12 months.

4.3 Referee Dissent Policy

Dissent towards referees is prohibited and can be in the form of any language directed at a referee. OST Australia mandates the display of the Referee Dissent Policy at all OST events (Appendix 4.3). Dissent does not end on the playing field, it also includes off field and in the community. The correct manner in which referees should be spoken to is calmly and with the respect during a pause in play i.e. changeover or half time. This should be via one team representative. If a player is removed from the field due to dissent, they must remain a safe distance away from the field which can be determined by the referee. Warnings are not necessary to send a player from the field. If a player is sent off an automatic suspension will occur. Refer to the suspension policy.

4.4 Suspension Table

| Suspension | Minimum | Maximum |
|---|---------|------------|
| Physical Contact i.e. pushing | 1 week | 4 weeks |
| Bullying | 1 week | Indefinite |
| Negative behaviour (at game or through use of media) | 1 week | 8 weeks |
| Harassment | 1 week | 8 weeks |
| Playing Unregistered | 1 week | 8 weeks |
| Not playing in the spirit of the game | 1 week | Indefinite |
| Send Off | 2 weeks | Indefinite |
| Discrimination | 5 weeks | 8 weeks |
| Violence | 5 weeks | Indefinite |
| Abusing Officials | 8 weeks | Indefinite |

Suspended players will be served with a Policy Breach – Suspension (Appendix 4.4). n. This will be delivered via email, letter or phone call. This restricts players from playing their next scheduled game. Suspended players will be documented on the Suspension List (Appendix 4.4.1). Players playing suspended risk their team forfeiting matches and increasing their suspension. A community service plan will be implemented for players wanting to right their wrongs, and reduce their suspension. Due to the varying natures of community service, terms and agreements will be discussed with and implemented by the venue manager. The governing bodies have the power to interject if fair punishment is not served that has brought the game into disrepute.

4.5 Appeal Policy

An appeal policy can be submitted for all suspensions to the venue manager at no costs. Initial appeals should be less than one page long. If photo or video evidence is available, it is recommended to submit such evidence. The officials' word will always supersede an unverified policy infringement appeal. If an appeal is granted by the venue manager, a suspension reduction can occur. If the venue managers response was unsatisfactory, a Policy Breach – Tribunal Hearing (Appendix 4.5) can be requested at

- \$500 for a 1-page A4 submission (using no small than Size 10 font) or
- \$1,000 for 3-page A4 submission and virtual tribunal where further evidence can be provided in a live format.

All fees must be paid prior to a hearing being set. The fee is to be paid to:

Account Name – Offside Tag QLD
Bank – St George
BSB – 114-879
Account No: 079 375 200
Ref: Player/Coaches Surname

A 1-page A4 submission will be reviewed by 1x senior OST official. A virtual hearing will include a three-person state or national panel will form 3-21 days from date of appeal lodgement if hearing is granted. The hearing will include review of the documented information, video evidence, photos and witness statements. The hearing will allow the accused and official whom lodged the infringement a time to speak. The venue manager is required to be present. The appeal will take place on a virtual platform such as Microsoft 'Teams' after standard business hours. The meeting minutes will be recorded using 'Teams'. The panel will deliberate without the accused present. In the best interest of the matter, decisions will made on the night unless the panel require more evidence, evidence is inclusive or further discussion is required. The outcome will take no longer than the accused suspension handed to them by the venue manager.

Failure to appear for a virtual hearing will result in forfeit of the appeal. Another appeal can be lodged with an additional \$1,000 hearing fee, however, may be declined based on the panels evidence review during the failed hearing. Suspension can also be increased, not reduced, in the instance further evidence has been brought to light or suspension guidelines were not followed in the first instance. If the appeal is overturned or the suspension is reduced, 50% of fees

will be returned to the accused and 50% is donated to developing and supporting referees.

5. Health and Safety Policy

The safety of OST's community is of the utmost importance. This includes, but is not limited to identifying, assessing and addressing any incidents that may occur during a game or at the venue.

In order for insurance to support injured player claims, it is important all players are registered, have paid full registration & insurance fees. Failure to do this will void any claims made. Insurance does not cover all scenarios. Should an incident occur at an OST venue

- Avoid movement until an injury can be assessed and escalated as required i.e. first aid, ambulance
- Alert an official or incident management team
- Seek early treatment (if required) i.e. ice
- Complete an Incident Report (Appendix 5.C) as soon as possible - both official and player and provide to the venue manager
- Avoid further participation if at risk of harm

5.1 Suspected Concussion

If a player has received strong impact or there is suspected concussion, players should be immediately assessed. Refer to the 'Suspected Concussion Protocol (Appendix 5.1.A) If a player has sustained a concussion, the player should not take any further part in the game and should be assessed and monitored. Concussion can result due to collision, and symptoms include memory loss, inability to process simple information (day of the week, name of the playing location), imbalance, vomiting, blurred vision, headache. It is the players/coaches/teams/parent's responsibility to restrict any further game play until the signs of concussion has elapsed. If known to the referee, they have the power to remove the player from the field. Refer to the Concussion Management Protocol (Appendix 5.1.B)

5.2 Bleeding

If an injury causes bleeding, the players safety and well-being is the first priority. If referees identify a bleeding player, the game should be paused, player attended to or player removed from the field (when safe to do so). Players can return to the field if there are no further signs of bleeding (this includes on playing attire).

5.3 Significant Injury

If a significant injury occurs which requires professional support, an ambulance or medical officer should be called and player attended to until they arrive or have been taken to the hospital's emergency department. If players are notably injured, they should not be moved if further harm can be caused. This can include, however, not limited to; concussion, seizures, broken bones, unconsciousness, excessive bleeding. The player should be kept as comfortable as possible until the appropriate support arrives. If unsure if medical attention is needed, it is always best to act on the side of caution and seek support.

6. Privacy Policy

OST is committed to protecting the privacy of our users and providing a safe experience. This Privacy Policy outlines the data we collect, how we use it, and how we protect our users' information. By registering participation with OST, parents/carers and players consent to our privacy practices as described below.

- Information on what data is being collected: We may collect personal information such as your name, email address, phone number, and location data.
- How the data will be used: We may use your data to provide you with competition information, insurance reasons, our service, communication and finance management. We may also use your data to improve our game and marketing efforts.
- Who has access to the data: We may share your data with our service providers who require access to your data to perform their duties. We may also share your data with authorized third parties as required by law. We do not sell or rent user data to third parties without prior consent.
- Data security: We take data security seriously. We maintain appropriate technical and organizational measures to protect our users' data from unauthorized access, alteration, and destruction.
- User rights: As a user, you have the right to access, correct and delete your personal information. You also have the right to withdraw consent. We will fulfil all requests made within a reasonable time, subject to our ability to verify your identity and applicable laws.

In case of any questions or concerns about our Privacy Policy, please reach out to your local venue manager.

6.1 Photography Policy

OST representatives will take photos and film players when playing or attending OST games and events. It is deemed appropriate unless advised otherwise from a parent, carer coach or player. Footage collected can be used for marketing purposes such as website, socials, publications and marketing. If there are child protection concerns, notify OST venue manager before the days play so appropriate stakeholders can be advised.

Footage taken by representatives outside of OST team members are subject to higher scrutiny. Should there be a concern, advise the coach and or an OST representative if the person taking the footage cannot be approached directly. Players parents/carer who object to photography during competitions can remove their child from field or ask the person capturing content to stop. OST representatives have authority to request the footage being taken is deleted. Filming should not be focussed on any one individual (unless it is the players parent), rather the team as a whole.

6.2 Media Release Policy

When players register to play OST, the terms and conditions will include consent for OST representatives to take photos and film players at OST events. Footage can be used for professional purposes to promote OST. An individual Media Release Form can be found in (Appendix 6.2)

6.3 Social Media Policy

OST values the role of social media in creating engagement with players and promoting events. However, we also acknowledge the importance of maintaining integrity and respect in all our online activities. As such, our social media policy aims to ensure that OST members conduct themselves in a professional and respectful manner when using social media platforms. This includes refraining from offensive language, discriminatory or defamatory remarks, or any other activity that could bring our organisation into disrepute. We also expect all our members to respect the privacy of others, refrain from sharing confidential information or sensitive content and comply with all relevant laws and regulations regarding social media use. By adhering to these guidelines, we can ensure that our online presence aligns with our values and fosters a positive relationship with our community.

7. Insurance Policy

It is highly recommended players seek their own medical insurance outside of OST to cover themselves for injury resulting in medical treatment required, loss of work or other. Insurance is available to players; however, it is limited. Players must complete an Incident Report (Appendix 5.C) directly after the game to minimise insurance claim issues and have an OST representative witness the claim. If the OST representative i.e. referees, did not witness the injury, ask a non-relative witness to provide their name and signature on the form. If the incident was not witnessed or cannot be verified, see the venue manager immediately.

The two types of limited insurance include

- Medical Insurance
- Loss of Income Insurance

8. Equal Opportunity Policy

OST's aim is to foster positive and healthy relationships with the community and encourage fair play and inclusiveness. All individuals, regardless of their race, gender, ethnicity, social/economic/geographical status, religion, disability or other characteristics, should have access to the same opportunities and resources. It is a fundamental aspect of a fair and just society, and ensures that everyone has a chance to succeed and achieve their full potential. Individuals and groups that have historically faced discrimination and disadvantage can be given special consideration to level the playing field. Achieving equal opportunity requires ongoing efforts to understand and address systemic barriers to equality, and a commitment to building inclusive institutions and communities.

We encourage communities to become involved with the games as OST encourages equal opportunity and have designed policies to support all

- Abilities – by providing equal opportunities to players
- Culture – by not making selections based on race
- Indigenous Australia – by providing programs in indigenous communities location – by promoting programs in regional areas
- Body shapes – by game design
- Gender – by having single sex and mixed teams
- Impairment – modifying game play for people with disabilities
- Socio-economic status – by seeking government funding to support players

9. Anti-Discrimination Policy

OST is a game for participants of all ages, sizes, shapes, ethnicity, gender, sexual preferences, and intellectual ability. We do not discourage any players from participating based on these grounds and do not judge others for past discretions. Everybody has the right to feel safe, included and treated with respect. The Anti-Discrimination Policy (Appendix 9) should always be displayed at OST venues. The policy is extended to spectators and referees. Not abiding by the anti-discrimination policy can result in player suspension. Players can be suspended by causing or being affiliated with harmful actions. This includes threats, stalking, profound language, physicality, sexual abuse, defamation or providing unwanted attention. Police will be notified of criminal matters. Reporting anti-discrimination and harassment to venue managers is encouraged and taken seriously by OST representatives.

10. Pregnancy Policy

Pregnant players have the support of OST to participate in games as long as it is safe to do so. Whilst OST is a non-tackling game, there can be some physical elements which could cause harm. It is essential to seek medical advice before participating in games for the safety of the player and their unborn child. It is important for pregnant players to understand the risks of playing a physical sport and take full responsibility for such decision and potential consequences pertaining to themselves or their unborn child. Pregnant players should advise the OST venue manager if they are pregnant, and sign a Pregnancy Policy Disclaimer Form (Appendix 10).

11. Anti-Bullying Policy

OST has a zero-tolerance policy against bullying. It is mandatory for the Anti-Bullying Policy information to be displayed at all OST events (Appendix 11). It is encouraged to report bullying to OST Officials and submit an Incident Report (Appendix 5.C) should the victim feel violated.

Bullying consists of, however is not limited to:

- Verbal Harassment i.e. degrading comments and insults
- Physical Harassment i.e. aggressive bumping, punching
- Intimidation i.e. threats, evading personal space
- Social Media i.e. hurtful negative comments directed at OST players and affiliates

12. Inclement Weather Policy

In the instance of poor weather venue managers always act in the best interest of the players and the game. At times, proceeding with games is taken out of the hands of OST, as playing is either a player or field safety risk. The preference is always to play when possible and not to cancel games. At times, games may be paused due to poor weather such as lightning, heavy rain, hail, bushfire, extreme heat or winds. Venue Managers will make an informed decision to proceed or cancel games by being present at the fields, checking playing surface, monitoring weather and assessing playing conditions. Players will be notified via Facebook if games are proceeding. The team captain or coordinator is recommended to alert team members via phone/text if there is doubt games are continuing.

12.1 Sun Safe Policy

OST encourages sun protection for our members. Therefore, it is our policy to promote and encourage sun safety practices to minimize the risk of harmful sun exposure. Wear appropriate sun safe items such as sunscreen and hat during

games. When not competing, seek shade, wear sunglasses and stay hydrated. OST will limit back-to-back games during peak sun exposure times of 10am – 2pm. If the temperature surpasses 30 degrees, additional drink breaks can be added for players. Alternatively, more frequent player rotations are encouraged for adequate rest and recovery.

13. Smoking, Drug and Alcohol Policy

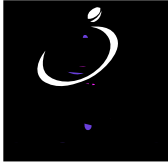
At OST events and programs, we are committed to promoting a safe and healthy environment for all attendees, players, and officials. As such, we have strict policies in place regarding smoking, drug use, and alcohol consumption. Smoking is prohibited in all areas of the venue, including outdoor areas, unless specifically designated as smoking areas. This policy is in line with relevant laws and regulations and aims to protect the health and well-being of our attendees and the surrounding environment. Failure to comply with this policy may result in eviction from the venue or other disciplinary actions. We also have a zero-tolerance policy regarding drug use. Attendees who are found using or in possession of illicit drugs will be immediately evicted from the venue and may face legal action within the law. Alcohol consumption is regulated, and we encourage responsible drinking if the premises is licenced to provide alcohol. Any attendee who is deemed intoxicated by our designated staff member may be evicted from the venue. We believe that by having these policies in place, we can promote a safe and enjoyable environment for all attendees, which aligns with our commitment to our community.

14. Uniform Policy

OST uniform must be worn during games. If uniform is forgotten, some items such as tags and shorts can be purchased on game day. Some uniforms may be borrowed (if available), with a licence, cash or keys suitable security. See the administration area should uniform be required.

15. Branding Policy

OST logo and name usage is only permitted to registered associations belonging to the National, State or local bodies. The name and logo are copyrighted and legal action will follow should unpermitted usage take place.



16. Appendix

Appendix 3.2.1 Administering Medication Register

Appendix 4.2 No Striking Policy

Appendix 4.3 Referee Dissent Policy

Appendix 4.4 Policy Breach – Suspension

Appendix 4.4.1 Suspension List

Appendix 4.5 Policy Breach - Tribunal Hearing

Appendix 5.1.A Suspected Concussion Protocol

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