Denmark Senior Soccer Club Wellness & Mental Health Policy

Supporting the wellbeing and mental health of every member, on and off the field

1. Purpose

This policy outlines the Denmark Senior Soccer Club's (the Club's) commitment to fostering a safe, supportive, and mentally healthy environment for all members. We recognise that participation in sport plays a vital role in building connection, resilience, confidence, and a sense of belonging. As a community club, we have a responsibility to promote wellbeing, reduce stigma around mental health, and ensure that every person feels valued, respected, and supported both on and off the field.

This policy outlines the Club's approach to wellbeing and mental health, including expectations of behaviour, reporting pathways, and practical initiatives that help create a positive and inclusive club culture.

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- Players
- Coaches
- Volunteers
- Committee members
- Officials
- Parents and guardians
- Spectators and supporters
- Any person representing or participating in club activities
  This includes:
  - Training sessions
  - Matches and competitions
  - Club functions and social events
  - Online and social media interactions related to the club

3. Definitions

Wellbeing: A holistic state of physical, mental, emotional, and social health that enables individuals to feel safe, connected, and able to participate fully.

Mental Health: A person's emotional, psychological, and social wellbeing. It affects how individuals think, feel, and act. Mental health exists on a spectrum and can fluctuate over time.

Mental Health Concern Any situation where a person is experiencing distress, changes in behaviour, reduced functioning, or signs that they may need additional support.

Wellness & Mental Health Officer A designated club representative who provides a confidential point of contact for wellbeing matters, promotes mental health awareness, and supports members in accessing appropriate pathways.

Bullying, Harassment, and Discrimination Behaviours that intimidate, humiliate, exclude, or harm another person. This includes verbal, physical, social, or online conduct.

Support Services External professional services such as GPs, psychologists, counsellors, crisis lines, or community mental health organisations.

4. Policy Statement

The Club is committed to creating a safe, inclusive, and mentally healthy environment where all members feel respected, supported, and able to participate without fear of harm or discrimination.

The Club is committed to:

- Promote positive mental health and wellbeing
- Encourage early help-seeking and reduce stigma
- Provide clear pathways for raising concerns
- Respond to wellbeing or mental health issues with care, respect, and confidentiality
- Implement practical initiatives that strengthen connection, resilience, and community
- Ensure all members understand their role in contributing to a safe and supportive club culture

The club acknowledges that while it cannot provide clinical mental health services, it can play a meaningful role in supporting members, promoting awareness, and connecting individuals with appropriate professional help when needed.

5. Expected Behaviour

All members are expected to:

- Treat others with respect and courtesy
- Support an inclusive, safe, and mentally healthy club environment
- Communicate appropriately with teammates, coaches, volunteers, officials, and spectators
- Behave in a manner that reflects positively on the Club
- Raise concerns respectfully and through appropriate channels
- Follow club rules, codes of conduct, and committee directions
- Look out for teammates and fellow members who may be struggling

6. Unacceptable Behaviour

The following behaviours will not be tolerated:

- Bullying or intimidation
- Harassment or discrimination
- Aggressive, abusive, or threatening behaviour
- Vilification or exclusion of members
- Sexual harassment or inappropriate conduct
- Excessive or dangerous behaviour that places others at risk
- Online abuse, harassment, or inappropriate social media conduct
- Retaliation against a person who raises a welfare concern
- Mocking, minimising, or dismissing someone's mental health concerns

7. Wellness & Mental Health Officer

The club may appoint a Wellness & Mental Health Officer to support member wellbeing.
The Officer may:

- Provide a confidential point of contact for members
- Assist members in raising concerns
- Support respectful communication and conflict resolution
- Promote mental health awareness and early help-seeking
- Refer serious matters to the committee or appropriate external services
- Coordinate mental health initiatives and education opportunities

The Officer is not expected to provide professional counselling or medical advice.

8. Reporting Concerns

Members are encouraged to raise concerns early where possible. DSSC have a Conflict Resolution Policy outlining steps to undertake to assist with addressing concerns within the Club.

Concerns may be raised with:

- The Wellness & Mental Health Officer
- A coach or team manager
- A committee member
- Club President or Executive

All concerns will be treated respectfully and, where possible, confidentially.

9. Response to Concerns

The Club will:

- Listen to concerns fairly and respectfully
- Assess the seriousness of the matter
- Take appropriate action where required
- Maintain confidentiality where practical
- Escalate serious matters to relevant authorities or external agencies if necessary

Possible outcomes may include:

- Informal discussion or mediation
- Behaviour warnings
- Suspension from club activities
- Removal from club membership
- Referral to external support or governing bodies
- Encouragement to seek professional mental health support

10. Mental Health and Wellbeing

The Club recognises the importance of mental health and encourages members to:

- Seek support when needed
- Look out for teammates and fellow members
- Promote a supportive and inclusive environment
- Participate in club wellbeing initiatives
- Speak up if they notice someone struggling
- Where appropriate, members may be directed toward external professional support services.

10.1 Mental Health Action Plan – Club Initiatives

The Club will implement practical, achievable actions such as:

- Mental Health Awareness Round once per season
- “Check-In Culture” – encouraging teammates to ask “You good?” and follow up
- Visible support resources: posters, hotline numbers, QR codes to services
- Pre-season wellbeing briefing for all teams
- Coach education on recognising signs of distress
- Quiet space available at training or game days for members needing a break
- Buddy system for new or younger players
- Post-game social connection activities to reduce isolation
- Zero-tolerance stance on stigma or jokes about mental health

10.2 External Support Pathways

The Club will provide information about:

- Lifeline
- Beyond Blue
- Headspace (youth)
- Local GP and mental health services
- State sporting association wellbeing programs
- Local community support networks

11. Confidentiality

Information relating to welfare or mental health concerns will be handled sensitively and shared only where necessary to:

- manage the issue appropriately
- protect member safety
- comply with legal or safeguarding obligations

12. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed periodically by the committee to ensure it remains relevant, effective, and aligned with best practice in community sport wellbeing and mental health support.