Article 91: Purpose

In order to ensure the safety of all male and female athletes, coaches, referees, staff and volunteers in the athletics sector, the Lebanese Athletics Federation is fully and resolutely committed, without ambiguity or leniency, to the Safeguarding Rules adopted by World Athletics and to all directives issued by it.

The Federation adopts a clear and explicit safeguarding policy providing for absolute zero tolerance of any form of abuse, harassment or exploitation within the Federation. This policy aims to protect male and female athletes and coaches (including the entire support team), officials, volunteers, all board members and administrators of affiliated clubs, and referees, while ensuring that everyone understands their rights and duties in the area of safeguarding. The policy is based on clear and specific principles that promote a culture of safeguarding within the Federation, proceeding from a firm belief that athletes have the right to participate in a safe sporting environment in which they are treated with full respect.

Article 92: Scope of Application

1. This Chapter and the provisions contained in it apply to:
    a. All male and female athletes affiliated with the Lebanese Athletics Federation or its affiliated clubs;

    b. Coaches, administrators, referees, doctors and therapists, volunteers, and all other members of the technical and medical staff;

    c. Members of the committees operating in the Federation and the clubs, and anyone who represents the Federation in an internal or external activity;

    d. Any person or entity contracted to organize, manage or support a sports activity under the umbrella of the Federation;

    e. Parents or companions during activities in which children or minors participate;

    f. Organizers and security personnel at official championships and competitions;

    g. Photographers, media personnel and media coverage staff who have access to athletes or are present at training and competition venues;

    h. Visitors or spectators at open activities where children or minor athletes are directly present.

2. The provisions of this Chapter apply to all activities connected with athletics, including training, official and friendly competitions, camps, and school and university activities organized by the Federation or organized under its patronage, partnership or supervision.

Article 93: Definitions

For the purposes of applying this Chapter, the following terms mean:

1. **Safeguarding: A set of policies, procedures and preventive and practical measures aimed at preventing, detecting and addressing abuse, violence, harassment and exploitation in sport when they occur, and at ensuring a safe environment for all participants.**

2. **Child/Minor: Any person who has not completed eighteen years of age under Lebanese legislation and the relevant international conventions.**

3. **Adult at Risk: Any adult who may be more vulnerable to exploitation or abuse because of disability, illness, economic or social fragility, or other circumstances.**

4. **Abuse: Any act or omission resulting in physical, psychological, emotional or sexual harm, or a violation of a person's rights and dignity.**

5. **Harassment: Any unwelcome behavior, repeated or serious, verbal, non-verbal or physical, that aims at or results in diminishing a person's dignity or creating a hostile or humiliating environment.**

6. **Exploitation: Using a person, particularly a child, for sexual, commercial, media or other purposes, in violation of his best interests, dignity and rights.**

7. **Physical violence: Any physical assault, including beating, deprivation of food or sleep, forcing an athlete into excessive training that threatens his health, or disregarding medical instructions.**

8. **Psychological/Emotional violence: Any pattern of insults, threats, intimidation, bullying, humiliation or excessive pressure that results in psychological harm to the participant.**

9. **Sexual violence or exploitation: Any behavior of a sexual nature imposed on a person without his free and informed consent, or where there is an imbalance of power, age or capacity to understand.**

10. **Safeguarding Officer (or Safeguarding Coordinator): The person or body appointed by the Federation to receive reports and to manage and follow up safeguarding cases.**

Article 94: General Principles

The Lebanese Athletics Federation and the clubs under its umbrella are committed to the following principles:

1. Giving priority to the safety and well-being of participants, especially children and minors, over any competitive, commercial or organizational considerations.

2. Respecting human dignity and non-discrimination on the basis of gender, age, religious, sectarian or political affiliation, origin, disability, social or economic status, or any other reason.

3. Zero tolerance of any form of abuse, violence, harassment or exploitation at all levels of athletics.

4. Promoting the principle of the shared responsibility of all those working in athletics to report any suspicion or incident that threatens the safety of participants.

5. Maintaining the confidentiality of information, protecting whistleblowers and victims, and avoiding exposing them to any retaliation.

6. Taking into account the best interests of the child/minor in all decisions and procedures concerning him, in line with the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the relevant international standards.

Article 95: Obligations of the Federation

In order to ensure that the training and competition environment is safe, the Federation undertakes to:

1. Establish and adopt a written policy for the safeguarding of male and female athletes participating in athletics, consistent with this Chapter and with the safeguarding policy issued by World Athletics.
2. Appoint a safeguarding officer at Federation level, and name a safeguarding liaison officer to ensure communication between persons at risk and the Federation, receive reports and complaints, and refer them to the competent and concerned authorities.
3. Prepare a Code of Conduct for those working in athletics (coaches, administrators, referees, doctors, volunteers, etc.) containing clear rules on acceptable and unacceptable behavior, especially in dealing with children and minors.
4. Ensure that all employees and volunteers who work directly with children and minors are subject, as far as possible, to:
    a. An appropriate prior background check in accordance with Lebanese law;
    b. Signing an undertaking to comply with the safeguarding policies and the Code of Conduct.

5. Provide effective and easily accessible mechanisms for submitting complaints and reports, including the possibility of confidential reporting, and inform athletes and parents of these mechanisms.

Article 96: Reporting Procedures and Handling of Complaints

1. The Federation establishes a clear written mechanism for reporting safeguarding concerns or incidents, including:

    a. A standard form for submitting a complaint or report;

b. Free electronic and telephone means of communication available at all times;

c. The ability to receive reports and complaints from athletes, parents, coaches, referees, or any person who witnessed or learned of a possible incident.

2. When receiving complaints or reports, the following shall be observed:

a. Respecting confidentiality to the maximum extent possible;

b. Not exposing the reporter or the victim to any discriminatory or retaliatory treatment;

c. Treating the report seriously and promptly, and not downplaying it.

3. The Safeguarding Officer or the competent committee at the Federation shall:

a. Conduct a preliminary assessment of the seriousness of the complaint;

b. Take urgent preventive measures when necessary, such as temporarily removing the person reported from contact with children, minors or victims, or temporarily suspending his duties;

c. Refer the matter to the competent judicial or security authorities when necessary.

Article 97: Investigations and Disciplinary Measures

1. The Federation conducts an internal administrative investigation, or assigns a competent committee, taking care to avoid conflicts of interest, to verify the facts that are the subject of the complaint.

2. The parties concerned are enabled to state their case and submit any documents or witnesses they have, while ensuring the protection of the victim, especially children, from re-victimization or stigmatization.

3. If a violation of the provisions of this Chapter or of the Code of Conduct is established, the Federation may take one or more of the following measures:

a. A written reprimand or a written warning;

b. Suspension of the person's participation in activities for a specified period;

c. Prohibition from training or supervision;

d. Termination of the contractual relationship with the coach, administrator, employee or volunteer;

e. Referral of the matter to the Federation's competent disciplinary committee to impose any additional penalties it deems appropriate.

4. The taking of disciplinary measures does not preclude prosecution of the offender before the competent judicial authorities when necessary.

Article 98: Prevention, Education and Capacity Building

The Federation undertakes to organize periodic training and education programs on safeguarding concepts in sport, directed to:

a. Coaches, administrators and referees;

b. Male and female athletes, especially minors;

c. Parents;

d. Volunteers.

Article 99: Review and Update

This Chapter is subject to periodic review (every three years at most, or whenever necessary) to ensure its consistency with:

a. Legislative developments in Lebanon;

b. Updates to the safeguarding policy issued by World Athletics and the International Olympic Committee;

c. Regional and international best practices in the field of safeguarding athletes in sport.