



CODE OF CONDUCT AND ETHICS

Definition

1. The following term has this meaning in this Policy:

a) **“Individuals”** – Wheelchair Sports Alberta directors, officers, organizers, coaches, officials, athletes, managers, volunteer, medical personnel, administrator, team captain, team manager, employees (including contract personnel), members, parents/guardians of Wheelchair Sports Alberta participants, and spectators at Wheelchair Sports Alberta events.

Code of Conduct

2. Wheelchair Sports Alberta is committed to providing an environment in which all **individuals** are treated with respect and believes that sports play a fundamental and integral role in the physical, social and mental well-being of an individual. Further, Wheelchair Sports Alberta supports equal opportunity and prohibits discriminatory practices. Members of Wheelchair Sports Alberta, its clubs and association members, parents/guardians of Wheelchair Sports Alberta participants and spectators at Wheelchair Sports Alberta events are expected to conduct themselves at all time in a manner consistent with the values of Wheelchair Sports Alberta that includes fairness, integrity, open communications and mutual respect.

3. Conduct that violates this Code of Conduct and Ethics may be subject to sanctions pursuant to Wheelchair Sports Alberta policies related to discipline and complaints.

Purpose

4. The purpose of this Code of Conduct and Ethics is to ensure a safe and positive environment within Wheelchair Sports Alberta programs, activities and events, by making all **individuals** aware that there is an expectation of appropriate behavior, consistent with the values of Wheelchair Sports Alberta, at all times.

Application of this Policy

5. This policy applies to **individuals** relating to conduct that that may arise during the course of Wheelchair Sports Alberta’s business, activities and events, including but not limited to, office environment, competitions, practices, training camps, travel, and any meetings.

6. This policy applies to conduct that may occur outside of Wheelchair Sports Alberta's business and events when such conduct adversely affects relationships within Wheelchair Sports Alberta's work and sport environment and is detrimental to the image and reputation of Wheelchair Sports Alberta.

7. Conduct arising within the business, activities and events of clubs or other organizations affiliated with Wheelchair Sports Alberta will be dealt with using the policies and mechanisms of such organizations.

Responsibilities

8. **All individuals** have a responsibility to:

a) Maintain and enhance the dignity and self-esteem of other **individuals** by:

- i. Demonstrating respect to **individuals** regardless of body type, athletic ability, gender, ethnic or racial origin, sexual orientation, age, marital status, religion, political belief, disability or economic status;
- ii. Focusing comments or criticism appropriately and avoiding public criticism of athletes, coaches, officials, organizers, volunteers, employees and members;
- iii. Consistently demonstrating the spirit of sportsmanship, leadership and ethical conduct;
- iv. Acting, when appropriate, to prevent or correct practices that are unjustly discriminatory;
- v. Consistently treating **individuals** fairly and reasonably;
- vi. Ensuring that the rules of the sports, and the spirit of such rules, are adhered to.

b) Refrain from any behavior that constitutes harassment, where harassment is defined as comment or conduct directed towards an individual or group, which is offensive, abusive, racist, sexist, degrading or malicious. Types of behavior that constitute harassment include, but are not limited to:

- i. Written or verbal abuse, threats or outbursts;
- ii. The display of visual material which is offensive or which one ought to know is offensive;
- iii. Unwelcome remarks, jokes, comments, innuendos or taunts about a person's looks, body, attire, age, race, religion, gender, impairment or sexual orientation;
- iv. Leering or other suggestive or obscene gestures;
- v. Condescending or patronizing behavior which is intended to undermine self-esteem, diminish performance or adversely affect working conditions;
- vi. Practical jokes which cause awkwardness or embarrassment, endanger a person's safety or negatively affect performance;
- vii. Any form of hazing;
- viii. Unwanted physical contact including touching, petting, pinching or kissing;
- ix. Unwelcome sexual flirtations, advances, requests or invitations;
- x. Physical or sexual assault;
- xi. Behaviors such as those described above that are not directed towards **individuals** or groups but have the same effect of creating a negative or hostile environment; or
- xii. Retaliation or threats of retaliation against an **individual** who reports harassment.

c) Refrain from any behavior that constitutes sexual harassment, where sexual harassment is defined as unwelcome sexual comments, advances or conduct of a sexual nature.

- d) Refrain from the use of power or authority in an attempt to coerce another person to engage in inappropriate activities.
- e) In the case of adults, avoid consuming alcohol in situations where minors are present, and take reasonable steps to manage the responsible consumption of alcoholic beverages in adult-oriented social situations at events where you are a representative of Wheelchair Sports Alberta.
- f) Respect the property of others and not willfully cause damage.
- g) Comply at all times with the Constitution, Bylaws, policies, rules and regulations of Wheelchair Sports Alberta, as adopted and amended from time to time, including complying with any contracts or athlete agreements executed with Wheelchair Sports Alberta;
- h) Abstain from accepting and/or paying money or other consideration to interfere in the fair outcome of a competition.
- i) Abstain from betting or act as a bookmaker on matches or tournaments under the jurisdiction of Wheelchair Sports Alberta.

Coaches

9. In addition to paragraph 8 above, Coaches have additional responsibilities. The athlete-coach relationship is a privileged one and plays a critical role in the personal as well as athletic development of their athletes. Coaches must understand and respect the inherent power imbalance that exists in this relationship and must be extremely careful not to abuse it. Coaches will at all times:

- a) Ensure a safe environment by selecting activities and establishing controls that are suitable for the age, experience, ability and fitness level of athletes, including educating athletes as to their responsibilities in contributing to a safe environment;
- b) Prepare athletes systematically and progressively, using appropriate time frames and monitoring physical and psychological adjustments while refraining from using training methods or techniques that may harm athletes;
- c) Refrain from public criticism of fellow coaches, especially when speaking to the media or recruiting athletes;
- d) Refrain from the use of profane, insulting, harassing or otherwise offensive language in the conduct of your coaching duties;
- e) Avoid compromising the present and future health of athletes by communicating and cooperating with sport medicine professionals in the diagnosis, treatment and management of athletes' medical and psychological problems;
- f) Abstain from drinking alcoholic beverages or use of non-medical prescription drugs when working with athletes. Abuse of alcohol and intoxication or drug abuse will not be tolerated and will result in an immediate removal from the team and the competition, repayment of all costs associated with the team staff position and subject to any disciplinary measures as may be determined by Wheelchair Sports Alberta and Board of Directors;

g) Discourage the use of alcohol at all sports events prior, during, after competition of the activity, or in victory celebrations at the competition site;

h) Under no circumstances provide, promote or condone the use of drugs or performance-enhancing substances that is banned from the sport. It is essential that each **individual** knows which substances are banned in each sport;

i) Refrain from using tobacco products within the competition arena and/or competition area;

j) Educate athletes about the dangers of drugs, performance-enhancing substances including boosting (see paragraph 11 below) and under no circumstances promote or condone their use;

k) Accept and promote athletes' personal goals and refer athletes to other coaches and sports specialists as appropriate and as opportunities arise;

l) At no time become intimately and/or sexually involved with the athletes they coach as per the Laws of Canada as stated below. This includes requests for sexual favors or threats of reprisal for the rejection or such requests. Coaches should refer to Canada's Law on Child Sexual Abuse: A Handbook, published by the Department of Justice in 1990. The following is an extract from this handbook dealing with the issue of CONSENT.

- i. Sexual activity without consent is always a crime regardless of the age of the **individuals**;
- ii. Children under 12 are never considered able to consent to sexual activity;
- iii. Children 12 or more, but under the age of 14, are deemed unable to consent to sexual acts except under specific circumstances involving sexual activity with their peers;
- iv. Young person's 14 or more but under the age of 18 are protected from sexual exploitation and their consent is not valid if the person touching them for a sexual purpose is in a position of trust or authority over them or if they are in a relationship of dependency with that person.

m) Where an athlete has qualified for a training camp, provincial team, national team, etc., the Coach will support the program, applicable coaching staff and Wheelchair Sports Alberta.

n) Be forthcoming with any past personal activities or incidents that could negatively affect Wheelchair Sports Alberta's reputation, confidence, or character;

Athletes

10. In addition to paragraph 8 above, Athletes will have additional responsibilities to:

a) Compete/participate in a spirit of fair play and honesty;

b) Compete/participate with in the rules of the game or competition;

c) Report any medical problems in a timely fashion, where such problems may limit the athlete's ability to travel, train or compete;

d) Refrain from using tobacco products within the competition arena and/or competition area;

e) Wheelchair Sports Alberta has a "zero tolerance" policy with the respect to the consumption of alcohol, non-prescription and banned drugs by any athlete while a member of Wheelchair Sports

Alberta teams, or as a representative of Wheelchair Sports Alberta, in a competition setting in Canada or overseas, irrespective of any other legal requirements. This “zero tolerance” policy on the consumption of alcohol also applies to all Wheelchair Sports Alberta members (including team staff and coaches) while involved in a competition setting specifically for Junior and/or Youth athletes, regardless of the team member’s age;

f) Abuse of alcohol and intoxication or drug abuse will not be tolerated and will result in an immediate removal from the team and the competition, repayment of the all costs associated with the athlete’s participation in the competition and subject to any disciplinary measures as may be determined by Wheelchair Sports Alberta and Board of Directors.

g) Participate and appear on time in all competitions, practices, training sessions, events, activities or projects;

h) Properly represent themselves and not attempt to enter a competition for which they are not eligible, by reason of age, classification or other reasons;

i) Respect an **individuals’** dignity; verbal or physical behaviors that constitute harassment or abuse are unacceptable;

j) Act in a sportsmanlike manner and not display appearances of violence, foul language or gestures to other players, officials, coaches or spectators;

k) Adhere to Wheelchair Sports Alberta’s rules and requirements regarding clothing and equipment;

l) Be forthcoming with any past personal activities or incidents that could negatively affect Wheelchair Sports Alberta’s reputation, confidence, or character;

Position Statement on Autonomic Dysreflexia and Boosting

11. Wheelchair Sports Alberta and individuals are to abide by the rules and guidelines of the International Paralympic Committee in regards to Autonomic Dysreflexia and boosting while at competitions where they are a representative of Wheelchair Sports Alberta. The rules set out by the International Paralympic Committee include:

a) Persons with cervical or high thoracic spinal injuries can suffer from an abnormal sympathetic reflex called Autonomic Dysreflexia. This reflex is caused by painful stimuli to the lower part of the body, particularly distension or irritation of the urinary bladder. The symptoms of dysreflexia are a rapid rise in blood pressure, headache, sweating, skin blotchiness and gooseflesh. In serious cases, confusion, cerebral hemorrhage and even death can occur.

This reflex may happen spontaneously or may be deliberately caused (“Boosting”). As this is a health hazard, the IPC forbids athletes to compete in a hazardous dysreflexic state.

b) An examination may be undertaken by physicians or paramedical staff appointed by the IPC or tournament committee and may be undertaken at any time including in the call up room or such other areas used by athletes for warm-up purposes prior to the event.

If an athlete fails to co-operate, the athlete will not be permitted to compete in the particular event.

c) A hazardous dysreflexic state is considered to be present when the systolic blood pressure is above 160mm Hg.

d) An athlete with a systolic blood pressure of above 160mm Hg will be re-examined approximately ten minutes after the first examination. If on the second examination the systolic blood pressure remains above 160mm Hg the person in charge of the examination shall inform the Technical Delegate to withdraw the athlete from the particular event in question.

e) Any deliberate attempt to induce autonomic dysreflexia is forbidden and will be reported to the Technical Delegate. The athlete shall be disqualified from the particular event regardless of the systolic blood pressure.

In addition, a report on the deliberate attempt to induce autonomic dysreflexia, or an attempt to compete in a hazardous dysreflexic state, will be provided to the IPC Legal and Ethical IPC Handbook, April 2016, IPC Position Statement on Autonomic Dysreflexia and Boosting, Section 2, Chapter 4.33 Committee for subsequent investigation in relation to the non-respect of legal and ethical principles by the athlete and/or athlete support personnel.

f) If an athlete with a spinal cord lesion who is susceptible to autonomic dysreflexia is hypertensive, the athlete must produce medical evidence prior to the moment of final entry to competition supporting this. This medical evidence must be from a licensed medical practitioner and outline the level of the athlete's resting blood pressure over a minimal period of 14 days preceding the competition, and what particular treatment the athlete is utilizing to address the hypertension.

g) The issue of monitoring autonomic dysreflexia is primarily the responsibility of the athlete's NPC, especially its medical team. This responsibility includes:

- i. Ensuring that their athlete(s) are not dysreflexic prior to entering the call-up area;
- ii. Ensuring that their athlete(s) are not using a mechanism which may cause or provoke dysreflexia;
- iii. Providing the authorized person who examines for autonomic dysreflexia, upon request, with a list of resting blood pressures of their athletes concerned;
- iv. Providing the authorized person who examines for autonomic dysreflexia with medical evidence of the level of spinal cord injury

Parents/Guardians and Spectators

12. In addition to paragraph 8 above, **Parents/Guardians** of Wheelchair Sports Alberta's participants and **Spectators** at events will:

- a) Encourage athletes to play by the rules and to resolve conflicts without resorting to hostility or violence;
- b) Never ridicule a participant for making a mistake during a performance or practice;

- c) Provide positive comments that motivate and encourage participants continued effort;
- d) Respect the decisions and judgments of officials, and encourage athletes to do the same;
- e) Never question an officials' or Wheelchair Sports Alberta staffs' judgment or honesty;
- f) Respect and show appreciation to all competitors, and to the coaches, officials and other volunteers who give their time to the sport;
- g) Keep off of the playing area, do not interfere with play or call lines.