



DISCIPLINE AND COMPLAINTS POLICY

[Definition of Terms](#)

* Indicates a section that has been adapted from the UCCMS

Purpose

1. Participants are expected to fulfil certain responsibilities and obligations including, but not limited to, complying with the policies, By-laws, rules and regulations of the AWPA. Non-compliance may result in the imposition of sanctions pursuant to this Policy.

Principles

2. *The following principles guide the findings and determinations under this Policy:
 - a) Any form of Maltreatment violates the integrity of Participants and undermines the values of Canadian sport.
 - b) Sanctions imposed will reflect the seriousness of the Maltreatment and the harm to those affected and the values of Canadian sport.

Application of this Policy

3. This Policy applies to all Participants.
4. This Policy applies to matters that may arise during the business, activities, and events of the AWPA including, but not limited to, competitions, practices and training, treatment or consultations (e.g., massage therapy), camps and clinics, travel associated with the activities of the AWPA, and any meetings.
5. This Policy also applies to Participants' conduct outside of the business, activities, and events of the AWPA when such conduct adversely affects the relationships (or the work and sport environment) of the AWPA, is detrimental to the image and reputation of the AWPA, or upon the acceptance of the AWPA.
6. **Reports of maltreatment as defined under the Alberta Universal Code of Conduct (AB UCC) are not handled under this Policy and must be submitted directly to the Alberta Safe Sport Complaint Mechanism (ABSSCM). This Policy applies to non-maltreatment matters only.**
7. *This Policy applies to alleged breaches of the *Code of Conduct and Ethics* by Participants who have retired from the sport where any claim regarding a potential breach of the *Code of Conduct and Ethics* occurred when the Participant was active in the sport. In addition, this Policy will apply to breaches of the *Code of Conduct and Ethics* that occurred when the Participants involved interacted due to their mutual involvement in the sport or, if the breach occurred outside of the sport environment, if the breach has a serious and detrimental impact on the Participant(s).

Approved: 10/02/2026 by the Board of Directors

Reviewed:



8. Applicability of this Policy will be determined by the AWPA at its sole discretion and shall not be subject to appeal.
9. In the event that it is considered appropriate or necessary on the basis of the circumstances, immediate discipline or the imposition of a sanction may be applied, after which further discipline or sanctions may be applied according to this Policy. Any infractions or complaints occurring within competition will be dealt with by the procedures specific to the competition, if applicable. In such situations, disciplinary sanctions may be for the duration of the competition, training, activity, or event only.
10. In addition to being subject to disciplinary action pursuant to this *Discipline and Complaints Policy*, an employee of the AWPA who is a Respondent to a complaint may also be subject to consequences in accordance with the employee's Employment Agreement or policies for human resources, if applicable.

Minors

11. Complaints may be brought for or against a Participant who is a Minor. Minors must have a parent/guardian or other adult serve as their representative during this process.
12. Communication from the Case Manager, Discipline Chair or Discipline Panel (as applicable) must be directed to the Minor's representative.
13. A Minor is not required to attend an oral hearing, if held.

Reporting a Complaint

14. Any person may report a complaint to the AWPA or to the AWPA's Case Manager (when identified). If a Case Manager has not been previously identified, the AWPA will appoint an independent Case Manager and direct that person to receive the complaint.
15. At its discretion, the AWPA may act as the Complainant and initiate the complaint process under the terms of this Policy. In such cases, the AWPA will identify an individual to represent the organization.
16. Complaints or incident reports should be made in writing and the person making the complaint may contact the Case Manager for direction. The Case Manager may accept any report, in writing or not, at their sole discretion.
17. *Complaints may be withdrawn, in writing, at any point in the process by the Complainant. Records of withdrawn complaints may be retained by the AWPA. The AWPA, at its discretion, may resume a withdrawn complaint and act as the Complainant by appointing an individual to represent the AWPA. The AWPA does not require the original Complainant's consent to resume a withdrawn complaint.*

Case Manager Responsibilities

18. Upon receipt of a complaint, the Case Manager has a responsibility to:
 - a) Determine the appropriate jurisdiction to manage the complaint and consider the following:

- i. Whether the complaint should be handled by a Club or by the AWPA. In making this decision, the Case Manager will consider:
 - a. whether the incident has occurred within the business, activities or events of the Club or the AWPA. If the incident has occurred outside of the business, activities or events of any of these organizations, the Case Manager will determine which organization's relationships are adversely affected or which organization's image or reputation will be detrimentally affected by the incident; and
 - b. if the Club is otherwise unable to manage the complaint for valid and justifiable reasons, such as a conflict of interest or due to a lack of capacity
 - ii. If the Case Manager determines that the complaint or incident should be handled by a Club, that Club may address the complaint per its own policies or may adopt this Policy and appoint its own Case Manager to fulfill the responsibilities listed below. In such instances, any reference to Case Manager below shall be understood as a reference to the Club's Case Manager and references to the AWPA shall be understood to be a reference to the Club. *Per the Reciprocation Policy, decisions rendered by a Club must be submitted to the AWPA.*
- b) Determine whether the complaint is frivolous and/or within the jurisdiction of this Policy and, if so, the complaint will be dismissed immediately and the Case Manager's decision¹ to dismiss the complaint may not be appealed;
 - c) Propose the use of alternative dispute resolution techniques²;
 - d) Determine if the alleged incident should be investigated pursuant to **Appendix A – Investigation Procedure**; and/or
 - e) Choose which process (Process #1 or Process #2) should be followed, and may use the following examples as a general guideline (**Appendix B**):

Process #1 - the Complainant alleges the following incidents:

- a) Disrespectful, abusive, racist, or sexist comments or behaviour
- b) Disrespectful conduct
- c) Minor incidents of violence (e.g., tripping, pushing, elbowing)
- d) Conduct contrary to the values of the AWPA
- e) Non-compliance with the organization's policies, procedures, rules, or regulations
- f) Minor violations of the *Code of Conduct and Ethics, Social Media Policy, or Athlete Protection Policy*

Process #2 - the Complainant alleges the following incidents:

- a) Repeated minor incidents
- b) Any incident of hazing
- c) Behaviour that constitutes harassment, sexual harassment, or sexual misconduct

¹ When the Case Manager determines that the complaint is frivolous and/or outside the jurisdiction of the Policy, the Case Manager must prepare a disposition outlining reasons that will be distributed to the Complainant and to the AWPA.

² Particularly, the Case Manager should propose mediation and/or a negotiated settlement. The Case Manager may act as the mediator (or may appoint someone else) and must invite a representative from the AWPA to join the process. Mediated resolutions and/or negotiated settlements must be approved by the AWPA and may not be appealed by any Party. Mediated agreements and negotiated settlements must be distributed to both parties and to the AWPA.



- d) Major incidents of violence (e.g., fighting, attacking, sucker punching)
- e) Pranks, jokes, or other activities that endanger the safety of others
- f) Conduct that intentionally interferes with a competition or with any athlete's preparation for a competition
- g) Conduct that intentionally damages the organization's image, credibility, or reputation
- h) Consistent disregard for the bylaws, policies, rules, and regulations
- i) Major or repeated violations of the *Code of Conduct and Ethics*
- j) Intentionally damaging the organization's property or improperly handling the organization's monies
- k) Abusive use of alcohol and cannabis, any use or possession of alcohol or cannabis by Minors, or use or possession of illicit drugs and narcotics
- l) A conviction for any *Criminal Code* offense
- m) Any possession or use of banned performance enhancing drugs or methods

PROCESS #1: Handled by Discipline Chair

Discipline Chair

19. Following the determination that the complaint or incident should be handled under Process #1, the Case Manager will appoint a Discipline Chair who may:
- a) Make a decision;
 - b) Ask the Complainant and the Respondent for either written or oral submissions regarding the complaint or incident; or
 - c) Convene the parties to a meeting, either in person or by way of video or teleconference in order to ask the parties questions.
20. Thereafter, the Discipline Chair shall determine if a breach occurred and, if so, if one or more sanctions should be applied (see: **Sanctions**).
21. The Discipline Chair will inform the Parties of the decision, which will take effect immediately.
22. Records of all sanctions will be maintained by the AWPA.

Request for Reconsideration

23. If there is no sanction, the Complainant may contest the non-sanction by informing the Discipline Chair, within five (5) days of receiving the decision, that the Complainant is not satisfied with the decision. The initial complaint or incident will then be handled under Process #2 of this Policy.
24. If there is a sanction, the sanction may not be appealed until the completion of a Request for Reconsideration. However, the Respondent may contest the sanction by submitting a Request for Reconsideration within five (5) days of receiving the sanction. In the Request for Reconsideration, the Respondent must indicate:
- a) Why the sanction is inappropriate;
 - b) Summary of evidence that the Respondent will provide to support the Respondent's position; and
 - c) What penalty or sanction (if any) would be appropriate.



25. Upon receiving a request for reconsideration, the Discipline Chair may decide to accept or reject the Respondent's suggestion for an appropriate sanction.
26. Should the Discipline Chair accept the Respondent's suggestion for an appropriate sanction, that sanction will take effect immediately.
27. Should the Discipline Chair not accept the Respondent's suggestion for an appropriate sanction, the initial complaint or incident will be handled under Process #2 of this Policy.

PROCESS #2: Handled by Case Manager

Case Manager

28. Following the determination that the complaint or incident should be handled under Process #2, the Case Manager has a responsibility to:
 - a) Propose the use of alternative dispute resolution techniques (*if they have not already been attempted*)
 - b) Appoint the Discipline Panel, if necessary
 - c) Coordinate all administrative aspects and set timelines
 - d) Provide administrative assistance and logistical support to the Discipline Panel as required
 - e) Provide any other service or support that may be necessary to ensure a fair and timely proceeding
29. The Case Manager will establish and adhere to timelines that ensure procedural fairness and that the matter is heard in a timely fashion. *Questions about the timelines and process should be submitted to the Case Manager.*
30. The Case Manager may propose using alternative dispute resolution with the objective of resolving the dispute. If applicable, and if the dispute is not resolved, or if the parties refuse to attempt alternative dispute resolution (such as mediation or a negotiated settlement) the Case Manager will appoint a Discipline Panel, which shall consist of a single Arbitrator, to hear the complaint. At the discretion of the Case Manager, a Discipline Panel of three people may be appointed to hear the complaint. In this event, the Case Manager will appoint one of the Discipline Panel's members to serve as the Chair.
31. The Case Manager, in cooperation with the Discipline Panel, will then decide the format under which the complaint will be heard. This decision may not be appealed. The format of the hearing may be an oral in-person hearing, an oral hearing by telephone or other communication medium, a hearing based on a review of documentary evidence³ submitted in advance of the hearing, or a combination of these methods. The hearing will be governed by the procedures that the Case Manager and the Discipline Panel deem appropriate in the circumstances, provided that:

³ *When the hearing consists of an exchange of documentary evidence, the Case Manager will facilitate the exchange of documents. Generally, the Complainant submits their complaint documents first, the Respondent has three (3) weeks to submit their response documents, and then Complainant has an additional one (1) week to submit a final rebuttal. All Parties must see all documents submitted.*



- a) The Parties will be given appropriate notice of the day, time, and place of the hearing, in the case of an oral in-person hearing or an oral hearing by telephone or other communication medium
 - b) Copies of any written documents which the parties wish to have the Discipline Panel consider will be provided to all Parties, through the Case Manager, in advance of the hearing
 - c) The Parties may engage a representative, advisor, or legal counsel at their own expense
 - d) The Discipline Panel may request that any other individual participate and give evidence at the hearing
 - e) The Discipline Panel may allow as evidence at the hearing any oral evidence and document or thing relevant to the subject matter of the complaint, but may exclude such evidence that is unduly repetitious, and shall place such weight on the evidence as it deems appropriate
 - f) The decision will be by a majority vote of the Discipline Panel
32. If the Respondent acknowledges the facts of the incident, the Respondent may waive the hearing, in which case the Discipline Panel will determine the appropriate sanction. The Discipline Panel may still hold a hearing for the purpose of determining an appropriate sanction.
33. The hearing will proceed in any event, even if a Party chooses not to participate in the hearing.
34. In fulfilling its duties, the Discipline Panel may obtain independent advice.

Decision

35. After hearing the matter, the Discipline Panel will determine whether an infraction has occurred and, if so, the sanctions to be imposed. Within fourteen (14) days of the hearing's conclusion, the Discipline Panel's written decision, with reasons, will be distributed to all parties, the Case Manager, to the AWPA. In extraordinary circumstances, the Discipline Panel may first issue a verbal or summary decision soon after the hearing's conclusion, with the full written decision to be issued before the end of the fourteen (14) day period. The decision will be considered a matter of public record unless decided otherwise by the Discipline Panel.

Sanctions

36. *Prior to determining sanctions, the Discipline Chair or Discipline Panel, as applicable, will consider factors relevant to determining appropriate sanctions which include:
- a) The nature and duration of the Respondent's relationship with the Complainant, including whether there is a Power Imbalance;
 - b) The Respondent's prior history and any pattern of inappropriate behaviour or Maltreatment;
 - c) The ages of the individuals involved;
 - d) Whether the Respondent poses an ongoing and/or potential threat to the safety of others;
 - e) The Respondent's voluntary admission of the offense(s), acceptance of responsibility for the Maltreatment, and/or cooperation in the process of the AWPA;
 - f) Real or perceived impact of the incident on the Complainant, sport organization or the sporting community;

- g) Circumstances specific to the Respondent being sanctioned (e.g. lack of appropriate knowledge or training regarding the requirements in the *Code of Conduct and Ethics*; addiction; disability; illness);
- h) Whether, given the facts and circumstances that have been established, continued participation in the sport community is appropriate;
- i) A Respondent who is in a position of trust, intimate contact or high-impact decision-making may face more serious sanctions; and/or
- j) Other mitigating and aggravating circumstances.

37. *Any single factor, if severe enough, may be sufficient to justify the sanction(s) imposed. A combination of several factors may justify elevated or combined sanctions.

38. *The Discipline Chair or Discipline Panel, as applicable, may apply the following disciplinary sanctions, singularly or in combination:

- a) **Verbal or Written Warning** - A verbal reprimand or an official written notice and formal admonition that a Participant has violated the *Code of Conduct and Ethics* and that more severe sanctions will result should the Participant be involved in other violations
- b) **Education** - The requirement that a Participant undertake specified educational or similar remedial measures to address the violation(s) of the *Code of Conduct and Ethics*
- c) **Probation** - Should any further violations of the *Code of Conduct and Ethics* occur during the probationary period, will result in additional disciplinary measures, likely including a period of suspension or permanent ineligibility. This sanction can also include loss of privileges or other conditions, restrictions, or requirements for a specified period of time
- d) **Suspension** - Suspension, either for a set time or until further notice, from participation, in any capacity, in any program, practice, activity, event, or competition sponsored by, organized by, or under the auspices of the AWP. A suspended Participant is eligible to return to participation, but reinstatement may be subject to certain restrictions or contingent upon the Participant satisfying specific conditions noted at the time of suspension
- e) **Eligibility Restrictions** - Restrictions or prohibitions from some types of participation but allowing participation in other capacities under strict conditions
- f) **Permanent Ineligibility** - Permanent ineligibility to participate in any program, activity, event, or competition sponsored by, organized by, or under the auspices of the AWP
- g) **Other Discretionary Sanctions** - Other sanctions may be imposed, including, but not limited to, other loss of privileges, no contact directives, a fine or a monetary payment to compensate for direct losses, or other restrictions or conditions as deemed necessary or appropriate

39. *The Discipline Chair or Discipline Panel, as applicable, may apply the following presumptive sanctions which are presumed to be fair and appropriate for the listed Maltreatment:

- a) Sexual Maltreatment involving a Minor Complainant shall carry a presumptive sanction of permanent ineligibility;
- b) Sexual Maltreatment, Physical Maltreatment with contact, and Maltreatment related to interference or manipulation of process shall carry a presumptive sanction of either a period of suspension or eligibility restrictions.
- c) While a Respondent has pending charges or dispositions in violation of the criminal law, the presumptive sanction shall be a period of suspension



40. A Participant's conviction for a *Criminal Code* offence shall carry a presumptive sanction of permanent ineligibility from participating with the AWP. *Criminal Code* offences may include, but are not limited to:
- a) Any child pornography offences
 - b) Any sexual offences
 - c) Any offence of physical violence
 - d) Any offence of assault
 - e) Any offence involving trafficking of illegal drugs
41. Unless the Discipline Panel decides otherwise, any disciplinary sanctions will begin immediately, notwithstanding an appeal. Failure to comply with a sanction as determined by the Discipline Panel will result in an automatic suspension until such time as compliance occurs.
42. Records of all decisions will be maintained by the AWP.

Appeals

43. The decision of the Discipline Panel may be appealed in accordance with the *Appeal Policy*.
44. Decisions arising from the ABSSCM process, including sanctions and appeals, are final and are not appealable under this Policy.

Suspension Pending a Hearing

45. The AWP may determine that an alleged incident is of such seriousness as to warrant suspension of a Participant pending completion of an investigation, criminal process, the hearing, or a decision of the Discipline Panel.

Confidentiality

46. The discipline and complaints process is confidential and involves only the AWP, the parties, the Case Manager, the Discipline Chair, the Discipline Panel, and any independent advisors to the Discipline Panel. Once initiated and until a decision is released, none of the parties will disclose confidential information relating to the discipline or complaint to any person not involved in the proceedings.
47. Any failure to respect the aforementioned confidentiality requirement may result in further sanctions or discipline by the Discipline Chair or Discipline Panel (as applicable).

Timelines

48. If the circumstances of the complaint are such that adhering to the timelines outlined by this Policy will not allow a timely resolution to the complaint, the Case Manager may direct that these timelines be revised.



Records and Distribution of Decisions

49. *Unless otherwise directed by the Discipline Chair or Discipline Panel, as applicable, the decision of the Discipline Chair or Discipline Panel, as applicable, is confidential and may not be distributed publicly or to any individual other than the parties and the Board of Directors of the AWPA.*
50. The AWPA will retain decisions indefinitely and, notwithstanding the above, may disclose the decision to a Discipline Chair, Case Manager, and/or Discipline Panel if a future complaint involves the same Respondent.
51. Unless the matter involves a minor, once the appeal deadline in the *Appeal Policy* has expired, the AWPA may publish on its website, or distribute to other individuals or groups as necessary, the outcome of the discipline and complaints process, the provision(s) of the relevant policies that have been violated, the name(s) of the participant(s) involved and the sanction(s) imposed, if any. Identifying information regarding minors will never be published.
52. As may be required by law, by Sport Canada, or by another organization, other individuals or organizations, including but not limited to, national sport organizations, provincial sport organizations, sport clubs, etc., may be advised of any decisions rendered in accordance with this Policy.
53. *The AWPA recognizes that a publicly-available searchable database or registry of Respondents who have been sanctioned, or whose eligibility to participate in sport has in some way been restricted, may be maintained and may be subject to provisions in the UCCMS.



Appendix A – Investigation Procedure

* Indicates a section that has been adapted from the UCCMS

Determination

1. When a complaint is submitted pursuant to the *Discipline and Complaints Policy*, the Case Manager will determine if the incident should be investigated.

Investigation

2. The Case Manager will appoint an Investigator. The Investigator must be an independent third-party skilled in investigating. The Investigator must not be in a conflict of interest situation and should have no connection to either party.
3. Federal and/or Provincial legislation related to Workplace Harassment may apply to the investigation if Harassment was directed toward a worker in a Workplace. The Investigator should review workplace safety legislation, the organization's policies for human resources, and/or consult independent experts to determine whether legislation applies to the complaint.
4. The investigation may take any form as decided by the Investigator, guided by any applicable Federal and/or Provincial legislation. The investigation may include:
 - a) Interviews with the Complainant
 - b) Witness interviews
 - c) Statement of facts (Complainant's perspective) prepared by Investigator, acknowledged by the Complainant and provided to the Respondent
 - d) Interviews with the Respondent
 - e) Statement of facts (Respondent's perspective) prepared by Investigator, acknowledged by the Respondent and provided to the Complainant

Investigator's Report

5. Upon completion of their investigation, the Investigator shall prepare a report that should include a summary of evidence from the parties (including both statements of facts, if applicable) and recommendations from the Investigator of whether, on a balance of probabilities, a breach of the *Code of Conduct and Ethics* occurred.
6. *The Investigator must be aware that sport-specific differences exist with respect to such aspects as acceptable levels of touch, physical contact, and aggression during training or competition and will consider such differences during the investigative process.
7. The Investigator's Report will be provided to the Case Manager who will disclose the report (or a summary of the report), at their discretion, to the AWPAA and/or to the Parties or any other third party.
8. Should the Investigator find that there are possible instances of offence under the *Criminal Code*, particularly related to Criminal Harassment (or Stalking), Uttering Threats, Assault, Sexual



Interference, or Sexual Exploitation, the Investigator shall advise the Complainant and the AWPA to refer the matter to police.

9. The Investigator must also inform the AWPA of any findings of criminal activity. The AWPA may decide whether to report such findings to police but is required to inform police if there are findings related to the trafficking of prohibited substances or methods (as indicated in the version of the World Anti-Doping Agency's Prohibited List currently in force), any sexual crime involving Minors, fraud against the AWPA, or other offences where the lack of reporting would bring the AWPA into disrepute.

Reprisal and Retaliation

10. *A Participant who submits a complaint to the AWPA or who gives evidence in an investigation may not be subject to reprisal or retaliation from any individual or group. Any such conduct may constitute Maltreatment and will be subject to disciplinary proceedings pursuant to the *Discipline and Complaints Policy*.

False Allegations

11. A Participant who submits allegations that the Investigator determines to be malicious, false, or for the purpose of retribution, retaliation or vengeance (or that otherwise fall within the definition of Maltreatment) may be subject to a complaint under the terms of the *Discipline and Complaints Policy* and may be required to pay for the costs of any investigation that comes to this conclusion. The AWPA, or the Participant against whom the allegations were submitted, may act as the Complainant.

Confidentiality

12. The Investigator will make every effort to preserve the confidentiality of the complainant, respondent, and any other party. However, the AWPA recognizes that maintaining anonymity of any party may be difficult for the Investigator during the investigation.

Appendix B

[Discipline and Complaints Process Flow Chart](#)