



FORT ST. JOHN SOCCER CLUB

Rule of Two Policy

January 2026

The Fort St. John Soccer Club believes in the health, safety, and wellness of all club participants and in particular the protection of our children, and that everyone involved in soccer has the right to participate in safe and inclusive environments free of abuse, harassment, discrimination, and to enjoy the sport at whatever level or capacity they participate in.

Purpose

The Purpose of this policy is to provide the Fort St. John Soccer Club staff and volunteers direction on the Rule of Two to ensure adult interactions with athletes, coaches and referees protect the health, safety, and wellness of all participants. The Rule of Two requires that a minimum of two screened and NCCP-trained or certified individuals be present with athletes at all times during all Club activities and interactions. This policy outlines that all one-on-one interactions between Persons in Authority and an athlete, without another individual present, must be avoided in all circumstances except medical emergencies.

1. Definitions

The following terms are defined to ensure clarity, consistency, and understanding of roles, responsibilities, and safety requirements within the Fort St. John Soccer Club.

Person in Authority: Any individual who holds a position of responsibility, trust, or influence within the Fort St. John Soccer Club or its activities, including but not limited to the Board of Directors, Technical Director and other staff, managers, coaches, volunteers, or other representatives of the Club or organization.

Minor: A minor is any person who has not yet reached the age of majority. Any person under the age of majority is considered a “minor child”. In British Columbia, any person who has not yet reached the age of **19 years old** is considered a minor.

Medical Emergency: A sudden or unexpected illness or injury, or physical or mental distress, that poses an immediate risk to a person's health or life and requires immediate medical assessment, intervention, emergency services to prevent serious harm.

2. Certification Requirements

In accordance with the Fort St. John Soccer Club's commitment to safeguarding athletes, all Persons in Authority must meet the following certification requirements as required under the Standards of Quality Soccer and Responsible Coaching Movement Pledge:

- 2.1** Complete of all required National Coaching Certification Program (NCCP) training, as applicable to their role, including any sport-specific or Safe Sport modules mandated by the Fort St. John Soccer Club Board of Directors and Technical Director, BC Soccer, and Canada Soccer. Including but not limited to:
 - Stage-appropriate Canada Soccer Grassroots Coach Education – Theory Module (Active Start, Fundamentals, Learn to Train, Soccer for Life)
 - Stage-appropriate Canada Soccer Grassroots Coach Education – Practical Module (Active Start, Fundamentals, Learn to Train, Soccer for Life)
 - NCCP Make Ethical Decisions Module and/or Online Evaluation
 - Respect in Sport Activity Leader Program
 - NCCP Making Headway Module
 - NCCP Emergency Action Planning Module
 - NCCP Rule of Two Module
- 2.2** Maintain current and valid certification, with responsibility for renewal in accordance with the Fort St. John Soccer Club timelines.
- 2.3** Successfully complete and maintain a Criminal Record Check, including any required vulnerable sector screening, as determined by the Fort St. John Soccer Club, provincial and federal legislation, BC Soccer and Canada Soccer.
- 2.4** Provide documentation of completed certifications and screenings upon request.

No individual may act in a Person in Authority role under the Rule of Two unless all required training and screening requirements have been satisfied and are kept current.

The Fort St. John Soccer Club reserves the right to restrict or revoke participation in any role of authority if certification requirements are not met or maintained.

3. Standards

To protect minors, the following standards establish clear expectations for safe, transparent, and appropriate interactions and communications between all Fort St. John Soccer Club adults and minors.

- 3.1** All interactions and communications between all participants must be **open, observable, and justifiable**.
- 3.2** Interaction, physically or virtually, must include **more than one adult** present, noting there may be exceptions in emergency situations.
- 3.3** In-person interactions between an adult with an individual minor must take place **within earshot and in view of other individuals** (team officials, players, parents, match officials and/or association officials).
- 3.4** E-mail communication must be communicated directly to the parent/guardian of the individual minor, with another adult, copied on the communication. Email Communication with a minor alone is prohibited.
- 3.5** One-to-one communication between an adult and a minor – including phone calls, text messages, online chat rooms or apps (e.g., RAMP, WhatsApp, etc.) and social media platforms – is prohibited.
- 3.6** Virtual coaching sessions, for example using a virtual meeting platform for coaching, at a minimum must include one other adult in attendance and preferably the individual minors' parents in attendance as well. **See Section 6: Applying the Rule or Two in a Virtual Setting.**

4. Gender Consideration

The Fort St. John Soccer Club will always consider the gender identity of the participant(s) when selecting the coaches and volunteers who are present with athletes.

- 4.1** The Fort St. John Soccer Club will ensure that at least one coach or Person in Authority of the same gender identity as the athletes is selected and assigned to every team and is present for all team activities, in accordance with the Rule of Two. This requirement is a condition of team formation and participation and must be met through the selection and assignment of Persons in Authority who have satisfied all mandatory certification requirements outlined within Section 2.
- 4.2** For teams consisting of athletes of just one gender identity, a minimum of two screened and trained Persons in Authority must be present for all team activities, at least one of whom shares the same gender identity as the athletes.
- 4.3** For teams consisting of athletes of more than one gender identity (e.g., co-ed teams), a minimum of two screened and trained Persons in Authority must be present for all team activities, and the composition of Persons in Authority must reflect the gender identities

of the athletes, such that at least one Person in Authority of each gender identity represented on the team is available.

4.4 Immediate family members do not meet the Rule of Two. This includes married couples, parent and child, as well as siblings.

5. Travel

Travel-related activities require specific safeguards to ensure safe and appropriate supervision. All Persons in Authority within the Fort St. John Soccer Club must adhere to the following guidelines:

5.1 A Person in Authority may not be alone in a vehicle with an athlete unless the Person in Authority is the athlete's parent/ guardian.

5.2 A Person in Authority may not share a room or be alone in a hotel room with an athlete unless the Person in Authority is the athlete's parent or guardian.

5.3 Room or bed checks during overnight stays must be done by two Persons in Authority.

6. Locker Room / Changing Area / Meeting Room

Locker rooms, changing areas, and meeting rooms are spaces where privacy is expected and therefore require heightened safeguards and clear supervision standards. All Persons in Authority within the Fort St. John Soccer Club must adhere to the following guidelines:

6.1 Interactions between a Person in Authority and an individual athlete should not occur in any room where there is a reasonable expectation of privacy such as the locker room, meeting room, washroom, or changing area. A second Person in Authority should be present for all necessary interactions in any such room.

6.2 The locker room or changing area should be supervised by two Persons in Authority of the same gender identity as the players whenever possible.

6.3 If a second Person in Authority is not available, the Person in Authority supervising the locker room or changing area should never be alone with an individual athlete.

6.4 If Persons in Authority are not present in the locker room or changing area, or if they are not permitted to be present, they should still be available outside the locker room or changing area and be able to enter the room or area if required. This would only be applicable in the event of a medical emergency.

7. Training / Competition Environment

Training and competition environments, **including before, during and after practices and games** require consistent supervision to ensure athlete safety and maintain appropriate boundaries. These guidelines apply to all Fort St. John Soccer Club training facilities, as well as any facilities used during travel or competition.

7.1 A Person in Authority should never be alone with an athlete prior to or following a game or practice, unless the Person in Authority is the athlete's parent or guardian.

7.2 If the athlete is the first athlete to arrive, the athlete's parent/guardian should remain until another athlete or Person in Authority arrives. If an athlete drives themselves, the athlete should wait for another athlete to arrive before going to the field.

7.3 If an athlete would potentially be alone with a Person in Authority following a game or practice, the Person in Authority should ask another Person in Authority (or a parent/guardian of another athlete or another athlete in a senior environment) to stay until all the athletes have been picked up. If an adult is not available, then another athlete should be present to avoid the Person in Authority being alone with a single athlete.

7.4 Persons in Authority giving instructions, demonstrating skills, or facilitating drills or lessons to an individual athlete should always be doing so within earshot and eyesight of another Person in Authority.

8. Applying the Rule of Two in a Virtual Setting

The Rule of Two continues to apply to all minor athletes in virtual environments (additionally, for those athletes under age 16, a parent or guardian must be present during the session where possible). The Rule of Two also applies to non-minor athletes, as well, in the current circumstances.

8.1 For every session, the Rule of Two requires two adult coaches be present, or one coach and one adult (parent, guardian, volunteer, club administrator) – one-on-one sessions are prohibited.

8.2 A clear statement of professional standards expected of the coach during calls should be communicated – (i.e., sessions are not social engagements and should be focused on training/coaching).

8.3 Parents/guardians are encouraged to debrief with athletes about virtual training on a weekly basis.

8.4 Parents/guardians must be fully informed beforehand about the activities undertaken during the sessions, as well as the process of the virtual session.

8.5 If virtual sessions are to take place they must be recorded for quality and safety purposes.

8.6 Communication during each session must be in an open and observable environment (i.e., avoid bedrooms) in the athlete's home (athlete's parents'/guardians' home), and the coach must initiate the session from an appropriate location (i.e., avoid bedrooms or "overly personal"/unprofessional settings).

8.7 Parents/guardians are required to consent to virtual sessions.

- Prior to each session if irregularly scheduled.
- Prior to the first session if there is a series of regularly scheduled sessions.

8.8 One-on-one texting, emailing or online contact between coach and athlete is strictly prohibited.

- Any texting, emailing or online contact should be limited to group text/email that includes at least 2 adults (2 coaches or 1 coach and 1 adult (parent, guardian, volunteer, club administrator), and limited to coaching (non-social) matters, and

parents of minor athletes should be provided the opportunity to receive these texts/emails.

8.9 Social media contact by coach to athlete is prohibited (including the sharing of memes, non-training video, etc.).

9. Compliance & Enforcement

All requirements set out within this policy are mandatory. Team activities, including but not limited to training sessions, games, tournaments, meetings, and travel, must not proceed unless the Rule of Two considerations and requirements are fully met.

Where the Rule of Two requirements cannot be met, advance notice must be provided to the Club by emailing fjsoccer@telus.net **no less than 24-hours prior** to the scheduled start time of the activity. This notice is required to allow sufficient time to appoint an appropriate replacement and ensure compliance with this policy. Failure to provide notice may result in the activity being delayed, modified, or cancelled until the requirements are met.

Failure by any Person in Authority to comply with this section may result in disciplinary action, up to and including suspension or removal from their role, in accordance with the Fort St. John Soccer Club's Discipline Policy.

10. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed periodically by the Fort St. John Soccer Club Technical Director and Board of Directors to ensure continued alignment with Canada Soccer and BC Soccer regulations and evolving best practices.

BC SOCCER ALIGNMENT

All Fort St. John Soccer Club policies must align with BC Soccer's Bylaws, Rules & Regulations, and applicable Policies and procedures.