



Purpose

The Responsible Coaching Movement (RCM) is coordinated by the Coaching Association of Canada and the Canadian Centre for Ethics in Sport that has the potential to affect all sport organizations and coaches. The RCM is a call to action for organizations to implement realistic change based on their individual state of readiness.

Phase 1 of the RCM addresses the gaps identified by stakeholders that indicate there is a lack of uniform policies, a lack of club capacity, a limited communication strategy, a lack of a tracking mechanism for coaches, and a lack of a coordinated approach by sport organizations to address responsible coaching practices have all contributed to permitting instances of unethical behavior in sport.

The goal is to make sport safer for children and the vulnerable sector. Although advances in athlete protection in the past twenty years have decreased instances of athlete maltreatment in amateur sport, incidents of athlete abuse, harassment by coaches, and risks to athlete safety have continued to occur.

To reduce risk in sport, Halifax County United Soccer Club (HCU) has adopted the Responsible Coaching Movement that focuses on three key areas:

- Rule of Two
- Background Screening
- Ethics and Respect Training

1. Rule of Two

The Rule of Two states that there will always be two screened and NCCP trained or certified coaches with an athlete, especially a minor athlete, when in a potentially vulnerable situation. This means that any one-on-one interaction between a coach and an athlete must take place within earshot and view of the second coach, with the exception of medical emergencies. One of the coaches must also be of the same gender as the athlete. Should there be a circumstance where a second screened and NCCP trained or certified coach is not available, a screened volunteer, parent, or adult can be recruited. This rule serves to protect minor athletes in potentially vulnerable situations by ensuring that more than one adult is present. Vulnerable situations can include closed doors meetings, travel, and training environments amongst others. Coaches and managers will be required to take Making Ethical Decisions.



2. Background Screening

HCU is required, by law, to do everything reasonable to provide a safe and secure environment for participants of our programs, activities, and events while also ensuring minimal liability/risk to the Club, our volunteers, and employees. HCU accepts its responsibility to ensure adherence to this policy for all its volunteers and employees involved in the provision and delivery of its programs to its members.

Definitions

Club - HCU, as represented by its duly elected Board of Directors

Program - a service or activity, both indoor and outdoor, offered by the Club to its members

Member - as defined in the Club's By-Laws

Volunteer - an individual who is registered with the Club to undertake the provision and delivery of a program for the benefit of the members of the Club, and has no binding contract and/or payment agreement with the Club. This includes members of the Board of Directors.

Screening Officer - a volunteer or Club employee approved by the Club who has taken the appropriate training.

Duty of Care - is a legal principal that identifies the obligations of individuals and organizations to take reasonable measures to care for and protect their members. It is important to understand that Canadian courts will uphold organizations' responsibilities to carefully screen volunteers and employees. This is part of their "Duty of Care".

Criminal Reference Checks (CRC) or "Police Check" - a search of the RCMP criminal database to determine whether the individual has a criminal record

Vulnerable person - is a member who has difficulty protecting him/herself from harm, temporarily or permanently, and is at risk because of age or being physically or mentally challenged.

Vulnerable Sector Check (VS) - A secondary part of the Criminal Reference Check, for individuals who are volunteering in a vulnerable sector (such as with minor athletes, seniors, or with persons with a disability), which also searches for the existence of any pardoned sex offenses and/or charges.



Senior – Players over the age of 18 as of January 1.

Team Official – Any coach, assistant coach, manager, or assistant manager that will be affiliated with the team and eligible to be with the players in the technical area.

Youth – Players under the age of 18 as of January 1.

Application of Policy

This policy applies to all individuals whose position with the Club is one of trust or authority which may relate to, at a minimum, finances, supervision, youth, or participants who are considered vulnerable.

Not all individuals associated with the Club will be required to undergo screening through a Criminal Reference Check and a Screening Disclosure Form as not all positions pose a risk of harm to the Club or to its participants. HCU will determine which individuals will be subject to screening using guidelines discussed within this policy

High Risk Positions – every 2 years*

Individuals involved in high-risk assignments who occupy positions of trust and/or authority, have a supervisory role, direct others, are involved with financial/cash management, and/or who have access to minors or people with a disability.

Examples:

- Full-time team staff
- Part-time paid staff
- Skill Center Coaches and Managers
- Tier A AA AAA Coaches and Managers

Low Risk Position – every 3 years*

Individuals involved in low-risk assignments that are not in a supervisory role, not directing others, not involved with financial/cash management, and/or do not have access to minors or people with a disability.

Examples:

- All Grassroot volunteer coaches
- Screening Officers and Board Members



The HCU Screening Process will include the following steps:

- a) Receipt of a completed Registration Waiver and Application form each season.
- b) Reference checks (via phone, email, or online jot form) for Skills Centre / A AA AAA/ coaches and managers.
- c) Evidence of a Criminal Reference Check (CRC) for any applicant age 18 and over, mandatory for New Applicants ONLY. An HCU Screening Declaration form will typically be accepted in lieu of subsequent police checks, however, the Club reserves the right to request an updated CRC.
- d) Completion of the Screening Declaration Form after initial CRC and for subsequent/returning applicants. Applicable to coaches from either Competitive or Recreational programs.
- e) An in-person interview with an HCU Screening Officer to establish the first time applicant's suitability and required qualifications as per the Club's written description. Said interview may be conducted in conjunction with an employment interview. Acknowledgment of suitability is recorded on the Interview Question Report.

How to Obtain Criminal Reference Checks (CRC)

For individuals who wish to apply for or retain a Position within the Club, a Criminal Reference Check will be required as per Soccer Nova Scotia's policy.

If a prospective applicant for a position in the Club is already in possession of a Criminal Reference Check that is less than six months old, submission of this Criminal Reference Check with their application for a Position will be accepted.

Application for Criminal Record Checks will be made by HCU administration.

All Criminal Reference Checks will be reviewed by a Screening Officer and returned to the candidate as per the Screening Policy. Individuals with past Criminal Code convictions for certain offenses will not be accepted for a Position within the Club. These offenses include, but are not limited to, the following:



Lifetime Exclusion

- Any type of sexual assault
- Invitation to sexual touching
- Sexual interference, bestiality or sexual exploitation
- Procuring sexual activity
- Indictable criminal offenses for youth abuse
- Any Court Order forbidding the individual to have contact with children under the age of 18
- Any convictions related to child pornography

Five (5) Year Exclusion

- Assault
- Any Weapons offence
- Conviction under any controlled drugs and substance act
- Criminal Driving offences

Excluded Until Resolved

- Outstanding convictions or charges pending for any violent offence.
- Outstanding convictions or charges pending for criminal driving offenses, including but not limited to impaired driving.
- Outstanding convictions or charges pending for sexual offenses.

Following the review of the Criminal Reference Check, the Screening Officer and applicant will complete the HCU Screening Declaration form. Every applicant approved and accepted for a Position within the Club is obliged to immediately inform the Club if he or she is charged, tried, convicted or involved in any way in a police investigated matter related to any of the above-noted offenses under the Criminal code or under other provincial or federal statutes. The Club cannot unduly discriminate against an applicant for a position; however, the Club has the right and the obligation to refuse potential applicants, based on the information gathered through the Screening Process. The applicant has the right to know why he/she is being refused and may appeal in writing to the Club



RESPONSIBLE COACHING MOVEMENT POLICY

Appeal Process

The Screening Committee will discuss all matters of concern pertaining to an applicant's appointment to a Position. If an applicant's appointment is declined by the Committee, the individual may appeal the decision ONLY if there is relevant information that has not been made available. This request must be submitted to the Chair of the Screening Committee within 48 business hours of notification.

Confidentiality of Information

The Club-appointed Screening Officers have signed an Oath of Confidentiality. All information obtained by the Screening Officers from the Screening Process, including interviews, review of Criminal Reference Checks, or revelations through other reference checks, will be kept confidential, to be used only for the purposes for which the applicant agrees in writing to its use. This information may be disclosed to volunteers or employees assigned by the Club to make decisions about hiring or refusing potential applicants for a position. There shall be no dissemination or disclosure of the information to any other agency, body or organization without the specific written approval of the applicant. Once the applicant is either appointed or declined the Position, all records will be either destroyed through shredding or kept in such a manner to prevent unauthorized access (for example, in a locked cabinet with limited access). All information relating to the Screening Process will be collected pursuant to the Club's Privacy Policy.

Ethics and Respect Training

Ethics and Respect training is a critical component of the RCM, supporting the development of a healthy and safe sport environment, both on and off the field of play. Education helps a coach develop a proper skill set to deliver age-appropriate training to athletes in a positive environment. It also promotes good conduct and behavior and helps a coach understand what it means to act ethically.

There are a number of excellent training options, including National Coaching Certification Program (NCCP) workshops, which prepare coaches to effectively handle situations that arise from ethical dilemmas or even legal challenges that concern individuals, teams, and their sports organizations. Here are a few recommendations to share with your staff, coaches, and volunteers:



NCCP Make Ethical Decisions

NCCP Make Ethical Decisions (MED) training is a four-hour workshop that provides coaches with a six-step decision-making framework to help them identify and work through the legal, ethical, and moral implications of difficult situations that present themselves in the world of team and individual sport.

This is a requirement for all coaches and managers at the Skill Centre and recreational and performance levels.

Commit to Kids for Coaches

Commit to Kids for Coaches is an online training program offered by the Canadian Centre for Child Protection, which explores the boundaries, grooming process, sexual misconduct, and reporting of misconduct. All full-time staff are required to have this training.

Respect in Sport for Activity Leaders

Respect in Sport for Activity Leaders educates youth leaders, coaches, officials, and participants (14-years and up) to recognize, understand and respond to issues of bullying, abuse, harassment and discrimination (BAHD). All Coaches in the Club are required to have this training.

Respect in the Workplace

Ethics and respect training is not only important for coaches. The Respect in the Workplace Program provides the knowledge and skills to prevent bullying, abuse, harassment and discrimination within sport organizations. All Board members and staff at HCU will be required to have this training.