



# SASKATCHEWAN SOCCER ASSOCIATION

## POLICIES AND PROCEDURES MANUAL

### Section 14 Athlete Protection Policy

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## 1 Purpose

- 1.0.1 This Athlete Protection Policy describes how Persons in Authority shall maintain a safe sport environment for all Athletes.

## 2 Interactions between Persons in Authority and Athletes – the ‘Rule of Two’

- 2.0.1 SSA and its Member Organizations strongly recommend the ‘Rule of Two’ for all Persons in Authority who interact with Athletes, whether in person or remotely (i.e., in virtual settings). The Coaching Association of Canada describes the intention of the ‘Rule of Two’ as follows:
- a) A coach must never be alone or out of sight with a minor athlete. Two NCCP trained or certified coaches should always be present with an athlete, especially a minor athlete, when in a potentially vulnerable situation such as in a locker room or meeting room. All one-on-one interactions between a coach and an athlete must take place within earshot and in view of a second coach except for 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.
- 2.0.2 SSA recognizes that fully implementing the ‘Rule of Two’, as described above (and modified accordingly for Persons in Authority), in all circumstances, may not always be possible. Consequently, at a minimum, interactions between Persons in Authority and Athletes must respect the following:
- a) Unless prohibited by public health order, the training and competition environments should be open to observation so that all interactions between Persons in Authority and Athletes are observable.
  - b) Private or one-on-one situations must be avoided unless they are open and observable by another adult or Athlete.
  - c) Persons in Authority shall not invite or have a Vulnerable Participant (or Vulnerable Participants) in their home without the written permission and contemporaneous knowledge of the Vulnerable Participant's parent or guardian.
  - d) Vulnerable Participants must not be in any situation where they are alone with a Person in Authority without another screened adult or Athlete present unless prior written permission is obtained from the Vulnerable Participant's parent or guardian.

### 2.1 Practices and Events

- 2.1.1 As it relates to practices and/or competitions, the following shall be respected:
- a) A Person in Authority should never be alone with a Vulnerable Participant prior to or following a competition or practice unless the Person in Authority is the Athlete's parent or guardian.



- b) If the Vulnerable Participant is the first Athlete to arrive, the Athlete's parent should remain until another Athlete or Person in Authority arrives.
- c) If a Vulnerable Participant would potentially be alone with a Person in Authority following a competition or practice, the Person in Authority should ask another Person in Authority (or a parent or guardian of another Athlete) to stay until all of the Athletes have been picked up. If an adult is unavailable, another Athlete, who is preferably not a Vulnerable Participant, should be present in order to avoid the Person in Authority being alone with a Vulnerable Participant.
- d) Persons in Authority giving instructions, demonstrating skills, or facilitating drills or lessons to an individual Athlete should always do so within earshot and eyesight of another Person in Authority.
- e) If there is a concern with observing the Rule of Two, Persons in Authority and Athletes should take additional steps to achieve transparency and accountability in their interactions.

## 2.2 Communications

- 2.2.1 Communications between Persons in Authority and Athletes shall respect the following:
- a) Group messages, group emails or team pages are to be used as the regular method of communication between Persons in Authority and Athletes.
  - b) Persons in Authority may only send personal texts, direct messages on social media or emails to individual Athletes when necessary and only for communicating information related to team issues and activities (e.g., non-personal information). Any such texts, messages or emails shall be professional in tone and must be copied to another adult when the Athlete is a Vulnerable Participant.
  - c) No personal texts between Vulnerable Participants and Persons in Authority may be sent; however, if this is necessary under Section 2.2.1 (b), it shall include one other adult person on the message (preferably the Vulnerable Person's parent(s)/guardian(s)).
  - d) Parents and guardians may request that their child not be contacted by a Person in Authority using any form of electronic communication and/or to request that certain information about their child may not be distributed in any form of electronic communications.
  - e) All communication between a Person in Authority and Athletes must be between the hours of 6:00am and 11:00pm unless extenuating circumstances justify otherwise (e.g., cancelling an early morning practice).
  - f) Communications concerning drugs or alcohol use (unless regarding its prohibition) is not permitted.
  - g) No sexually explicit language or imagery or sexually oriented conversation may be communicated by any medium.
  - h) Persons in Authority and Athletes are not permitted to offer or ask one another to keep a secret for them.

## 2.3 Virtual settings



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- 2.3.1 The Rule of Two shall apply to all Minors in a virtual environment. Specifically:
- a) For Athletes under the age of 16, where possible, a parent/guardian should be present during any virtual session.
  - b) Two adult coaches should be present or one coach and one adult (parent, guardian, volunteer, club administrator). One-on-one virtual sessions are prohibited.
  - c) Coaches shall be informed by SSA of the expected standards of conduct during virtual sessions.
  - d) Parents/guardians of Minors shall be informed by SSA of the activities that will take place during the virtual session, as well as the process of the virtual session.
  - e) Parents/guardians of Minors shall provide consent to the Minor participating in the virtual session, if irregularly scheduled, or prior to the first session if the sessions will take place on a regular basis.
  - f) Communications during virtual sessions shall take place in an open and observable environment. Sessions must be initiated in appropriate locations (i.e., not in personal or inappropriate locations such as bedrooms).
  - g) Virtual sessions should be recorded whenever allowed by the technology being used.
  - h) Parents/guardians should debrief with Minors on a weekly basis regarding virtual sessions.

## 2.4 Travel

- 2.4.1 Any travel involving Persons in Authority and Athletes shall respect the following:
- 2.4.2 Teams or groups of Athletes shall always have at least two Persons in Authority with them.
- a) For mixed gender teams or groups of Athletes, there will be one Person in Authority from each gender.
  - b) Screened parents or other volunteers will be available in situations when two Persons in Authority cannot be present.
  - c) No Person in Authority may drive a vehicle with an Athlete alone unless the Person in Authority is the Athlete's parent or guardian.
  - d) 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.
  - e) Room or bed checks during overnight stays must be done by two Persons in Authority.
  - f) For overnight travel when Athletes must share a hotel room, roommates will be age-appropriate and, for Minors, shall be within two years of age of one another and of the same gender identity.

## 2.5 Locker Room / Changing Areas

- 2.5.1 The following shall apply to locker rooms, changing areas, and meeting rooms:

- a) Interactions (i.e., conversation) between Persons in Authority and Athletes should not occur in any room where there is a reasonable expectation of privacy such as a locker room, restroom or changing area. A second adult should be present for any necessary interaction between an adult and an Athlete in any such room. The Rule of Two must be respected.
- b) 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, including but not limited to team communications and/or emergency.

## 2.6 Photography / Video

- 2.6.1 Any photograph or video involving Athletes shall respect the following:
  - a) Photographs and video may only be taken in public view, must observe generally accepted standards of decency, and be both appropriate for and in the best interest of the Athlete.
  - b) The use of recording devices of any kind in rooms where there is a reasonable expectation of privacy is strictly prohibited.
  - c) Examples of photos that shall be edited or deleted include:
  - d) Images with misplaced apparel or where undergarments are showing
  - e) Suggestive or provocative poses
  - f) Embarrassing images
  - g) If any photographs or videos will be used on any form of public media, an Image Consent Form must be completed before any images are taken and used.

## 2.7 Physical Contact

- 2.7.1 It is recognized that some physical contact between Persons in Authority and Athletes may be necessary for various reasons including, but not limited to, teaching a skill or tending to an injury. Any physical contact shall respect the following:
  - a) Unless it is otherwise impossible because of serious injury or other justifiable circumstance, a Person in Authority must always clarify with an Athlete where and why any physical contact will occur prior to the contact occurring. The Person in Authority must make clear that they are requesting to touch the Athlete and not requiring physical contact
  - b) Infrequent, non-intentional physical contact during a training session is permitted
  - c) Hugs lasting longer than five seconds, cuddling, physical horseplay, and physical contact initiated by the Person in Authority is not permitted. It is recognized that some Athletes may initiate hugging or other physical contact with a Person in Authority for various reasons (e.g., such as crying or celebrating after a performance), but this physical contact may only occur in an open and observable environment.

## 2.8 Enforcement



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- 2.8.1 Any alleged violations of this Athlete Protection Policy shall be addressed pursuant to SSA's Discipline and Complaints Policy.

## **2.9 Privacy**

- 2.9.1 The collection, use and disclosure of any personal information pursuant to this Policy is subject to SSA's usual policies and practices regarding private and/or confidential information.

### 3 Appendix A Definitions

- 3.0.1 *“Affected Party”* – any individual or entity, as determined by the Appeal Manager, who may be affected by a decision rendered under the Appeal Policy and who may have recourse to an appeal in their own right under the Appeal Policy.
- 3.0.2 *“Appellant”* – the Party appealing a decision pursuant to the Appeal Policy.
- 3.0.3 *“Appeal Manager”* – an individual appointed by SSA to oversee the administration of the Appeal Policy. The Appeal Manager’s responsibilities shall include those as described in the Appeal Policy. The Appeal Manager shall be independent of SSA. Appeal Managers that satisfy the relevant requirements to perform such duties can be found on the Sask Sport website here.
- 3.0.4 *“Athlete”* – includes any Individual who is registered with SSA (either directly or indirectly through their club, national sport organization or other sport organization) for either recreational or competitive purposes.
- 3.0.5 *“Board”* – the Board of Directors of SSA.
- 3.0.6 *“Case Manager”* – an independent individual appointed by SSA to fulfill the responsibilities described in the Discipline and Complaints Policy. In order to be appointed as a Case Manager, the individual must have relevant experience and skills to manage complaints and perform their duties, either as a legal practitioner or sport administrator. Case management service providers that satisfy the relevant requirements to perform such duties can be found on the Sask Sport website here.
- 3.0.7 *“Club Licensing”* - Club Licensing system in accordance with Canada Soccer’s Rules and Regulations directives whose objectives are to safeguard the credibility and integrity of Club competitions, to improve the level of professionalism of soccer in Saskatchewan, to promote sporting values in accordance with the principles of fair play as well as safe and secure match environments, and to promote transparency in the finances, management and control of MO.
- 3.0.8 *“Complainant”* – the Party making a complaint pursuant to the Discipline and Complaints Policy and as referred to in the Investigations Policy.
- 3.0.9 *“Complaint Resolution Officer”* – an individual appointed by SSA to handle the duties of the Complaint Resolution Officer as described in the Discipline and Complaints Policy. Complaint Resolution Officers that satisfy the relevant requirements to perform such duties can be found on the Sask Sport website here.
- 3.0.10 *“CONCACAF”* - Confederation of North and Central American and Caribbean Associations of Football; and is a Confederation of the FIFA.
- 3.0.11 *“Conflict of Interest”* – Any situation in which a representative’s decision-making, which should always be in the best interests of SSA, is influenced or could be perceived to be influenced by personal, organizational, family, financial, business, or other private interests.





- 3.0.12 *"Consent"* - Consent is (a) informed (knowing), (b) voluntary (freely given), and (c) active (not passive). Consent must be demonstrated by clear words or actions, indicating that a person who is legally and functionally competent has indicated permission to engage in mutually agreed upon sexual activity.
- 3.0.13 *"Criminal Record Check (CRC)"* – a search of the RCMP Canadian Police Information Centre (CPIC) system for adult convictions
- 3.0.14 *"Days"* – calendar days.
- 3.0.15 *"Director of Sanctions and Outcomes"* – the individual(s) responsible for overseeing the imposition of Provisional Measures, agreed outcomes, Sanctions and appearing before the Safeguarding Tribunal or the Appeal Tribunal in cases arising from a potential breach of the Universal Code of Conduct to Prevent and Address Maltreatment in Sport (UCCMS) (or other conduct rules, as applicable) within the jurisdiction of the Office of the Sport Integrity Commissioner (OSIC).
- 3.0.16 *"Discrimination"* – as defined in the UCCMS and as amended from time to time by the Sport Dispute Resolution Centre of Canada (SDRCC).
- 3.0.17 *"Enhanced Police Information Check (E-PIC)"* – a Criminal Record Check plus a search of local police information, available from Sterling Backcheck.
- 3.0.18 *"Event"* – an event sanctioned by SSA, and which may include a social Event.
- 3.0.19 *"FIFA"* - Fédération Internationale de Football Association, which is the Governing Organization of soccer in the world.
- 3.0.20 *"Governing Body"* - The organization that has the authority to manage a judicial process as per the policies of the governing body. Governing body may refer to Canada Soccer, SSA, or Member Organizations, clubs/zones or entities that are members of SSA.
- 3.0.21 *"Harassment"* – a vexatious comment (or comments) or conduct against an Individual or group, irrespective of whether the comment or conduct occurs in person or via any other media, including social media, which is known or ought to reasonably be known to be unwelcome. Types of behaviour that constitute Harassment include, but are not limited to:
  - a) Written or verbal abuse, threats, or outbursts;
  - b) Persistent unwelcome remarks, jokes, comments, innuendo, or taunts;
  - c) Racial harassment, which is racial slurs, jokes, name calling, or insulting behaviour or terminology that reinforces stereotypes or discounts abilities because of racial or ethnic origin;
  - d) Leering or other suggestive or obscene gestures;
  - e) Condescending or patronizing behaviour which is intended to undermine self-esteem, diminish performance or adversely affect working conditions;
  - f) Practical jokes which endanger a person's safety, or which may negatively affect performance;



- g) Hazing, which is any form of conduct which exhibits any potentially humiliating, degrading, abusive, or dangerous activity, which does not contribute to any Individual's positive development, but is required to be accepted as part of a team or group, regardless of the individual's willingness to participate. This includes, but is not limited to, any activity, no matter how traditional or seemingly benign, that sets apart or alienates any teammate or group member based on class, number of years on the team or with the group, or ability;
  - h) Unwanted physical contact including, but not limited to, touching, petting, pinching, or kissing;
  - i) Deliberately excluding or socially isolating a person from a group or team;
  - j) Persistent sexual flirtations, advances, requests, or invitations;
  - k) Physical or sexual assault;
  - l) Behaviours such as those described above that are not directed towards a specific person or group but have the same effect of creating a negative or hostile environment; and
  - m) Retaliation or threats of retaliation against a person who Reports harassment to SSA.
- 3.0.22 *"Independent Third Party"* – the independent organization or individual(s) retained by Sask Sport to receive complaints and to fulfill the responsibilities outlined in the Discipline and Complaints Policy, Investigation Policy and Appeal Policy, as applicable.
- 3.0.23 *"Individuals"* – refers to all categories of members in the Bylaws of SSA including, without limitation, Life Members, Participant Members and Organizer Members, as well as all people employed by, contracted by, or engaged in activities with SSA including, but not limited to, employees, contractors, Athletes, Team Personnel, officials, volunteers, managers, administrators, parents or guardians, spectators, committee members, directors or officers.
- 3.0.24 *"Maltreatment"* – as defined in the UCCMS, and as amended from time to time by the SDRCC.
- 3.0.25 *"Match Official/Referee"* – Individuals who perform as referees, assistant referees, 4th officials, referee administrators, referee assignors, referee supervisors, referee mentors, referee leads, referee instructors and referee assessors during sanctioned soccer activities.
- 3.0.26 *"Member Organizations"* (MO) – Regular Members and Associate Members, as defined in the SSA Bylaws.
- 3.0.27 *"Minor"* – any Individual who is under the age of 18. Adult Individuals are responsible for knowing the age of a Minor.
- 3.0.28 *"Non-Pecuniary Interest"* - An interest that an individual may have in a matter which may involve family relationships, friendships, volunteer positions or other interests that do not involve the potential for financial gain or loss.




- 3.0.29 *“Organizer”* – Anyone performing an activity connected with soccer at a Member Organization or entity, regardless of title, type of activity (administrative, sporting or any other) and duration of the activity. Includes all directors, officers, committee members, coaches, trainers, match officials, diversity officers, persons in charge of safety, and any other person responsible for technical, medical and/or administrative matters, members, clubs or leagues, as well as all other persons obliged to comply with SSA and Canada Soccer by-laws regardless of whether they are paid or volunteers.
- 3.0.30 *“OSIC”* – the Office of the Sport Integrity Commissioner, which is an independent division of the SDRCC, which comprises the functions of the Sport Integrity Commissioner.
- 3.0.31 *“Parties”* – in the context of a complaint under the Discipline and Complaints Policy, the Complainant and Respondent; in the context of an appeal under the Appeal Policy, the Appellant, Respondent and Affected Party (or Parties).
- 3.0.32 *“Pecuniary Interest”* – An interest that an individual may have in a matter because of the reasonable likelihood or expectation of financial gain or loss for that individual, or another person with whom that individual is associated.
- 3.0.33 *“Person in Authority”* – any Individual who holds a position of authority within SSA, including, but not limited to, coaches, officials, managers, support personnel, chaperones, committee members, directors or officers. In addition to the responsibilities described for Individuals in the Code of Conduct and Ethics, a Person in Authority shall be responsible for knowing what constitutes Maltreatment and Prohibited Behaviour.
- 3.0.34 *“Provisional Suspension”* – means that the Individual is barred temporarily from participating in any capacity in any Event or activity of SSA (or, as applicable, SSA’s Member Organizations), or as otherwise decided pursuant to the Discipline and Complaint Policy, prior to the decision rendered in a hearing conducted pursuant to the Discipline and Complaints Policy.
- 3.0.35 *“Power Imbalance”* – as defined in the UCCMS and as amended from time to time by the SDRCC.
- 3.0.36 *“Prohibited Behaviour”* – as defined in the UCCMS and as amended from time to time by the SDRCC.
- 3.0.37 *“Prohibited Method”* – as defined in the Canadian Anti-Doping Program, as amended from time to time by the Canadian Centre for Ethics in Sport.
- 3.0.38 *“Prohibited Substance”* – as defined in the Canadian Anti-Doping Program, as amended from time to time by the Canadian Centre for Ethics in Sport.
- 3.0.39 *“Reporting (or Report)”* – as defined in the UCCMS and as amended from time to time by the SDRCC.
- 3.0.40 *“Respondent”* – the Party responding to a complaint or investigation; or, in the case of an appeal, the body or organization whose decision is being appealed, or the Individual who was the subject of a decision that is being appealed.



- 3.0.41 *“Personal Information”* – Any information about an individual that relates to the person’s personal characteristics including, but not limited to: sex, gender, age, income, home address, phone number, ethnic background, family status, health history, and health conditions, athletic testing and results and email
- 3.0.42 *“PIPEDA”* - The Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act (PIPEDA) sets out ground rules for how private sector organizations may collect, use or disclose personal information in the course of commercial activities
- 3.0.43 *“PSO Safe Sport Liaison”* - Each PSO will identify at least one designated individual who is responsible for acting as a representative of their organization and lead point of contact for any safe sport or dispute resolution matters. This includes, but is not limited to; 1) working directly with the Independent Third Party to select Complaint Resolution Officers, Case Managers and Appeal Managers from approved listing (on Sask Sport website), 2) ensuring major and minor sanctions are enforced, 3) ensuring mediation agreements are approved by PSO/club and upheld, 4) long-term suspensions (1 year or longer) are reported to Sask Sport, 5) screening requirements and educational/training requirements are enforced. Safe Sport Liaisons must have knowledge and experience in board governance and must have completed the Governance Essentials e-learning course offered by the Canadian Centre for Ethics in Sport.
- 3.0.44 *“Sask Cup”* – The suite of championships offered by the Saskatchewan Soccer Association
- 3.0.45 *“SSA”* – Saskatchewan Soccer Association.
- 3.0.46 *“Sexual Harassment”* – as defined in the UCCMS and as amended from time to time by the SDRCC.
- 3.0.47 *“Social media”* – the catch-all term that is applied broadly to computer-mediated communication media such as blogs, YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, Tumblr, Snapchat, TikTok, and Twitter.
- 3.0.48 *“SDRCC”* – the Sport Dispute Resolution Centre of Canada.
- 3.0.49 *“Tampering”* – as defined in the Canadian Anti-Doping Program, as amended from time to time by the Canadian Centre for Ethics in Sport.
- 3.0.50 *“Team Personnel”* - All supervisory team personnel including but not limited to coaches, assistant coaches, managers, trainers and other medical staff, and gender representative personnel or anyone that wishes to have access to the field of play.
- 3.0.51 *“UCCMS”* – the Universal Code of Conduct to Prevent and Address Maltreatment in Sport, as amended from time to time by the SDRCC.
- 3.0.52 *“UCCMS Participant”* - an Individual affiliated with Canada Soccer, and who has signed the required UCCMS Participant consent form.
- 3.0.53 *“Vulnerable Participant”* – as defined in the UCCMS and as amended from time to time by the SDRCC.



- 3.0.54 *“Vulnerable Sector Check (VSC)”* – a detailed check that includes a search of the RCMP Canadian Police Information Centre (CPIC) system, local police information, and the Pardoned Sex Offender database.
- 3.0.55 *“Workplace”* – any place where events, business or work-related activities are conducted. Workplaces include but are not limited to, the office or facilities of SSA, work-related social functions, work assignments outside offices, work-related travel, the training, and competition environment (wherever located), and work-related conferences or training sessions.
- 3.0.56 *“Workplace Harassment”* – vexatious comment(s) or conduct against a worker in a Workplace that is known or ought reasonably to be known to be unwelcome. Workplace Harassment should not be confused with legitimate, reasonable management actions that are part of the normal work/training function, including measures to correct performance deficiencies, such as placing someone on a performance improvement plan, or imposing discipline for workplace infractions. Types of behaviour that constitute Workplace Harassment include, but are not limited to:
- a) Bullying;
  - b) Workplace pranks, vandalism, bullying or hazing;
  - c) Repeated offensive or intimidating phone calls, text messages or emails;
  - d) Inappropriate sexual touching, advances, suggestions or requests;
  - e) Displaying or circulating offensive pictures, photographs or materials in printed or electronic form;
  - f) Psychological abuse;
  - g) Excluding or ignoring someone, including persistent exclusion of a person from work-related social gatherings;
  - h) Deliberately withholding information that would enable a person to do his or her job, perform or train;
  - i) Sabotaging someone else’s work or performance;
  - j) Gossiping or spreading malicious rumours;
  - k) Intimidating words or conduct (offensive jokes or innuendos); and
  - l) Words or actions which are known or should reasonably be known to be offensive, embarrassing, humiliating, or demeaning.
- 3.0.57 *“Workplace Violence”* – the use of or threat of physical force by a person against a worker in a Workplace that causes or could cause physical injury to the worker; an attempt to exercise physical force against a worker in a Workplace that could cause physical injury to the worker; or a statement or behaviour that it is reasonable for a worker to interpret as a threat to exercise physical force against the worker in a Workplace that could cause physical injury to the worker. Types of behaviour that constitute Workplace Violence include, but are not limited to:
- a) Verbal or written threats to attack;
  - b) Sending or leaving threatening notes, text messages or emails;
  - c) Physically threatening behaviour such as shaking a fist at someone, finger pointing, destroying property, or throwing objects;
  - d)  Wielding a weapon in a Workplace;

- e) Hitting, pinching or unwanted touching which is not accidental;
- f) Dangerous or threatening horseplay;
- g) Physical restraint or confinement;
- h) Blatant or intentional disregard for the safety or wellbeing of others;
- i) Blocking normal movement or physical interference, with or without the use of equipment;
- j) Sexual violence; and
- k) Any attempt to engage in the type of conduct outlined above.