

West London Soccer League (WLSL)

Code of Conduct and Ethics

Purpose

The West London Soccer League (WLSL) has adopted a code of conduct and ethics that serves to guide the expectations of the conduct of players, coaches, parents, board members, match officials and all spectators and minimize the negative effects that inappropriate conduct and/or bullying and harassment has on our youth.

The purpose of this Code is to ensure a safe and positive environment within the Organization's programs, activities, and events by making Individuals aware that there is an expectation, at all times, of appropriate behaviour. WLSL supports equal opportunity, prohibits discriminatory practices, and is committed to providing an environment in which all individuals are treated with respect and fairness.

Scope

This Code applies to Individuals' conduct during the Organization's business, activities, and events including, but not limited to, meetings, tournaments, practices, travel associated with the Organization's activities, meetings of the Organization's Board, and any other meetings of the Organization.

This Code also applies to Individuals' conduct outside of the Organization's business, activities, and events when such conduct adversely affects relationships within the Organization (and its work and sport environment) or is detrimental to the image and reputation of the Organization. Such applicability will be determined by the Organization at its sole discretion.

Definitions

1. The following terms have these meanings in this Code:
 - a. *"Affiliate Organization"* – means any Soccer Association, League, Club, or Registered Organization.
 - b. *"Case Manager"* – means an individual who is responsible for managing complaints after a 'Request for Reconsideration' has been submitted.
 - c. *"Code"* – means this Code of Conduct and Ethics
 - d. *"Complainant"* – the Party alleging an infraction
 - e. *"Complaints Administrator(s)"* – An individual or individuals appointed by the Organization, typically a staff person of the Organization (or an external group or body), to be the first point of-contact for all Code of Conduct and Ethics complaint matters reported to the Organization

WLSL Code of Conduct and Ethics

- f. *“Days”* – shall mean total days, including weekends and holidays, but not including the date of the meeting, hearing or event in question, or the date by which a response if any is required.
- g. *“Final Decision-Making Panel”* – shall mean a group consisting of either one or three persons who are appointed by a Case Manager to decide on a case in accordance with this Code.
- h. *“Individuals”* – means all categories defined in the Organization’s By-laws, as well as all individuals employed by, or engaged in activities with the Organization including, but not limited to, Administrators, Coaches, Directors, Employees, Players, Registered Teams, Registrants, Team Officials, volunteers, spectators, parents/guardians or Representatives.
- i. *“Organization”* – the organization adopting this Code
- j. *“Party”* – The Complainant or Respondent.
- k. *“Proposed Result”* – The decision by the Complaints Administrator on the complaint. Parties can either accept the Proposed Result or submit a Request for Reconsideration
- l. *“Respondent”* – The alleged infracting Party.
- m. *“Workplace”* – means any place where business or work-related activities are conducted. Workplaces include but are not limited to, the Organization’s office, work-related social functions, work assignments outside the office, work-related travel, and work-related conferences or training sessions

Application of this Code

- 2. An Individual who violates this Code may be subject to a formal complaint, a discipline process and the imposition of sanctions, pursuant to this Code.
- 3. This Code does not prevent immediate discipline or sanction from being applied as reasonably required. Further discipline may be applied according to this Code. Any infractions or complaints occurring within competition will be dealt with by the procedures specific to the competition, if applicable.
- 4. The conduct provisions of this Code apply to staff and employees of the Organization, however, the procedures for discipline and the sanctions described in the Code do not apply. Conduct complaints about staff or employees should be submitted to the Board of Directors and will be addressed per the Organization’s policies.

Jurisdiction

- 5. Organizational jurisdiction of complaints within WLSL and its Affiliate Organizations will be determined based upon where and when the conduct occurred, as determined by the

WLSL Code of Conduct and Ethics

Organization's Complaints Administrator, at its discretion. WLSL may assume jurisdiction of a complaint being handled by an Affiliate Organization if, in its discretion, it believes that the Affiliate Organization does not have the capacity or capability to handle the complaint or that it may be in a conflict of interest.

6. Incidents that occur in-game or that relate to Operational Procedures are addressed per the Organization's Discipline Policy. Incidents may not be addressed under both this Code and the Discipline Policy.

Responsibilities

7. Individuals have a responsibility to:
 - a) Maintain and enhance the dignity and self-esteem of Individuals and other persons by:
 - i. Demonstrating respect to individuals regardless of body type, physical characteristics, athletic ability, race or perceived race, nationality, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, class, marital status, family status, religion, political belief, physical or mental disability, economic status or source of income
 - ii. Focusing comments, criticism or disciplinary actions appropriately
 - iii. Demonstrating the spirit of sportsmanship, sport leadership, and ethical conduct
 - iv. Acting, when appropriate, to correct or prevent practices that are unjustly discriminatory
 - v. Treating individuals fairly and reasonably
 - vi. Adhering to the Organization's rules and policies and the spirit of those rules and policies
 - b) Refrain from any behaviour 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 behaviour 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 a reasonable person ought to know is offensive in the circumstances
 - iii. 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
 - iv. Unwelcome remarks, jokes, comments, innuendo, or taunts
 - v. Leering or other suggestive or obscene gestures

WLSL Code of Conduct and Ethics

- vi. Condescending or patronizing behaviour, which is intended to undermine self-esteem, diminish performance or adversely affect working conditions
 - vii. Practical jokes which cause awkwardness or embarrassment, endanger a person's safety, or negatively affect performance
 - viii. Hazing, retaliation or threats of retaliation against an individual who reports harassment to the Organization
 - ix. Bullying
 - x. Offensive or intimidating communications, including social media
 - xi. Inappropriate use of social media
 - xii. Displaying or circulating offensive pictures, photographs or materials in printed or electronic form
 - xiii. Psychological abuse
 - xiv. Discrimination
 - xv. Words or actions which are known or should reasonably be known to be offensive, embarrassing, humiliating, demeaning or intimidating
 - xvi. Behaviours such as those described above that are not directed towards a specific individual or group but have the same effect of creating a negative or hostile environment
 - xvii. Retaliation or threats of retaliation against a person who reports harassment
- c) Refrain from any behaviour that constitutes **violence**, where violence is defined as the exercise of physical force, that causes or could cause physical injury; an attempt to exercise physical force that could cause physical injury; or a statement or behaviour that it is reasonable to interpret as a threat to exercise physical force. Types of behaviour that are applicable to this section include, but are not limited to:
- i. Verbal threats to attack
 - ii. Sending to or leaving threatening notes or emails
 - iii. Making threatening physical gestures
 - iv. Wielding a weapon
 - v. Hitting, pinching or unwanted touching which is not accidental
 - vi. Throwing an object
 - vii. Blocking normal movement or physical interference, with or without the use of equipment
 - viii. Any attempt to engage in the type of conduct outlined above
- d) Refrain from any behaviour that constitutes **sexual harassment**, where sexual harassment is defined as unwelcome sexual comments and sexual advances, requests for sexual favours, or conduct of a sexual nature. Types of behaviour that constitute sexual harassment include, but are not limited to:
- i. Sexist jokes

WLSL Code of Conduct and Ethics

- ii. Sexual violence
 - iii. Display of sexually offensive material
 - iv. Sexually degrading words used to describe a person
 - v. Inquiries or comments about a person's sex life
 - vi. Unwelcome sexual flirtations, advances, requests, invitations or propositions
 - vii. Inappropriate sexual touching, advances, suggestions or requests
 - viii. Persistent unwanted physical contact including, but not limited to, touching, petting, pinching, or kissing
 - ix. Physical or sexual assault
- e) Abstain from the use of illegal drugs, or illegal or non-prescribed performance-enhancing drugs or methods.
 - f) Refrain from the use of power or authority in an attempt to coerce another person to engage in inappropriate or unwanted activities
 - g) While acting in the capacity as either a coach or volunteer responsible for supervising activities and/or athletes, refrain from consuming recreational drugs, intoxicants or alcohol.
 - h) Respect the property of others and not willfully cause damage
 - i) Adhere to all federal, provincial, and municipal laws
 - j) Comply, at all times, with the Organization's By-laws, policies, procedures, and rules and regulations, as adopted and amended from time to time
 - k) Treat all other Individuals with respect
 - l) Report to the Organization any ongoing criminal investigation, conviction, or existing bail conditions involving yourself, including, but not limited to, those for violence, child pornography, or possession, use, or sale of any illegal substance

Volunteers

- 8. In addition to section 8 (above) volunteers have additional responsibilities. Volunteers are a critical part of the organization and the organization's success is directly related to volunteers carrying out their assigned responsibilities. Volunteers will:
 - a) Act with honesty and integrity while carrying out any assigned responsibilities
 - b) Comply with both the letter and the spirit of any training or orientation provided by the Organization
 - c) Take responsibility for actions and decisions. Follow reporting lines to facilitate the effective resolution of problems
 - d) Prudently manage and allocate assets and resources, both financial and material
 - e) Abide by applicable conflict of interest and confidentiality policies
 - f) Use inoffensive language
 - g) Dress professionally, neatly, and inoffensively

WLSL Code of Conduct and Ethics

9. Volunteers will **not**:

- a) Exceed the authority of their assigned position
- b) Encourage athletes to consume illegal drugs, alcohol or performance-enhancing drugs
- c) Engage in a sexual relationship with a minor athlete

Coaches

10. In addition to section 8 (above), coaches have many additional responsibilities. The coach-athlete relationship is a privileged one and plays a critical role in the personal, sport, and athletic development of the athlete. Coaches must understand and respect the inherent power imbalance that exists in this relationship and must be extremely careful not to abuse it, consciously or unconsciously. Coaches **will**:

- a) Ensure a safe environment by selecting activities and establishing controls that are suitable for the age, experience, ability, and fitness level of the involved athletes
- b) Provide athletes (and the parents/guardians of minor athletes) with the information necessary to be involved in the decisions that affect the athlete
- c) Act in the best interest of the athlete's development as a whole person
- d) Meet coaching credentials required by the Organization
- e) Respect athletes playing with other teams and, in dealings with them, not encroach upon topics or actions which are deemed to be within the realm of 'coaching', unless after first receiving approval from the coaches who are responsible for the athletes
- f) Recognize the power inherent in the position of coach and respect and promote the rights of all participants in sport. This is accomplished by establishing and following procedures for confidentiality (right to privacy), informed participation, and fair and reasonable treatment. Coaches have a special responsibility to respect and promote the rights of participants who are in a vulnerable or dependent position and less able to protect their own rights
- g) Dress professionally, neatly, and inoffensively
- h) Use inoffensive language

11. Coaches will **not**:

- a) Exceed the authority of their assigned position
- b) Provide athletes with, or promote, encourage or condone the use by athletes of illegal drugs, alcohol, or performance enhancing substances or methods.
- c) Engage in a sexual relationship with a minor athlete

Athletes (with the assistance of their caregivers when necessary)

WLSL Code of Conduct and Ethics

12. In addition to section 8 (above), athletes will have additional responsibilities to:
- a) Report any medical problems in a timely fashion, when such problems may limit their ability to travel, practice, or compete
 - b) Participate and appear on-time and be prepared to participate to their best abilities in all competitions, practices, training sessions, tryouts, tournaments, and events
 - c) Properly represent themselves and not attempt to participate in a competition for which they are not eligible by reason of age, classification, or other reason
 - d) Adhere to the Organization's rules and requirements regarding clothing and equipment
 - e) Never ridicule a participant for a poor performance or practice
 - f) Act in a sportsmanlike manner and not display appearances of violence, foul language, or gestures to other players, officials, coaches, or spectators
 - g) Dress in a manner representative of the Organization, focusing on neatness, cleanliness, and discretion
 - h) Act in accordance with the Organization's policies and procedures and, when applicable, additional rules as outlined by coaches or managers

Directors, Committee Members, and Staff

13. In addition to (i) Section 8 above, (ii) the Conflict-of-Interest Policy, and (iii) the Confidentiality Policy, the Directors, Committee Members, and Staff will have additional responsibilities to:
- a) Ensure their loyalty prioritizes the interests of the Organization;
 - b) Act with honesty and integrity and conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the nature and responsibilities of the business and the maintenance of Individuals' confidence
 - c) Ensure that financial affairs are conducted in a responsible and transparent manner with due regard for all fiduciary responsibilities
 - d) Conduct themselves openly, professionally, lawfully and in good faith
 - e) Be independent and impartial and not be influenced by self-interest, outside pressure, expectation of reward, or fear of criticism
 - f) Behave with decorum appropriate to both circumstance and position
 - g) Exercise the degree of care, diligence, and skill required in the performance of their duties pursuant to applicable laws
 - h) Respect the confidentiality appropriate to issues of a sensitive nature
 - i) Respect the decisions of the majority and resign if unable to do so
 - j) Commit the time to attend meetings and be diligent in preparation for, and participation in, discussions at such meetings
 - k) Have a thorough knowledge and understanding of all governance documents

WLSL Code of Conduct and Ethics

14. Directors, Committee Members and Staff will **not**:

- a) Exceed the authority of their assigned position
- b) Encourage anyone to consume illegal drugs, alcohol or performance-enhancing drugs
- c) Engage in a sexual relationship with a minor athlete

Officials

15. In addition to section 8 (above), officials will have additional responsibilities to:

- a) Maintain and update their knowledge of the rules and rules changes
- b) Work within the boundaries of their position's description while supporting the work of other officials
- c) Act as an ambassador of the Organization by agreeing to enforce and abide by national and provincial rules and regulations
- d) Take ownership of actions and decisions made while officiating
- e) Respect the rights, dignity, and worth of all individuals
- f) Not publicly criticize other officials or any club or association
- g) Act openly, impartially, professionally, lawfully, and in good faith
- h) Be fair, equitable, considerate, independent, honest, and impartial in all dealings with others
- i) Respect the confidentiality required by issues of a sensitive nature, which may include ejections, defaults, forfeits, discipline processes, appeals, and specific information or data about Individuals
- j) Honour all assignments unless unable to do so by virtue of illness or personal emergency, and in these cases inform the assignor or association at the earliest possible time
- k) When writing reports, set out the true facts
- l) Dress in proper attire for officiating

16. Officials will **not**:

- a) Exceed the authority of assigned position
- b) Encourage anyone to consume illegal drugs, alcohol or performance-enhancing drugs
- c) Engage in a sexual relationship with a minor athlete

Parents/Guardians and Spectators

17. In addition to section 8 (above), parents/guardians and spectators at events will:

- a) Encourage athletes to compete within the rules and to resolve conflicts without resorting to hostility or violence

WLSL Code of Conduct and Ethics

- b) Condemn the use of violence in any form
- c) Never ridicule a participant for making a mistake during a performance or practice
- d) Provide positive comments that motivate and encourage participants' continued effort
- e) Respect the decisions and judgments of officials, and encourage athletes to do the same
- f) Never question an official's or staff member's judgment or honesty
- g) Support all efforts to remove verbal and physical abuse, coercion, intimidation, and sarcasm
- h) Respect and show appreciation to all competitors, and to the coaches, officials and other volunteers
- i) Not harass competitors, coaches, officials, parents/guardians, or other spectators

Affiliate Organizations

18. The Organization's Affiliate Organizations will:

- a) Adhere to all of the Organization's governing documents and, where necessary, amend their own rules to comply or align with those of the Organization
- b) Pay all required dues and fees by the prescribed deadlines;
- c) Recognize that their websites, blogs and Social Media accounts may be seen as extensions of the Organization and must reflect the Organization's mission, vision and values
- d) Ensure that all Athletes and coaches participating in sanctioned competitions and events of the Organization are registered and in good standing
- e) Have well-defined hiring practices and standards in place including interviews, reference checks, and screening procedures to ensure Athletes have a healthy and safe sport environment
- f) Ensure that any possible or actual misconduct is investigated promptly and thoroughly
- g) Impose appropriate disciplinary or corrective measures when misconduct has been substantiated, regardless of the position or authority of the offender
- h) Advise the Organization immediately of any situation where a complainant has publicized a complaint in the media
- i) Provide the Organization with a copy of all decisions rendered pursuant to the organization's policies for complaints and appeals