



POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Code of Conduct & Ethics

Effective: November 2016

1 Code of Conduct & Ethics

1.1 Definitions

1.1.1 The following terms have these meanings in this Code:

- a) *“Governing Body”* – It refers to the organization that has the authority to manage a discipline complaint per the policies of the Governing Body. Governing Body may refer to the Canadian Soccer Association, SSA, VSA, or Member Organizations, Clubs/Zones or Entities that are Members of the VSA.
- b) *“Members”* – All Members defined by VSA Bylaws and for the purposes of this policy include individuals and Member Organizations and include parents/guardians of Individual Members and spectators at VSA events and VSA sanctioned competitions.
- c) *“SSA”* – Saskatchewan Soccer Association
- d) *“VSA”* – Valley Soccer Association

1.2 Purpose

1.2.1 The purpose of the Code of Conduct and Ethics (hereinafter referred to as the Code) is to ensure a safe and positive environment (within the VSA’s programs, activities, and events) by making Members aware that there is an expectation, at all times, of appropriate behaviour consistent with the VSA’s core values. The VSA supports equal opportunity, prohibits discriminatory practices, and is committed to providing an environment in which all individuals are treated with respect.

The VSA has zero tolerance for abuse and inappropriate behavior.

- 1.2.2 This Code is not intended to specifically outline every instance of misconduct. As such, misconduct not specifically listed in this Code which is not in line with the values of the VSA or the purpose of this Code, may still constitute a breach of the Code and be subject to sanctions.
- 1.2.3 VSA Member Organizations are responsible to ensure that their Code of Conduct and Ethics Policy is consistent with this Policy. As such, the VSA recommends that Governing Bodies adopt similar processes as described within this Policy or adopt this Policy.

1.3 Application of this Code

- 1.3.1 A Member who violates this Code may be subject to sanctions pursuant to the VSA’s *Formal Complaints Policy*. In addition to facing possible sanctions pursuant to the VSA’s *Formal Complaints Policy*, a Member who violates this Code during a competition may be ejected from the competition or the playing area, the official may delay the competition until the Member complies with the ejection, and the Member may be subject to any additional discipline associated with the competition per the VSA’s *Event Discipline Procedure*.
- 1.3.2 An employee of the VSA who violates this Code will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action according to the terms of the VSA’s *Policies* as well as the employee’s Employment Agreement (if applicable).

1.4 Responsibilities

1.4.1 Members have a responsibility to:

- a) Comply, at all times, with the VSA’s bylaws, policies, procedures, directives, and rules and regulations, as adopted and amended from time to time.
- b) Work in a spirit of partnership to collaborate with the VSA and all its Members and stakeholders to align efforts to achieve the Mission of the VSA and the SSA Strategic Plan.
- c) Resolve conflicts in a professional and civil manner on issues that may be in dispute.
- d) Maintain and enhance the dignity and self-esteem of the VSA members and other individuals by:

- i. Demonstrating respect to individuals regardless of body type, physical characteristics, athletic ability, age, ancestry, colour, race, citizenship, ethnic origin, place of origin, creed, disability, family status, marital status, gender identity, gender expression, sex, and sexual orientation.
 - ii. Complying with Canada Soccer's Rules and Regulations specifically, but not limited to, (Section 3, page 2) the CSA Neutrality and Non-Discrimination Code and FIFA's Code of Ethics (Section 23, page 20).
 - iii. Focusing comments or criticism appropriately and avoiding public criticism of Members.
 - iv. Consistently demonstrating the spirit of sportsmanship, sport leadership, and ethical conduct.
 - v. Consistently treating individuals fairly and reasonably.
- e) Ensure adherence to the rules of the sport and the spirit of those rules.
- f) Demonstrate respect for the Fair Play Principles of Sport, which are:
- i. Respect for both the letter and spirit of the rules;
 - ii. Respect for referees and their decisions;
 - iii. Respect for opponents, including modesty in victory and composure in defeat;
 - iv. Facilitation of access to sport; and,
 - v. Maintenance of self-control at all times.
- g) Refrain from the use of power or authority to coerce another person to engage in inappropriate activities.
- h) Promote the sport in the most constructive and positive manner possible.
- i) Respect the property of others and not willfully cause damage.
- j) Adhere to all federal, provincial, municipal and host country laws.
- k) Comply with the VSA Conflict of Interest Policy.
- l) Comply with the guidelines of the VSA Social Media Policy.
- m) Abstain from the non-medical use of drugs or the use of performance-enhancing drugs or methods. More specifically, the SSA adopts and adheres to the Canadian Anti-Doping Program. Any infraction under this Program shall be considered an infraction of this Code and may be subject to further disciplinary action, and possible sanction, pursuant to the VSA's *Formal Complaints Policy*. The VSA will respect any penalty enacted pursuant to a breach of the Canadian Anti-Doping Program, whether imposed by the VSA or any other sport organization.
- n) Refrain from associating with any person for coaching, training, competition, instruction, administration, management, athletic development, or supervision of the sport, who has incurred an anti-doping rule violation and is serving a sanction involving a period of ineligibility imposed pursuant to the Canadian Anti-Doping Program and/or the World Anti-Doping Code and recognized by the Canadian Centre for Ethics in Sport (CCES).
- o) Refrain from consuming alcohol, tobacco products, or recreational drugs while participating in the VSA programs, activities, competitions, or events. In the case of adults, avoid consuming alcohol or recreational drugs in situations where minors are present and take reasonable steps to manage the responsible consumption of alcohol in adult-oriented social situations associated with VSA's events.

1.5 Harassment

1.5.1 Members have a responsibility to:

- a) Refrain from any behaviour that constitutes **harassment**, where harassment is defined according to the [Canadian Human Rights Commission](#) as a form of discrimination which involves any unwanted physical or verbal behaviour that offends or humiliates. Generally, harassment is a behaviour that persists over time. Serious one-time incidents can also sometimes be considered harassment.
- b) 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. Unwelcome remarks, jokes, comments, innuendo, or taunts.

- iv. Leering or other suggestive or obscene gestures.
 - v. Condescending or patronizing behaviour which is intended to undermine self-esteem, diminish performance or adversely affect conditions of participation.
 - vi. Practical jokes which cause awkwardness or embarrassment, endanger a person's safety, or negatively affect performance.
 - vii. Any form of hazing.
 - viii. Retaliation or threats of retaliation against an individual who reports harassment.
 - ix. Bullying.
 - x. Offensive or intimidating phone calls or emails.
 - xi. Displaying or circulating offensive pictures, photographs or materials in printed or electronic form.
 - xii. Psychological abuse.
 - xiii. Discrimination.
 - xiv. Words or actions which are known or should reasonably be known to be offensive, embarrassing, humiliating, demeaning or intimidating.
 - xv. 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.
- 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 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 or deemed to be generally accepted as a part of sport participation
 - vi. Throwing an object in the direction of someone
 - 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
 - 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. Unwanted physical contact including, but not limited to, touching, petting, pinching, or kissing
 - ix. Physical or sexual assault

1.6 Board/Committee Members and Staff

1.6.1 In addition to 1.5.1 the VSA's Directors, Committee Members, and Staff will have additional responsibilities to:

- a) Function primarily as a member of the staff, board and/or committee(s) of the VSA.
- b) Act with honesty and integrity and conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the nature and responsibilities of the VSA's business and the maintenance of Members' confidence.

- c) Ensure that the VSA's financial affairs are conducted in a responsible and transparent manner with due regard for all fiduciary and operational responsibilities.
- d) Conduct themselves openly, professionally, lawfully and in good faith in the best interests of the VSA.
- 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 and be fair, equitable, considerate, and honest in all dealings with others.
- g) Keep informed about the VSA's and SSA activities, the provincial sport community, and general trends in the sectors in which they operate.
- h) Exercise the degree of care, diligence, and skill required in the performance of their duties pursuant to the laws under which the VSA is governed.
- i) Respect the confidentiality appropriate to issues of a sensitive nature.
- j) Ensure that Members are given sufficient opportunity to express opinions, and that all opinions are given due consideration and weight.
- k) Respect the decisions of the majority and resign if unable to do so.
- l) Commit the time to attend meetings and be diligent in preparation for, and participation in, discussions at such meetings.
- m) Have a thorough knowledge and understanding of all the VSA governance documents.
- n) Conform to the bylaws and policies approved by the VSA, this *Code of Conduct and Ethics* as well as the *Conflict of Interest Policy* and *Confidentiality Policy*.

1.7 Team Personnel

- 1.7.1 In addition to 1.5.1, Team Personnel (which includes, but not limited to, all Coaches, Assistant Coaches, Managers, Gender Representatives, Medical or other personnel in a position of influence on the athletes) have many additional responsibilities. The Team Personnel-athlete relationship is a privileged one and plays a critical role in the personal, sport, and athletic development of the athlete. Team Personnel 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. Team Personnel 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) Prepare athletes systematically and progressively, using appropriate time frames and monitoring physical and psychological adjustments while refraining from using training methods or techniques that may harm athletes.
 - c) Avoid compromising the present and future health of athletes by communicating and cooperating with sport medicine professionals in the diagnosis, treatment, and management of athletes' medical and psychological treatments.
 - d) Support the coaching staff of a training camp or team should an athlete qualify for participation.
 - e) Provide athletes (and the parents/guardians of minor athletes) with the information necessary to be involved in the decisions that affect the athlete.
 - f) Act in the best interest of the athlete's development as a whole person.
 - g) Respect other coaches.
 - h) Meet the highest standards of credentials, integrity and suitability, including but not limited to such considerations established by the VSA's *Screening Policy*.
 - i) Report any ongoing criminal investigation, conviction, or existing bail conditions, including those for violence, child pornography, or possession, use, or sale of any illegal substance.
 - j) Report any disciplinary action taken against them by any other governing organization (ie. charity organization, other sporting body, etc.).
 - k) Under no circumstances provide, promote, or condone the use of drugs (other than properly prescribed medications) or performance-enhancing substances and, in the case of minors, alcohol and/or tobacco.

- l) 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.
- m) Not engage in a sexual relationship with an athlete under 18 years old, or an intimate or sexual relationship with an athlete over the age of 18 if the Team Personnel is in a position of power, trust, or authority over the athlete.
- n) Recognize the power inherent in the position of Team Personnel 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. Team Personnel 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.
- o) Dress professionally, neatly, and inoffensively.
- p) Use inoffensive and appropriate language, considering the audience being addressed.

1.8 Athletes

1.8.1 In addition to 1.5.1, 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; or in the case of carded athletes, interfere with the athlete's ability to fulfill requirements under the Athlete Assistance Program.
- b) Participate and appear on-time, well-nourished, and 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 VSA'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 athletes, officials, coaches, or spectators.
- g) Dress in a manner representative of the VSA; focusing on neatness, cleanliness, and discretion.
- h) Act in accordance with the VSA's policies and procedures and, when applicable, additional rules as outlined by coaches or managers.

1.9 Officials

1.9.1 In addition to 1.5.1, officials will have additional responsibilities to:

- a) Conduct him/herself with dignity both on and off the field of play and shall, by example, seek to inspire the principles of fair play and earn the respect of those the referee serves.
- b) Not cause the Canadian Soccer Association, SSA, VSA or any regional referees association to become involved in any controversial matters and shall abide by the rules and regulations of the provincial soccer association and the referee's own regional association.
- c) Adhere to all standards and directives established by the international (FIFA), national (CSA) and provincial (SSA) soccer association, zone (VSA) soccer association and the referee's regional association.
- d) Always be neat in appearance and maintain a high level of physical and mental fitness.
- e) Study the Laws of the Game and be aware of all changes and shall enforce all said Laws and Changes.
- f) Perform his/her designated duties, including attending organized clinics and lectures, etc. and shall assist their colleagues in upgrading and improving their standards of officiating, instructing and assessing.
- g) Adhere to the Canadian Soccer Association's Anti-Doping Policy.
- h) Honor any appointments made for and accepted by them unless unable to do so by virtue of illness or personal emergency.
- i) Not publicly criticize other referees, the national, provincial, or zone soccer association, or any referee's association.

- j) Not make any statement to the media (newspaper, television, radio, etc.) related to a game in which the referee has officiated, or to the performance of the players or other officials.
- k) Not accept any appointment to officiate in any competitive game involving a team in the same age group and gender division in the same league to which the referee is directly affiliated as a registered coach or manager.
- l) Not accept an appointment to officiate in any game involving a team or club to whom the referee is directly affiliated as a player, a registered coach or manager.
- m) Not accept any appointment to officiate in any competitive game in which an immediate member of his/her family by marriage or common law is a registered player or coach. An immediate member of the family is a parent, a spouse, a son or daughter, a brother or sister.
- n) Be fair, equitable, considerate, independent, honest, and impartial in all dealings with others.
- o) When writing reports, set out the true facts and not attempt to justify any decisions.
- p) Officiate in such a manner as to reduce harm or potential harm to all participants keeping in mind age, gender and co-ed participation.

1.10 Spectators and Parents/Guardians

1.10.1 In addition to 1.5.1, **Spectators and Parents/Guardians** will:

- a) Encourage athletes to play by the rules and to resolve conflicts without resorting to hostility or violence.
- b) Never ridicule a participant (coach, player, referee) for making a mistake during a performance or practice.
- c) Provide positive comments that motivate and encourage participants' continued effort.
- d) Never approach or confront a game official.
- e) Never approach or confront a coach, manager, or team personnel while on the game field.
- f) Respect the decisions and judgments of officials and encourage athletes to do the same.
- g) Respect and show appreciation to all competitors, and to the coaches, officials, and other volunteers who give their time to the sport.

1.10.2 Keep off the training or competition area and not interfere with any activities.

1.10.3 Observe games from the opposite side of the field than where player benches are located.

2 Code of Conduct Summary – Fair Play

2.1.1 [Fair Play Code](#) for Coaches

- a. I will be reasonable when scheduling games and practices remembering that young players have other interest and obligations.
- b. I will teach my players to play fairly and to respect the rules, officials and their opponents.
- c. I will ensure that all players get equal instruction, support and playing time.
- d. I will not ridicule or yell at my players for making mistakes or for performing poorly. I will remember that children play to have fun and must be encouraged to have confidence in themselves.
- e. I will make sure that equipment and facilities are safe and match the players' ages and abilities.
- f. I will remember that children need a coach they can respect. I will be generous with praise and set a good example.
- g. I will obtain proper training and continue to upgrade my coaching skills.
- h. I will not discriminate on any grounds (i.e race, gender, sexuality, etc) & adhere to VSA's Code of Conduct & Ethics Policy.
- i. I will show support to my community club & governing body by respecting the rules and accepting their decisions and polices.

2.1.2 [Fair Play Code](#) for Players

- a. I will participate because I want to, not just because my parents/guardian or coaches want me to.
- b. I will respect & play by the rules, and in the spirit of the game.
- c. I will control my temper - fighting and "mouthing off" can spoil the activity for everybody.
- d. I will respect my opponents.
- e. I will do my best to be a true team player & be committed to team participation.
- f. I will remember that winning isn't everything - that having fun, improving skills, making friends and doing my best are also important.
- g. I will acknowledge good plays/performances - those of my team and of my opponents.
- h. I will remember that coaches and officials are there to help me. I will accept their decisions and show them respect.
- i. I will not discriminate on any grounds (i.e race, gender, sexuality, etc) & adhere to VSA's Code of Conduct & Ethics Policy.

2.1.3 [Fair Play Code](#) for Parents/Guardian

- a. I will not condone inappropriate language or behaviour & serve as an example to my child.
- b. I will remember that my child plays sport for his or her enjoyment, not for mine.
- c. I will encourage my child to play by the rules and to resolve conflicts without resorting to hostility or violence.
- d. I will teach my child that doing one's best is as important as winning, so that my child will never feel defeated by the outcome of a game/event.
- e. I will make my child feel like a winner every time by offering praise for competing fairly and trying hard.
- f. I will never ridicule or yell at my child for making a mistake or losing a competition.
- g. I will remember that children learn best by example. I will applaud good plays/performances by both my child's team and their opponents.
- h. I will never question the officials' judgment or honesty in public or in front of players.
- i. I will support all efforts to remove verbal and physical abuse from children's sporting activities. I will encourage my peers to do the same when necessary.
- j. I will support, respect and show appreciation for the volunteer coaches & my community club to provide sport activities for my child.
- k. I will respect the oppositions players, coaches & parents/guardians.
- l. I will not coach my child from the sidelines, just support them positively from the sidelines.
- m. I will not discriminate on any grounds (i.e race, gender, sexuality, etc) & adhere to VSA's Code of Conduct & Ethics Policy.
- n. I will show support to my community club & governing body by respecting the rules and accepting their decisions and polices.