

PAN-CANADIAN POLICY

SPECIAL OLYMPICS CANADA AND SPECIAL OLYMPICS NOVA SCOTIA

CODE OF CONDUCT AND ETHICS

This Policy has been prepared by Special Olympics Canada and is a Pan-Canadian Policy applicable to Special Olympics Canada and its Chapters. This document cannot be modified by a Chapter without consultation and approval from Special Olympics Canada.

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Definitions

1. The following terms have these meanings in this Code:
 - a) “*Chapter*” – means the Provincial or Territorial Special Olympics Organization recognized by Special Olympics Canada as a provincial or territorial governing body of Special Olympics
 - b) “*Code*” – means this Special Olympics Canada Code of Conduct and Ethics
 - c) “*Individuals*” – means all categories of membership defined in the Special Olympics Canada Bylaws or Chapter Bylaws, as well as all individuals employed by, or engaged in activities with, Special Olympics Canada or their Chapters including, but not limited to, employees, contractors, athletes, coaches, mission staff, chefs de mission, officials, volunteers, managers, administrators, committee members, parents or guardians, and directors and officers
 - d) “*Workplace*” – means any place where business or work-related activities are conducted. Workplaces include but are not limited to, the Special Olympics Canada or their Chapters’ office, work-related social functions, work assignments outside the office, work-related travel, and work-related conferences or training sessions

Purpose

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

Application of this Code

3. This Code applies to Individuals’ conduct during Special Olympics Canada or their Chapter’s workplace, business, activities, and events including, but not limited to, competitions, tournaments, practices, tryouts, training camps, travel associated with Special Olympics Canada or Chapter activities, Special Olympics Canada or Chapter Board of Director meetings and any other Special Olympics Canada or Chapter meetings.
4. An Individual who violates this Code may be subject to sanctions pursuant to Special Olympics Canada’s *Discipline and Complaints Policy*. In addition to facing possible sanctions pursuant to Special Olympics Canada’s *Discipline and Complaints Policy*, an Individual who violates this Code during a competition may be ejected from the competition or the playing area, and the Individual may be subject to sanctions pursuant to that competition’s policies.
5. This Code also applies to Individuals’ conduct outside of Special Olympics Canada or Chapter business, activities, and events when such conduct adversely affects relationships within Special Olympics Canada or its Chapter(s) (and its work and sport environment) and is detrimental to the image and reputation of Special Olympics Canada or the Chapter. Such applicability will be determined by Special Olympics Canada or the Chapter, as applicable, at its sole discretion.

Responsibilities

6. 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, color, 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 Special Olympics Canada and Chapter 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. 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 working conditions
 - vi. Practical jokes which cause awkwardness or embarrassment, endanger a person's safety, or negatively affect performance
 - vii. Any form of hazing where hazing is defined as *any potentially humiliating, degrading, abusive, or dangerous activity*
 - viii. Retaliation or threats of retaliation against an individual who reports harassment to Special Olympics Canada or a Chapter
 - 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
- 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
 - 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
- 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, municipal and host country laws
 - j) Comply, at all times, with Special Olympics Canada and Chapter bylaws, policies, procedures, and rules and regulations, as adopted and amended from time to time
 - k) Treat all other Individuals with respect
 - l) Report to Special Olympics Canada or a Chapter 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

7. In addition to section 6 (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 Special Olympics Canada and its Chapters
 - 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
8. Volunteers will **not**:
- a) Exceed the authority of assigned position
 - b) Encourage athletes to consume illegal drugs, alcohol or performance-enhancing drugs
 - c) Engage in a sexual relationship with an athlete

Coaches

9. In addition to section 6 (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) 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 medical professionals in the diagnosis, treatment, and management of athletes' medical and psychological treatments
 - d) Support the coaching staff of a training camp, provincial team, or national team, should an athlete qualify for participation with one of these programs
 - 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) Meet the coaching credentials, as required by Special Olympics Canada and its Chapters
 - h) 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

- i) 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
- j) Dress professionally, neatly, and inoffensively
- k) Use inoffensive language

10. Coaches will **not**:

- a) Exceed the authority of 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 an athlete

Athletes (with the assistance of their caregivers when necessary)

11. In addition to section 6 (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 Special Olympics Canada and Chapter 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 Special Olympics Canada and its Chapters, focusing on neatness, cleanliness, and discretion
- h) Act in accordance with Special Olympics Canada and Chapter policies and procedures and, when applicable, additional rules as outlined by coaches or managers

Directors, Committee Members, and Staff

12. In addition to (i) section 6 (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 Special Olympics Canada or a Chapter, as applicable;
- 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

Officials

13. In addition to section 6 (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 Special Olympics 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

Parents/Guardians and Spectators

14. In addition to section 6 (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
- 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