



SAFE SPORT POLICY

* Indicates a section that has been adapted from the UCCMS

Purpose

1. This Policy describes how Softball Canada aims to provide a safe sport environment.

Commitment to True Sport Principles

2. Softball Canada commits to the True Sport Principles which are:
 - a) **Go for It** – Rise to the challenge – always strive for excellence. Discover how good you can be.
 - b) **Play Fair** – Play honestly – obey both the letter and spirit of the rules. Winning is only meaningful when competition is fair.
 - c) **Respect Others** – Show respect for everyone involved in creating your sporting experience, both on and off the field. Win with dignity and lose with grace.
 - d) **Keep it Fun** – Find the joy of sport. Keep a positive attitude both on and off the field.
 - e) **Stay Healthy** – Place physical and mental health above all other considerations – avoid unsafe activities. Respect your body and keep in shape.
 - f) **Include Everyone** – Share sport with others. Ensure everyone has a place to play.
 - g) **Give Back** – Find ways to show your appreciation for the community that supports your sport and helps make it possible.

Commitment to a Sport Environment Free from Maltreatment

3. *Softball Canada makes the following commitments to a sport environment free from Maltreatment:
 - a) All Participants in sport can expect to play, practice and compete, work, and interact in an environment free from Maltreatment.
 - b) Addressing the causes and consequences of Maltreatment is a collective responsibility and requires the deliberate efforts of all Participants, sport stakeholders, sport club administrators and organization leaders.
 - c) Participants in positions of trust and authority have the general responsibility to protect the health and well-being of all other Participants.
 - d) Adult Participants have a specific ethical and statutory duty and the additional responsibility to respond to incidents of Maltreatment involving Minors and other Vulnerable Participants.
 - e) All Participants recognize that Maltreatment can occur regardless of age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, race, ethnicity, Indigenous status, or level of physical and intellectual disability and their intersections. Moreover, it is recognized that those from traditionally marginalized groups have increased vulnerability to experiences of Maltreatment.
 - f) All Participants recognize that individuals who have experienced Maltreatment may experience a range of effects that may emerge at different time points and that can profoundly affect their lives.
 - g) All adults working with children and youth have a duty to prevent or mitigate opportunities for misconduct.

- h) In recognition of the historic vulnerability to discrimination and violence amongst some groups, and that continues to persist today, Participants in positions of trust and authority have a duty to incorporate strategies to recognize systemic bias, unconscious bias, and to respond quickly and effectively to discriminatory practices

Pledge

- 4. The stakeholders, members, and leaders of Softball Canada are expected to live the True Sport Principles and Softball Canada pledges to embed the True Sport Principles in its governance and operations in the following ways:
 - a) Conduct Standards – Softball Canada will adopt comprehensive conduct standards that are expected to be followed by Participants
 - b) Athlete Protection – Softball Canada will provide coaches and other stakeholders with general and sport-specific athlete protection guidelines
 - c) Dispute Resolution and Investigations – Softball Canada will have dispute resolution processes that are confidential and procedurally fair and that require independent investigation for certain alleged violators of the conduct standards
 - d) Strategy – Softball Canada will have strategic plans that reflect the organization’s mission, vision, and values
 - e) Governance – Softball Canada will have a diverse blend of sport leaders and will adhere to principles of good governance
 - f) Risk Management – Softball Canada will intentionally manage risks to their operations and events through the use of risk management plans and/or risk registries

Conduct Standards

- 5. Softball Canada will adopt a *Code of Conduct and Ethics* that describes standards of conduct and behaviour for all Participants. General standards of conduct will apply to all Participants and specific standards will be described for positions within the organization. The *Code of Conduct and Ethics* will have specific sections, including but not limited, to:
 - a) Athletes
 - b) Coaches
 - c) Officials
 - d) Directors and Committee Members
 - e) Parents and Spectators
- 6. The *Code of Conduct and Ethics* will contain detailed definitions of key terms, including:
 - a) Harassment
 - b) Maltreatment
 - c) Workplace Harassment
 - d) Workplace Violence
 - e) Discrimination
- 7. The *Code of Conduct and Ethics* will include the following definition of Hazing:
 - a) Hazing is a form of conduct that exhibits a potentially humiliating, degrading, abusive, or dangerous activity expected of a junior-ranking individual by a more senior individual, which does not contribute to either individual’s positive development, but is required to be accepted as part of a team or group, regardless of the junior-ranking 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

8. Softball Canada will adopt an *Abuse Policy* that will define “vulnerable individuals” and describe the types of abuse (e.g., Physical Abuse, Sexual Abuse, Emotional Abuse, and Neglect) that Vulnerable Participants may be subjected to.

Anti-Doping

9. The *Code of Conduct and Ethics* will indicate that Softball Canada adopts and adheres to the Canadian Anti-Doping Program.
10. Softball Canada will adopt an *Anti-Doping Policy* that further clarifies their commitment to drug-free sport.

Social Media

11. Softball Canada will adopt a *Social Media Policy* that describes standards of conduct that are expected on social media by Participants. The *Social Media Policy* will indicate specific conduct standards and risks that are common and/or exclusive to social media. The *Social Media Policy* will highlight the importance of responsible coach-athlete interaction on social media and will provide examples of violations of conduct standards.

Athlete Protection

Screening

12. Softball Canada will adopt a comprehensive *Screening Policy* that requires some Participants to pass a screening process before being permitted to interact with athletes. The *Screening Policy* will:
 - a) Categorize positions in the organization as ‘Low Risk’, ‘Medium Risk’, and ‘High Risk’ and require progressive screening measures for individuals serving in each category of risk
 - b) Describe how frequently some Participants must obtain a police records check and which type of check(s) they must obtain
 - c) Describe how frequently some Participants must submit Screening Disclosure Forms and Screening Renewal Forms
 - d) Empower a Screening Committee to prohibit Participants who do not pass screening from participating in certain positions
 - e) Empower a Screening Committee to attach conditions to a Participant’s participation in certain positions
13. Softball Canada will develop an *Athlete Protection Policy* that can be used by coaches, managers, medical personnel, and other Persons in Authority. Softball Canada may provide training on the policy and take steps to ensure the policy is being implemented. Softball Canada will conduct a regular review of the policy to add and/or modify new content as appropriate.

Resources

14. Softball Canada will regularly provide information to Participants about resources and training related to athlete protection. Resources and training opportunities can include:
 - a) [CAC Safe Sport Training](#)
 - b) [NCCP modules](#)
 - c) [Respect in Sport](#)
 - d) [Commit to Kids](#)
 - e) [Red Cross – Respect Education Courses](#)

Athlete Engagement

15. Softball Canada will engage with athletes to determine the level of success of their athlete protection measures as well as to identify any gaps or athlete concerns. This engagement may take the form of:
 - a) Anonymous athlete surveys
 - b) Athlete involvement in organizational decision-making
 - c) Independently-led athlete outreach consultations

Dispute Resolution

16. Softball Canada will have a comprehensive suite of dispute resolution policies that will include:
 - a) *Discipline and Complaints Policy*
 - b) *Appeal Policy*
 - c) *Dispute Resolution Policy*
 - d) *Event Discipline Procedure*
17. Taken together, the suite of dispute resolution policies will include the following features:
 - a) An independent individual to whom complaints can be submitted
 - b) Sanctions for violations of conduct standards
 - c) Mechanism for suspension of individuals pending the conclusion of the process
 - d) Non-biased and experienced case managers, decision-makers and/or investigators
 - e) Protection from reprisal for submitting complaints
 - f) Anonymity for the complainant in cases of whistleblowers
 - g) Independency of appeal procedures (when appeals are permitted)
 - h) Opportunity for alternate dispute resolution
 - i) Investigations of certain complaints (e.g., when required by law and/or when the complaint involves harassment, abuse, or discrimination)
 - j) In-event discipline procedures (when an event does not have its own disciplinary procedures)

Alignment

18. Softball Canada recognizes the importance of safe sport for athletes and participants across the country. Softball Canada requires:
 - a) Provincial/Territorial Organizations and Local Associations to report discipline decisions to Softball Canada, PTSOs, and Local Associations
 - b) The distribution of discipline decisions to all Provincial/Territorial Organizations and to applicable Local Associations
 - c) Softball Canada, PTSOs, and Local Associations to recognize and enforce sanctions imposed by Softball Canada, PTSOs, and Local Associations

Obligations – Reporting and Third-Party Case Management

19. The policies of Softball Canada will include requirements that certain complaints must be reported to government entities, local police forces, and/or child protection agencies.
20. The policies of Softball Canada will include requirements that certain complaints (e.g., those related to harassment, discrimination, and abuse) should be handled by an independent third party that has no affiliation with Softball Canada.

Records

21. Softball Canada will retain records of decisions that have been made pursuant to the organization's policies. These records may be shared with other individuals or organizations, including but not limited to, national sport organizations, provincial sport organizations, multi-sport organizations, and government entities.

Governance and Operations

22. Softball Canada will have a comprehensive Strategic Plan in which athlete protection and safe sport are top priorities for the organization.
23. Softball Canada will adopt a *Conflict of Interest Policy* that will guide decision-makers and ensure that conflicts are declared before a decision is made.
24. Softball Canada will adopt an *Equity and Inclusion Policy* that will encourage inclusion, equity and access in their administration, policies, programs, and activities and provide Under-Represented Groups with a full and equitable range of opportunities to participate and lead.
25. Softball Canada will pursue a governance structure that reflects the diversity of the athletes and stakeholders within the sport, that adheres to all applicable federal and/or provincial/territorial legislation, and that moves toward a national alignment strategy for the sport in Canada.
26. Softball Canada will continually monitor and evaluate its policies, practices, and procedures.