



West Ferris Ringette Association

The Birthplace of Ringette

September 2010

Updated October 2018

WFRA CODE OF CONDUCT AND ETHICS POLICY

1. The WFRA is committed to providing an environment in which all individuals are treated with respect. Further, WFRA supports equal opportunity and prohibits discriminatory practices. Members of WFRA, parents/guardians of WFRA members, and spectators at WFRA events are expected to conduct themselves at all times in a manner consistent with the values of the WFRA.

Purpose

2. The purpose of this Code of Conduct is to ensure a safe and positive environment within WFRA programs, activities and events, by making all individuals aware that there is an expectation of appropriate behavior, consistent with the values of the WFRA, at all times.

Definitions

3. The following terms have these meanings in this Policy:

- a) "*Individuals*" - WFRA Members, parents/guardians of WFRA Members, spectators at WFRA events and WFRA employees/volunteers.
- b) "*WFRA*" – West Ferris Ringette Association.
- c) "*Members*" – Any director, officer, committee member, volunteer, coach, athlete, official, referee, manager, parent (or legal guardian) of a Member, or other member within WFRA".

Application of this Policy

4. This policy applies to Individuals relating to conduct that that may arise during the course of WFRA business, activities and events, including but not limited to, office environment, competitions, practices, training camps, travel, and any meetings of staff, committees or the Board of Directors.

5. This policy applies to conduct that may occur outside of WFRA business, activities and events when such conduct adversely affects relationships within WFRA's work and sport environment and is detrimental to the image and reputation of the WFRA.

6. Conduct arising within the business, activities and events of clubs or other organizations affiliated with WFRA will be dealt with using the policies and mechanisms of such organizations or, where no policy is in place, the policies and procedures of WFRA.

Complaints & Discipline

7. Conduct that violates this Code of Conduct and Ethics may be subject to sanctions pursuant to WFRA policies related to discipline and complaints.

Responsibilities

8. **All** Individuals have a responsibility to:

a) Maintain and enhance the dignity and self-esteem of WFRA Members and other individuals by:

i. Demonstrating respect to individuals regardless of body type, athletic ability, gender, ethnic or racial origin, sexual orientation, age, marital status, religion, political belief, disability or economic status;

ii. Focusing comments or criticism appropriately and avoiding public and **social media** criticism of athletes, coaches, officials, organizers, volunteers, employees and members;

iii. Consistently demonstrating the spirit of sportsmanship, sports leadership and ethical conduct;

iv. Acting, when appropriate, to prevent or correct practices that are unjustly discriminatory;

v. Consistently treating individuals fairly and reasonably; and

vi. Ensuring that the rules of the sport of Ringette, and the spirit of such rules, are adhered to.

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, homophobic, transphobic, degrading or malicious. Types of behavior 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 one ought to know is offensive;

- iii. Unwelcome remarks, jokes, comments, innuendos or taunts about a person's looks, body, attire, age, race, religion, sex or sexual orientation;
 - iv. Leering or other suggestive or obscene gestures;
 - v. Condescending or patronizing behavior 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 or bullying, including online bullying
 - viii. Unwanted physical contact including touching, petting, pinching or kissing;
 - ix. Unwelcome sexual flirtations, advances, requests or invitations;
 - x. Physical or sexual assault;
 - xi. Behaviors such as those described above that are not directed towards individuals or groups but have the same effect of creating a negative or hostile environment; or
 - xii. Retaliation or threats of retaliation against an individual who reports harassment.
- c) Refrain from any behaviour that constitutes sexual harassment, where sexual harassment is defined as unwelcome sexual comments, advances or conduct of a sexual nature.
- d) Refrain from the use of power or authority in an attempt to coerce another person to engage in inappropriate activities.
- e) Respect the property of others and not wilfully cause damage.
- f) Comply at all times with the Constitution, Bylaws, policies, rules and regulations of WFRA, as adopted and amended from time to time.

Coaches

9. In addition to paragraph 8 above, **Coaches** have additional responsibilities. The athlete-coach relationship is a privileged one and plays a critical role in the personal as well as athletic development of their athletes. Coaches must understand and respect the inherent power imbalance that exists in this relationship and must be extremely careful not to abuse it. Coaches will at all times:

- a) Ensure a safe environment by selecting activities and establishing controls that are suitable for the age, experience, ability and fitness level of athletes, including educating athletes as to their responsibilities in contributing to a safe environment;
- 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 co-operating with sport medicine professionals in the diagnosis, treatment and management of athletes' medical and psychological problems;
- d) Under no circumstances provide, promote or condone the use of drugs or performance-enhancing substances;
- e) Accept and promote athletes' personal goals and refer athletes to other coaches and sports specialists as appropriate and as opportunities arise;
- f) At no time engage in an intimate or sexual relationship with an athlete under the age of 18 years and at no time engage in an intimate or sexual relation with an athlete over the age of 18 if the coach is in a position of power, trust or authority over the athlete;
- g) Where an athlete has qualified for a training camp, provincial team, national team, etc., the Coach will support the program, applicable coaching staff and Ontario Ringette;
- h) Respect the decisions and judgments of officials, and encourage athletes to do the same;
- i) Respect and show appreciation to all competitors, and to the coaches, officials, professional staff and other volunteers.
- j. Always cc another coach, trainer, manager on all correspondence between players/coaches. Communication should only be made on a team page via group chats and coaches should not interact with players via private text
- k) The Rule of Two: Always have two adult coaches or screened adults in the room at once, no matter the gender. One of the coaches has to be of the same gender as the athlete. A minor-aged coach does not count as one of the adults needing to be present. The Rule of Two applies between all minor coaches and adult coaches.

Athletes

10. In addition to paragraph 8 above, **recreational** and **competitive Athletes** in the WFRA have additional responsibilities to:

- a) Report any medical problems in a timely fashion, where such problems may limit the athlete's ability to travel, train or compete;
- b) Participate and appear on time in all competitions, practices, training sessions, events, activities or projects;
- c) Properly represent themselves and not attempt to enter a competition for which they are not eligible, by reason of age, classification or other reasons;
- d) Adhere to WFRA rules and requirements regarding clothing and equipment;
- e) 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, professional staff and other volunteers.
- h) Abstain from the non-medical use of drugs or the use of performance-enhancing drugs or methods.
- i Do not bring cell phones into the change rooms. Do not ask coaches to hold onto. Leave it with parents or in the car.

Parents/Guardians and Spectators

11. In addition to paragraph 8 above, **Parents/Guardians** of WFRA members and **Spectators** at events will:

- a) Encourage athletes to play by the rules and to resolve conflicts without resorting to hostility or violence;
- b) Never ridicule a participant for making a mistake during a performance or practice;

Social Media (taken from the Ringette Ontario Social Media Policy)

12. Social media has become an integral part of the way we communicate with our audiences and friends. Social media includes personal and professional websites, blogs, chat rooms and bulletin boards; social networks, such as, but not limited to, Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter; video and image sharing sites such as YouTube, Instagram; and e-mail.

13. Everyone using any social media platform should:

- a) Think twice before posting, once posted it cannot be retracted.
- b) Maintain a positive social media presence. Negative behaviour and comments reflect badly on you and could impact the reputation of the WFRA. • Write in the first person so that it is clear that you are expressing your personal opinions and not those of the O.R.A. or any other organization.
- c) Those players 17 years of age and younger should obtain permission from parents to post photographs and or names to social media sites.

Everyone using any social media platform shall NOT:

- a) Publish negative comments about other associations, teams, players or referees, and any controversial or potentially inflammatory subjects or incidents that may have occurred. • Use harassing, hostile or derogatory language in any online communications.
- b) Be careful when responding to any inaccurate or negative comments about your association, team, player or anyone involved with your association. In order to avoid escalation do not engage in an open debate about these comments.