

Code of Conduct and Ethics Policy

Definitions

1. In this Code of Conduct and Ethics Policy the following terms mean:
 - a) “*Individuals*” – All categories of membership defined in the Association’s Bylaws, as well as all individuals engaged in activities with the Association including, but not limited to, athletes, coaches, managers, officials, volunteers, and committee or board members of the Association.

Purpose

2. The purpose of this Code is to ensure a safe and positive environment within the Association programs, activities, and events by making Individuals aware that there is an expectation of appropriate behaviour consistent with the Association’s mission and objectives. The Association supports equal opportunity, prohibits discriminatory practices, and is committed to providing an environment in which all individuals are treated with respect.

Application of this Code

3. This Code applies to Individuals’ conduct during Association business, activities, and events including, but not limited to, competitions, tournaments, practices, tryouts, training camps, travel associated with Association activities, Board of Director meetings and any other Association meetings. This Policy does not apply to any Association employees as such matters are governed by the Association’s policies that expressly apply to its employees.
4. An Individual who violates this Code may be subject to sanctions pursuant to the Association’s *Discipline and Complaints Policy*. In addition to facing possible sanctions pursuant to the Association’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 the Association’s business, activities, and events when such conduct adversely affects relationships within the Association (and its work and sport environment) and is detrimental to the image and reputation of the Association. Such applicability will be determined by the Association at its sole discretion.

Responsibilities

6. Individuals have a responsibility to:
 - a) Maintain and enhance the dignity and self-esteem of Individuals and other individuals by:
 - i. Demonstrating respect to individuals regardless of body type, physical characteristics, athletic ability, gender, ancestry, ethnic origin, race, place of origin, sexual orientation, age, marital status, religion, political belief, disability, or economic status
 - 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 Association’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. 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
 - viii. Retaliation or threats of retaliation against an individual who reports harassment to the Association
 - 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 **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, or propositions or invitations
 - 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
- d) 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
- e) Abstain from the use of illegal drugs or the use of performance-enhancing drugs or methods. The Association 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 Association's *Discipline and Complaints Policy*. The Association will respect any penalty enacted pursuant to a breach of the Canadian Anti-Doping Program, whether imposed by the Association or any other sport organization
 - f) Refrain from the use of power or authority in an attempt to coerce another person to engage in inappropriate 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 the Association's bylaws, policies, procedures, and rules and regulations, as adopted and amended from time to time
 - k) Treat other coaches with respect
 - l) Report to the Association 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 the Association
 - 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) Use inoffensive language
 - f) 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 sport medicine 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 the Association
- 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; 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 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 Association'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 Association, focusing on neatness, cleanliness, and discretion
- h) Act in accordance with the Association's policies and procedures and, when applicable, additional rules as outlined by coaches or managers
- i) Refrain from consuming illegal drugs, alcohol or performance enhancing substances or methods while participating in the Association competitions.

Modification of Criteria

The Ontario Cheerleading Federation may revise this policy at any time as circumstances require.