

Waterloo Region Minor Football – Code of Conduct and Ethics

“WRMF” refers to: Waterloo Region Minor Football Association

DEFINITIONS

1. The following terms have these meanings in this Code:
 - a) “*Individuals*” – Individuals appointed, elected or employed by, or engaged in activities with, WRMF including, but not limited to, athletes, coaches, convenors, managers, administrators, committee members, and directors and officers of WRMF
 - b) “*Venue*” - Any place where football or football-related activities are conducted. Venues include but are not limited to, WRMF’s office, football related social functions, football activities such as games, practices and fundraising events outside WRMF’s schedule, football-related travel, and away games or fan participation.

PURPOSE

2. The purpose of this Code is to ensure a safe and positive environment (within WRMF’s programs, activities, and events) by making Individuals aware that there is an expectation, at all times, of appropriate behaviour consistent with WRMF’s core values. WRMF 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 WRMF’s business, activities, and events including, but not limited to, competitions, practices, tryouts, training camps, travel associated with WRMF’s activities, WRMF’s office environment, and any meetings.
4. An Individual who violates this Code may be subject to sanctions pursuant to WRMF’s *Discipline and Complaints Policy*. In addition to facing possible sanction pursuant to WRMF’s *Discipline and Complaints Policy*, an Individual 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 Individual complies with the ejection, and the Individual may be subject to any additional discipline associated with the particular competition with consideration of sanctions over and above that of the Ontario Football Conference (OFC) and Ontario Football Alliance (OFA) Code of Conduct Policies.
5. A Director, Head Coach, Assistant Coach or Team Manager of WRMF found to have engaged in acts of violence or harassment against any other volunteer, member, customer, club or other third party, will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action subject to the terms of WRMF’s *Human Resources Policy* as well as the employee’s Employment Agreement (if applicable)

6. This Code also applies to Individuals' conduct outside of WRMF's business, activities, and events when such conduct adversely affects relationships within WRMF (and its work and sport environment) and is detrimental to the image and reputation of WRMF. Such applicability will be determined by WRMF at its sole discretion.

RESPONSIBILITIES

7. Individuals have a responsibility to:
- a) Maintain and enhance the dignity and self-esteem of WRMF 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. Focusing comments or criticism appropriately and avoiding public criticism of athletes, coaches, officials, organizers, volunteers, employees, or members
 - iii. Consistently demonstrating the spirit of sportsmanship, sport leadership, and ethical conduct
 - iv. Acting, when appropriate, to correct or prevent practices that are unjustly discriminatory
 - v. Consistently treating individuals fairly and reasonably
 - vi. Ensuring adherence to the rules of the sport and the spirit of those rules. Including but not limited to OFC and OFA bylaws.
 - 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 one 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 expected of a junior-ranking athlete by a more senior teammate, which does not contribute to either athlete's positive development, but is required to be accepted as part of a team, regardless of the junior-ranking athlete'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 based on class, number of years on the team, or athletic ability."*
 - viii. Unwanted physical contact including, but not limited to, touching, petting, pinching, or kissing
 - ix. Unwelcome sexual flirtations, advances, requests, or invitations
 - x. Physical or sexual assault
 - xi. 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

- xii. Retaliation or threats of retaliation against an individual who reports harassment to WRMF
- c) Refrain from any behaviour that constitutes **workplace harassment**, where workplace harassment is defined as vexatious comment or conduct against a worker in a workplace – a comment or conduct that is known or ought reasonably to be known to be unwelcome. Workplace or on-field harassment should not be confused with legitimate, reasonable management actions that are part of the normal function, including measures to correct performance deficiencies, such as placing someone on a performance improvement plan, or imposing discipline for infractions. Types of behaviour that constitute harassment include, but are not limited to:
 - i. Bullying
 - ii. Repeated offensive or intimidating phone calls or emails
 - iii. Inappropriate sexual touching, advances, suggestions or requests
 - iv. Displaying or circulating offensive pictures, photographs or materials in printed or electronic form
 - v. Psychological abuse
 - vi. Personal harassment
 - vii. Discrimination
 - viii. Intimidating words or conduct (offensive jokes or innuendos)
 - ix. Words or actions which are known or should reasonably be known to be offensive, embarrassing, humiliating, or demeaning
- d) Refrain from any behaviour that constitutes **workplace violence**, where workplace violence is defined as the exercise of physical force by a person against a worker, in a workplace, that causes or could cause physical injury to the worker; an attempt to exercise physical force against a worker, in a workplace, that could cause physical injury to the worker; or a statement or behaviour that it is reasonable for a worker to interpret as a threat to exercise physical force against the worker, in a workplace, that could cause physical injury to the worker. Types of behaviour that constitute workplace harassment include, but are not limited to:
 - i. Verbal threats to attack a worker
 - ii. Sending to or leaving threatening notes or emails for a worker
 - iii. Making threatening physical gestures to a worker
 - iv. Wielding a weapon in a workplace
 - v. Hitting, pinching or unwanted touching of a worker which is not accidental
 - vi. Throwing an object at a worker
 - vii. Blocking normal movement or physical interference of a worker, with or without the use of equipment
 - viii. Sexual violence against a worker
 - ix. Any attempt to engage in the type of conduct outlined above
- e) 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. Display of sexually offensive material
 - iii. Sexually degrading words used to describe a person
 - iv. Inquiries or comments about a person's sex life
 - v. Unwelcome sexual flirtations, advances, or propositions
 - vi. Persistent unwanted contact

- f) Abstain from the non-medical use of drugs or the use of performance-enhancing drugs or methods. More specifically, WRMF 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 WRMF's *Discipline and Complaints Policy*. WRMF will respect any penalty enacted pursuant to a breach of the Canadian Anti-Doping Program, whether imposed by WRMF or any other sport organization
- g) Refrain from associating with any person for the purpose of 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)
- h) Refrain from the use of power or authority in an attempt to coerce another person to engage in inappropriate activities
- i) Refrain from consuming alcohol, tobacco products, or recreational drugs while participating in WRMF programs, activities, competitions, or events
- j) In the case of adults, avoid consuming alcohol in situations where minors are present and take reasonable steps to manage the responsible consumption of alcohol in adult-oriented social situations associated with WRMF's events
- k) Respect the property of others and not wilfully cause damage
- l) Promote the sport in the most constructive and positive manner possible
- m) Adhere to all federal, provincial, municipal and host country laws
- n) Comply, at all times, with WRMF's bylaws, policies, procedures, and rules and regulations, as adopted and amended from time to time

BOARD/COMMITTEE MEMBERS AND STAFF

- 8. In addition to section 7 (above), WRMF's Directors, Committee Members, and Staff will have additional responsibilities to:
 - a) Function primarily as a member of the board and/or committee(s) of WRMF; not as a member of any other particular member or constituency
 - b) Act with honesty and integrity and conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the nature and responsibilities of WRMF's business and the maintenance of Individuals' confidence
 - c) Ensure that WRMF's 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 in the best interests of WRMF
 - 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 WRMF's 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 WRMF is incorporated
 - i) Respect the confidentiality appropriate to issues of a sensitive nature

- j) Ensure that all Individuals 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 WRMF governance documents
- n) Conform to the bylaws and policies approved by WRMF, in particular this *Code of Conduct and Ethics* as well as the *Conflict of Interest Policy* and *Confidentiality Policy*

COACHES

9. In addition to section 7 (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) Respect other coaches
 - h) Meet the highest standards of credentials, integrity and suitability, including but not limited to such considerations established by WRMF'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) 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
 - k) 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
 - l) 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 coach is in a position of power, trust, or authority over the athlete
 - m) 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

- n) Dress professionally, neatly, and inoffensively
- o) Use inoffensive language, taking into account the audience being addressed
- p) Read, sign and adhere to the WRMF Coaches Code of Conduct

ATHLETES

10. In addition to section 7 (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, 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 WRMF'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 WRMF; focusing on neatness, cleanliness, and discretion
- h) Act in accordance with WRMF's policies and procedures and, when applicable, additional rules as outlined by coaches or managers