

OVA ABUSE POLICY PERSON IN AUTHORITY CODE OF CONDUCT

This is a Pan-Canadian Policy that has been amended by Volleyball Canada and the Ontario Volleyball Association in order to be consistent with the Universal Code of Conduct to Prevent and Address Maltreatment in Sport (UCCMS)

Definitions

1. The following terms have these meanings in this policy:
 - a) **Abuse** – Maltreatment as defined below;
 - b) **Boundary Transgressions** – as defined in UCCMS s. 5.7, namely interactions or communications that breach objectively reasonable boundaries of an individual and are inconsistent with duties/responsibilities of the Participant;
 - c) **Child/Children** – a Minor as defined in the UCCMS, namely an individual under the age of 19;
 - d) **Independent Third Party** – an independent person or organization that has no professional or personal ties to Volleyball Canada or OVA
 - e) **Individuals** – Registered Participants as defined in Volleyball Canada’s Bylaws and in the Bylaws of a Provincial/Territorial Association, as applicable, (Participants as defined in the UCCMS), and for greater certainty includes all individuals employed by, contracted by, or engaged in activities with, Volleyball Canada or a Provincial/Territorial Association including, but not limited to employees, contractors, athletes, volleyball clubs, coaches, mission staff, referees, volunteers, managers, administrators, committee members, health care workers, directors and officers, parents/guardians, and spectators at events;
 - f) **Maltreatment** – as defined in the UCCMS, namely a volitional act or omission described in sections 5.2-5.6 of the UCCMS that results in harm or has the potential for physical or psychological harm and includes Psychological Maltreatment (s. 5.2), Physical Maltreatment (s. 5.3), Neglect (s. 5.4), Sexual Maltreatment (s. 5.5), and Grooming (s. 5.6);
 - f.1) **OVA** – Ontario Volleyball Association;
 - g) **Person in Authority/PIAs** – any person who holds a position of authority over a Vulnerable individual pursuant to the role assigned to them. Persons in Authority include, but are not limited to, coaches, managers, trainers, referees, staff, and administrators; further, a Power Imbalance (as defined below) exists in any interaction between a Person in Authority and a Vulnerable Individual;
 - h) **Power Imbalance** – as defined in the UCCMS; it is presumed to exist where a participant has authority or control over another person and is in a position to confer, grant or deny a benefit or advancement, or is responsible for the physical or psychological well-being of a person;
 - i) **Prohibited Behaviour** – conduct described in UCCMS section 5, including but not limited to Maltreatment and the prohibited conduct specified in paragraph 9.1;
 - j) **Provincial/Territorial Associations/PTAs** – the provincial/territorial member governing bodies for volleyball in each province/territory;
 - j.1) **UCCMS** – the Universal Code of Conduct to Prevent and Address Maltreatment in Sport, Version 6.0, published on May 31, 2022 by the Sport Dispute Resolution Centre of Canada (also see paragraphs 4-7 below);
 - k) **Vulnerable Adults** – is included in the definition of Vulnerable Participant;
 - l) **Vulnerable Individuals** – Minors and Vulnerable Participants; and
 - m) **Vulnerable Participant** – as defined in the UCCMS, namely Persons at risk of Maltreatment and/or coercion, often due to age, gender, race, poverty, Indigeneity, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, disability psychological or cognitive ability, and their intersections, and it includes persons who are not able to provide informed consent.

- 1.1 The definitions in the UCCMS (Appendix 1 Definitions) apply to this and all other Volleyball Canada and OVA Policies as applicable.

Purpose

2. Volleyball Canada and the Provincial/Territorial Associations are committed to a sport environment free from Abuse. The purpose of this policy is twofold:
 - a) to define Abuse and educate Individuals about Abuse, by outlining how Volleyball Canada and Provincial/Territorial Associations will work to prevent Abuse, and how Abuse or suspected Abuse can be reported to and addressed by Volleyball Canada and Provincial/Territorial Associations; and
 - b) to establish boundaries for Persons in Authority for the protection of Vulnerable Individuals from Prohibited Behaviours, and in particular, from Grooming and Sexual Maltreatment.
 - i. *Prohibited Behaviours*: In assessing whether a behaviour would be considered a Prohibited Behaviour, one should consider whether the behaviour would raise concerns in the mind of a reasonable observer. The behaviour may also be assessed by determining whose needs are being met (the Vulnerable Individual or the PIA) and what objective appears to be guiding the interaction.
 - ii. *Grooming and Sexual Maltreatment*: The Grooming process is often gradual and involves building trust and comfort with a person, and sometimes also with the protective adults and peers around the person. It may begin with subtle behaviours that may not appear to be inappropriate but that can serve to sexualize a relationship, reduce sexual inhibitions, or normalize inappropriate behaviour. It may include the testing of boundaries (e.g. seemingly accidental touching) that gradually escalates to Sexual Maltreatment (e.g. sexualized touching). It is acknowledged that many victims / survivors of sexual abuse neither recognize the Grooming process as it is happening, nor do they recognize that this process of manipulation is part of the overall abuse process.

Grooming behaviour often begins with Boundary Transgressions, which can occur when a Person In Authority places their needs above those of the Vulnerable Individual, and thus gains personally or professionally at the Vulnerable Individual's expense.

Zero Tolerance Statement

3. Volleyball Canada and the Provincial/Territorial Associations have zero tolerance for any type of Abuse.

Individuals are required to report instances of Abuse or suspected Abuse in accordance with the policies of Volleyball Canada and the OVA respectively; for greater certainty, there is no time limitation in respect of reporting an instance of Abuse or suspected Abuse, provided that the parties met the definition of an Individual at the time that the alleged conduct took place. Failure to report, as defined in s. 5.11 of the UCCMS, is a violation of this policy and the OVA Code of Conduct.

Application

- 3.1 This policy applies to all Individuals.
- 3.2 This policy applies to Individuals' conduct during the business, activities, and sanctioned events of Volleyball Canada and the OVA, including, but not limited to, competitions, practices, tryouts, training camps, travel associated with organizational activities, and any meetings.
- 3.3 This policy also applies to Individuals' conduct outside of the business, activities, and sanctioned events of Volleyball Canada and the OVA when such conduct has the potential to cause harm to OVA members, or adversely affects the relationships with or is detrimental to, or has the potential to be detrimental to, the image and reputation of Volleyball Canada or the OVA. Such applicability will be determined by Volleyball Canada or the OVA, as applicable, at its sole discretion.

Universal Code of Conduct to Prevent and Address Maltreatment in Sport (UCCMS)

4. The Universal Code of Conduct to Prevent and Address Maltreatment in Sport ([UCCMS](#)) is the core document that sets harmonized rules to be adopted by sport organizations that receive funding from the Government of Canada to advance a respectful sport culture that delivers quality, inclusive, accessible, welcoming, and safe sport experiences.
5. Volleyball Canada formally adopted the UCCMS as a policy of Volleyball Canada in June 2022.
6. Volleyball Canada entered into an agreement with the Sport Dispute Resolution Centre of Canada (SDRCC) in June 2022, for the enforcement of the UCCMS, including using the services of the Office of the Sport Integrity Commissioner (OSIC) and the Director of Sanctions and Outcomes (DSO) (the SDRCC Agreement.) Volleyball Canada's participation in this agreement extends to the OVA and the OVA's member clubs.
7. If there is a conflict between a provision of the UCCMS and a provision of any other Volleyball Canada Policy or any OVA policy, the UCCMS prevails to the extent of the conflict.

Preventing Abuse

8. Volleyball Canada and the OVA will enact measures aimed at preventing Abuse, including, but not limited to, screening, orientation, educating and monitoring.

Practice

9. When Individuals, especially Persons in Authority, interact with Vulnerable Individuals who are not their Children, they are required to enact certain practical approaches to these interactions including, but not limited to:
 - a) Limiting physical interactions to non-threatening or non-sexual touching (e.g. high-fives, pats on the back or shoulder, handshakes, specific skill instruction, etc.);
 - a.1) Not engaging in the Prohibited Behaviours detailed in the UCCMS or in any of the prohibited conduct defined in paragraph 9.1;
 - b) Ensuring that Vulnerable Individuals are always supervised by more than one adult;
 - b.1) Where a one-on-one interaction between a Person in Authority and a Vulnerable Individual is necessary, ensuring that such an interaction complies with the Rule of Two, as described in Appendix A;
 - c) Ensuring that more than one person is involved with team selection (thereby limiting the consolidation of power onto one Individual);

- d) Ensuring that parents/guardians are aware that some non-personal communication between Persons in Authority and Vulnerable Individuals (e.g. between coaches and minor athletes) may take place electronically (e.g. by texting, direct messaging) and that this type of communication is now considered to be commonplace, especially with older Children (e.g. teenagers). Such communication, in addition to being subject to the *Code of Conduct and Ethics*, shall be carried out in accordance with the Mandatory Requirements established in paragraph 9.2; and
- e) When traveling with Vulnerable Individuals, the Person in Authority will not transport Vulnerable Individuals without another adult present and will not stay in the same overnight accommodation location without additional adult supervision, except when the Person in Authority is the parent of the Vulnerable Individual.

Specific Prohibitions – Persons in Authority

9.1 Persons in Authority shall not engage in the following actions or behaviours with, or in the presence of, a Vulnerable Individual.

- a) Butt-pats, tickling, wrestling, or horseplay;
- b) Continued physical contact that makes the Vulnerable Individual uncomfortable, whether expressed or not;
- c) Cuddling or prolonged physical contact;
- d) Displaying material of a sexual nature;
- e) Displaying offensive materials, gestures, or symbols;
- f) Excessive gift-giving to a Vulnerable Individual;
- g) Excessive involvement in a Vulnerable Individual's personal life;
- h) Giving massages, piggyback rides, or shoulder rides;
- i) Having an athlete sit on the lap of a PIA or making such a request;
- j) Hitting, pushing, punching, beating, biting, striking, kicking, choking, slapping, or purposely injuring;
- k) Lingering or repeated embraces;
- l) Mocking or threatening a Vulnerable Individual;
- m) Negative or disparaging comments about Vulnerable Individual's disability, ethnicity, religion, race, sexual orientation, gender, gender expression or gender identity;
- n) Nudity or exposure of genitals;
- o) Overlooking hazing or other activity that is humiliating, degrading, abusive or dangerous;
- p) Physical contact that a Vulnerable Individual has specifically requested not occur;
- q) Physical contact that does not take place in public;
- r) Physical contact that is not for benefit of the Vulnerable Individual (i.e. it instead it meets a need of the PIA);
- s) Providing drugs, alcohol or tobacco to a Vulnerable Individual;
- t) Restricting a Vulnerable Individual's privacy;
- u) Sexual or discriminatory jokes or comments;
- v) Sexually oriented conversation or discussions about personal sexual activities;
- w) Socially isolating a Vulnerable Individual;
- x) Spending time with a Vulnerable Individual outside of team activities; or
- y) Withholding or reducing playing time to a Vulnerable Individual based on the athlete's disability, ethnicity, religion, race, sexual orientation, gender, gender expression or gender identity.

Mandatory Requirements – Communications

9.2 Persons in Authority must comply with the following rules when communicating with Vulnerable Individuals.

- a) Group messages, group emails, or team pages are to be used as the regular method of communication;
- b) PIAs may send personal texts, direct messages on social media, or emails only when necessary and only for the purpose of communicating information related to team issues and activities;
- c) The content of all such electronic communication must be professional in tone when communicating information related to team issues or activities;
- d) Such communication from PIAs must be carried out between 6 am and 11:59 pm, unless extenuating circumstances exist;
- e) Sexually explicit language or sexually oriented conversation is prohibited; furthermore, PIAs must not send inappropriate or sexually explicit pictures or videos;
- f) Communication concerning drug or alcohol use (other than regarding its prohibition) is prohibited; and
- g) PIAs must not ask a Vulnerable Individual to keep a secret for them.

Monitoring

10. Volleyball Canada and the Provincial/Territorial Associations may regularly monitor those Individuals who have access to, or interact with, Vulnerable Individuals. The monitoring will be based on the level of risk, as described in the *Screening Policy*.

Reporting Abuse

11. Volleyball Canada and the OVA will share all decisions regarding Abuse with one another. All information shared will be in compliance with Volleyball Canada and/or Provincial/Territorial Associations' Privacy Policy.

12. The policies of Volleyball Canada and the OVA will require that complaints relating to Abuse and Prohibited Behaviours must be handled by an Independent Third Party. In the case of Volleyball Canada, this is to be done pursuant to the SDRCC Agreement.

13. Volleyball Canada and the OVA pledge not to dismiss, penalize, discipline, or retaliate or discriminate against any person who discloses information or submits, in good faith, a report concerning Abuse or a Prohibited Behaviour.

Communication

14. Volleyball Canada and the OVA will identify those persons within their respective organizations who will be responsible for implementing this policy.

Review and Amendment

15. All significant amendments to this policy will be submitted to Volleyball Canada for review by its *ad hoc* committee on policies.

16. This policy will be reviewed every two years. Any significant policy amendments require approval by Volleyball Canada and the OVA.

Approval

17. This policy was approved by Volleyball Canada and its Board of Directors on Oct. 11, 2022.

18. This policy was approved by Ontario Volleyball Association and its Board of Directors on February 7, 2023.

Appendix A

Rule of Two

Rule of Two

- A1. The Rule of Two requires that a PIA never be alone or out of sight with a Vulnerable Individual.
- A2. Any one-on-one interaction between a PIA and the Vulnerable Individual must take place within earshot and view of a second PIA. If possible, one of the PIAs should be the same gender as the Vulnerable Individual.
- A3. If a PIA is not available, another screened volunteer, parent, or adult is to be asked to be present. (An exception is permitted for medical emergencies.)
- A4. Ensure an open and observable environment for one-on-one interactions; this could include leaving the door open when having a meeting, or moving away from others in a public space but staying within visual range. Private one-on-one interactions, which should only occur when necessary, are to be open and observable by another Individual.

For additional guidance, refer to the *Open and Observable Environments* guidelines published on Volleyball Canada’s website, as well as the Coaching Association of Canada’s “Gold Standard” and Volleyball Canada’s “Open and Observable Environments: Rule of 2” infographics below.



OPEN AND OBSERVABLE ENVIRONMENTS: RULE OF TWO



RULE OF 2

WHAT IS IT?

RULE OF TWO states that there will always be two screened and safety-trained adults with a participant, especially a minor athlete, when in a potentially vulnerable situation.

WHAT ARE OPEN AND OBSERVABLE ENVIRONMENTS?

Open and observable spaces involve making meaningful and concerted efforts to avoid situations where a person of authority: coach, official, staff member, etc., might be alone with an athlete and/or vulnerable individual.



Not closed or concealed from others



No closed doors or secluded locations



Others should be aware the interaction is taking place

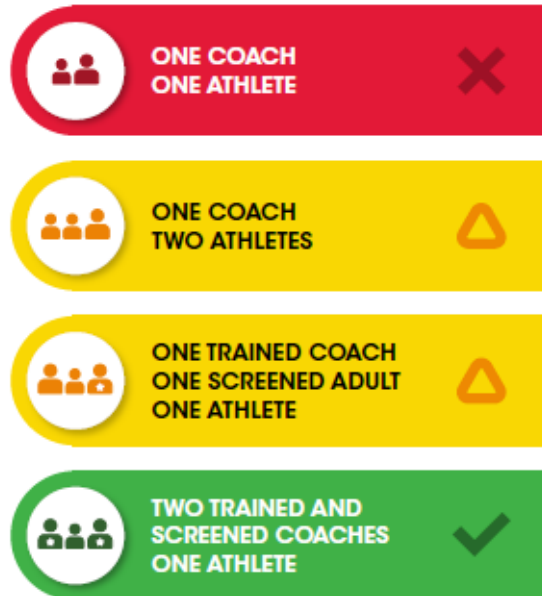


Others can see, observe or take note of the interaction



Volleyball Canada (VC) endorses the Coaching Association of Canada's Responsible Coaching Movement and all participants of VC events, activities, and meetings are encouraged to adhere to these best practice guidelines.
www.coach.ca/responsiblecoaching

INTERACTIONS



ELIMINATE one-to-one electronic messaging and ensure that all communications are sent to the group and/or include parents (for minors) or other certified coaches and/or staff members.



CONSIDER the gender of the participant when selecting the screened people for the closed meeting.

ENSURE a minor participant rides in a vehicle with two screened adults present.

