



SAFE SPORT

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Overview



- What is Safe Sport?
- The Canadian Context for Safe Sport
- Implications for Sport Organizations
- A Safe Sport Framework
- Independent Third Party Role
- Examples of Safe Sport Situations
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What is Safe Sport?



- An international movement to end abuse and misconduct in sport.
- Based on the principle that everyone in sport has the right to enjoy the sport by participating in a safe and inclusive training and competitive environment free of abuse, harassment or discrimination.
- In Canada, Safe Sport covers all forms of 'safety' including such things as mental health, inclusion, diversity and, concussion prevention.

Safe Sport in Canada



- The Federal Government has acted to foster safe sport in Canada collaborating with provincial/ territorial governments and the sport community.
- New funding has been provided to launch initiatives such as:
- A bilingual national toll-free helpline for harassment, abuse and discrimination which provides a professional listening and referral service. <http://abuse-free-sport.ca>
- The development of a nationwide code of conduct for sport in Canada.

Safe Sport in Canada



- The Minister of Sport has linked funding to sport organizations with a number of safe sport requirements.
- A full listing of Government of Canada initiatives can be found in the Safe Sport for All Backgrounder at: <https://www.canada.ca/en/canadian-heritage/news/2019/03/safe-sport-for-all.html>

Implications for Sport Organizations



- In June 2018, new Safe Sport measures were announced to address harassment, abuse and discrimination in sport.
- Sport organizations are expected to:
 - take all necessary measures to create a workplace free from harassment, abuse and discrimination of any kind
 - immediately disclose any incident of harassment and abuse
 - make provisions—within their governance framework—for access to an independent third party to address harassment and abuse cases
 - provide mandatory training on harassment and abuse to their members by April 1, 2020.

A Basic Safe Sport Framework

Clear Expectations,
Governance and
Operating Models

Safe Sport Program
Monitoring, Reporting
and Evaluation

Prevention

Fair, Timely
Response To
Concerns

Clear Expectations, Governance and Operating Models



For Example:

- Policies and Procedures are in place and include:
 - Code of Conduct which describes standards of conduct and behaviour for all Individuals
 - Complaints and Discipline Policy
 - Appeals Policy
 - Access to an Independent Third Party
- A Risk Management Framework Guides Action
 - Identifies risks associated with the sport
 - Identifies risk mitigation strategies

Prevention

Measures may include:

- Screening for personnel and volunteers
- Required training on harassment and abuse for members
- Ongoing education and awareness on topics such as:
- The Code of Conduct
 - Inclusion and Diversity
 - Complaint and Dispute Resolution Options
 - Concussion Awareness
- Implementation of other risk mitigation strategies identified for the sport



Fair and Timely Response



- Members know where to turn if they have a Safe Sport related concern.
- Are able to access an independent, third party to raise issues confidentially.
- Know how to file a complaint following procedures set out by the organization.
- Complaints are screened by the third party for jurisdiction and timeliness.
- Disputes are addressed through mediation/adjudication as appropriate.
- Focus is on early resolution where possible to the circumstance.

Fair and Timely Response



- Where required, independent investigations are carried out to determine facts.
- Hearings when required, take place before an independent decision maker as per organizational procedure.
- The complaint process is confidential and respects the principle of natural justice.
- Discipline is administered fairly as per organizational policy and precedent.
- An appeal process is in place.
- All incidents of abuse and harassment are reported to the designated individual.

Independent Third Party Role



- Administers member concerns at arms length from the organization which may increase confidence in reporting.
- Ensures the principles of procedural fairness are adhered to.
- Ensures that the investigative process and complaint process is carried out with due diligence and respect for the rights of those involved.
- Preserves confidentiality so that no one potentially conflicted within the organization may discover who the complainant is, who the person alleged to have breached the applicable policy or procedure is, and/or the nature or specifics of the allegations.
- Reports to a designated individual within the organization regarding the nature of the matter, to obtain financial authority as necessary, and to update regarding the status of the matter.

Independent Third Party Role



- Arranges for mediation when appropriate.
- Designates who the investigator will be, when required.
- Has authority to request, receive and, review any documents necessary to the handling of the matter.
- Receives a full copy of the investigation report and reviews the recommendations contained within the report.
- Where appropriate, convenes the appointment of an administrative body as referenced within the organization's applicable policy or procedure.
- Reports to Sport Canada as required.

Safe Sport Program Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting



Measures may include:

- Tracking complaint frequency and trends
- Administering surveys to assess member safe sport related knowledge and experiences
- Publishing trends to educate members and prevent repeat breaches of the Code of Conduct and organizational policies and procedures
- Benchmarking with other sport organizations

Examples of Safe Sport Situations



- Breaches of acceptable behaviour set out in the Code of Conduct (e.g. verbal abuse, physical abuse, sexual harassment, preferential treatment, isolating others, making racist remarks, being disrespectful, etc.)
- Use of power imbalance in relationships (e.g. coach-athlete) to undermine, harass or discriminate
- Failure to accommodate (e.g. transitioning athletes, special needs, cultural and religious considerations)
- Inappropriate use of social media as well as “gossip” to harm and undermine individual and organizational reputation
- Failure to follow organizational policies and procedures jeopardizing safety of athletes and others (e.g. concussion protocols, field of play management, etc.)

Safe Sport and Equestrian Canada



Equestrian Canada has demonstrated a strong commitment to safe sport with many required elements in place:

- Core policies have been implemented including the Code of Conduct, an Alternative Dispute Resolution policy and, a Complaint and Appeals policy.
- An Independent Third Party has been retained to administer safe sport complaints. The role and contact information has been communicated to members.
- Coach licensing

Safe Sport and Equestrian Canada



Work is in progress to:

- Review and update organizational policies and procedures to align with Safe Sport changes (e.g. Third Party Role)
- Prioritize education and training for members:
 - customized training for both concussion and harassment and abuse to be made available to all sport license holders prior to the April 1, 2020 deadline
 - PTSOs will have the option of offering this same training to their members. Ontario Equestrian has already made this commitment.

Safe Sport and Equestrian Canada



- Implement Screening
- Develop and implement a risk management framework
- Publish historical and ongoing discipline decisions

The View Ahead



- Safe Sport is about everyone in sport having the right to enjoy the sport in a safe and inclusive environment free of abuse, harassment or discrimination.
- Safe Sport sets a framework for managing inherent risks.
- The Safe Sport movement is the new normal in Canada and Internationally.
- Approaches will mature and evolve with experience and government funding decisions.
- Equestrian Canada is well positioned to keep pace with these new and evolving requirements.