

# GYMNASTICS ONTARIO

## CODE OF CONDUCT AND ETHICS

### Definitions

1. The following terms have these meanings in this Code:

- a) *“Individuals”* – Individuals employed by, or engaged in activities with, Gymnastics Ontario and/or its Member Clubs including, but not limited to, athletes, coaches, convenors, officials, volunteers, managers, administrators, committee members, learning facilitators, parents and guardians and spectators at events, and Directors and Officers
- b) *“Workplace”* - Any place where business or work-related activities are conducted. Workplaces include but are not limited to, Gymnastics Ontario’s office, Member Clubs working environment, work-related social functions, work assignments outside Gymnastics Ontario’s or Member Club offices, work-related travel, the training and competition environment, and work-related conferences or training sessions
- c) *“Abuse”* – As defined in Gymnastics Ontario’s *Abuse Policy*
- d) *“Discrimination”* – Differential treatment of an individual based on one or more prohibited grounds which include race, citizenship, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, marital status, family status, genetic characteristics, or disability.
- e) *“Harassment”* – A course of vexatious comment or conduct including within the use of social media, against an Individual or group, which is known or ought to reasonably be known to be unwelcome. Types of behaviour that constitute Harassment include, but are not limited to:
  - i. Written or verbal abuse, threats, or outbursts;
  - ii. Persistent unwelcome remarks, jokes, comments, innuendo, or taunts;
  - iii. Racial harassment, which is racial slurs, jokes, name calling, or insulting behaviour or terminology that reinforces stereotypes or discounts abilities because of racial or ethnic origin;
  - 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 endanger a person’s safety, or may negatively affect performance;
  - vii. Hazing, which is any form of conduct which exhibits any potentially humiliating, degrading, abusive, or dangerous activity expected of a junior-ranking individual by a more senior individual, which does not contribute to either individual’s positive development, but is required to be accepted as part of a team or group, regardless of the junior-ranking individual’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 or group member based on class, number of years on the team or with the group, or ability;
  - viii. Unwanted physical contact including, but not limited to, touching, petting, pinching, or kissing;
  - ix. Deliberately excluding or socially isolating a person from a group or team;
  - x. Persistent sexual flirtations, advances, requests, or invitations;
  - xi. Physical or sexual assault;

- xii. Behaviours such as those described above that are not directed towards a specific person or group but have the same effect of creating a negative or hostile environment;
  - xiii. Retaliation or threats of retaliation against a person who reports harassment to Gymnastics Ontario;
  - xiv. Bullying;
  - xv. Repeated offensive or intimidating phone calls or emails;
  - xvi. Displaying or circulating offensive pictures, photographs or materials in printed or electronic form; and
  - xvii. Stalking
- f) *“Workplace Harassment”* – Vexatious comment or conduct against a worker in a Workplace that is known or ought reasonably to be known to be unwelcome. Workplace Harassment should not be confused with legitimate, reasonable management actions that are part of the normal work/training function, including measures to correct performance deficiencies, such as placing someone on a performance improvement plan, or imposing discipline for workplace infractions. Types of behaviour that constitute Workplace Harassment include, but are not limited to:
- i. Bullying;
  - ii. Workplace pranks, vandalism, bullying or hazing;
  - iii. Repeated offensive or intimidating phone calls or emails;
  - iv. Inappropriate sexual touching, advances, suggestions or requests;
  - v. Displaying or circulating offensive pictures, photographs or materials in printed or electronic form;
  - vi. Psychological abuse;
  - vii. Excluding or ignoring someone, including persistent exclusion of a particular person from work-related social gatherings;
  - viii. Deliberately withholding information that would enable a person to do his or her job, perform or train;
  - ix. Sabotaging someone else’s work or performance;
  - x. Gossiping or spreading malicious rumours;
  - xi. Intimidating words or conduct (offensive jokes or innuendos); and
  - xii. Words or actions which are known or should reasonably be known to be offensive, embarrassing, humiliating, or demeaning.
- g) *“Sexual Harassment”* – A course of vexatious comment or conduct including within the use of social media, against an Individual because of sex, sexual orientation, gender identify or gender expression, where the course of comment or conduct is known or ought reasonably to be known to be unwelcome; or making a sexual solicitation or advance where the person making the solicitation or advance is in a position to confer, grant or deny a benefit or advance to the Individual and the person knows or ought reasonably to know that the solicitation or advance is unwelcome. Types of behaviour that constitute Sexual Harassment include, but are not limited to:
- i. Sexist jokes;
  - ii. Threats, punishment, or denial of a benefit for refusing a sexual advance;
  - iii. Offering a benefit in exchange for a sexual favour;
  - iv. Demanding hugs;
  - v. Bragging about sexual ability;
  - vi. Leering (persistent sexual staring);
  - vii. Sexual assault;

- viii. Display of sexually offensive material;
  - ix. Distributing sexually explicit messages or attachments such as pictures or video files;
  - x. Sexually degrading words used to describe an Individual;
  - xi. Unwelcome inquiries into or comments about an Individual's gender identity or physical appearance;
  - xii. Inquiries or comments about an Individual's sex life;
  - xiii. Persistent, unwanted attention after a consensual relationship ends;
  - xiv. Persistent unwelcome sexual flirtations, advances, or propositions; and
  - xv. Persistent unwanted contact.
- h) *"Workplace Violence"* – the use of or threat 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 Violence include, but are not limited to:
- i. Verbal or written threats to attack;
  - ii. Sending to or leaving threatening notes or emails;
  - iii. Physically threatening behaviour such as shaking a fist at someone, finger pointing, destroying property, or throwing objects;
  - iv. Wielding a weapon in a Workplace;
  - v. Hitting, pinching or unwanted touching which is not accidental;
  - vi. Dangerous or threatening horseplay;
  - vii. Physical restraint or confinement;
  - viii. Blatant or intentional disregard for the safety or wellbeing of others;
  - ix. Blocking normal movement or physical interference, with or without the use of equipment;
  - x. Sexual violence; and
  - xi. Any attempt to engage in the type of conduct outlined above.

### **Purpose**

2. The purpose of this Code is to ensure a safe and positive environment (within Gymnastics Ontario and its Member Clubs' programs, activities, and events) by informing Individuals that there is an expectation, at all times, of appropriate behaviour consistent with Gymnastics Ontario's core values. Gymnastics Ontario supports equal opportunity, prohibits discriminatory practices, and is committed to providing an environment in which all individuals are treated with respect and fairness.

### **Application of this Code**

3. This Code applies to Individuals' conduct during Gymnastics Ontario's and its Member Clubs' business, activities, and events including, but not limited to, competitions, practices, tryouts, training camps, travel associated with activities, office environment, and any meetings.

An Individual who violates this Code may be subject to sanctions pursuant to Gymnastics Ontario's *Discipline and Complaints Policy*, which may include immediate sanctions pending further review. In addition to facing possible sanction pursuant to Gymnastics Ontario'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 in accordance with the Event Discipline Procedure or the Discipline and Complaints Policy.

4. An employee of Gymnastics Ontario found to have engaged in acts of violence or harassment against any other employee, worker, contractor, member, customer, supplier, client or other third party during business hours, or at any event of Gymnastics Ontario, will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action subject to the terms of Gymnastics Ontario's policies for human resources as well as the employee's Employment Agreement (if applicable).
5. This Code also applies to Individuals' conduct outside of Gymnastics Ontario's business, activities, and events when such conduct adversely affects relationships within Gymnastics Ontario or is detrimental to the image and reputation of Gymnastics Ontario. Such applicability will be determined by Gymnastics Ontario at its sole discretion.

### **Responsibilities**

6. Individuals have a responsibility to:
  - a) Maintain and enhance the dignity and self-esteem of Gymnastics Ontario members and other individuals by:
    - i. Treating each other with the highest standards of respect and integrity;
    - 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; and
    - vi. Ensuring adherence to the rules of the sport and the spirit of those rules.
  - b) Refrain from any behaviour that constitutes Harassment, Workplace Harassment, Sexual Harassment, Workplace Violence, or Discrimination
  - c) Abstain from the non-medical use of drugs or the use of performance-enhancing drugs or methods. More specifically, Gymnastics Ontario 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 Gymnastics Ontario's *Discipline and Complaints Policy*. Gymnastics Ontario will respect any penalty enacted pursuant to a breach of the Canadian Anti-Doping Program, whether imposed by Gymnastics Ontario or any other sport organization
  - d) 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)
  - e) Refrain from the use of power or authority in an attempt to coerce another person to engage in inappropriate activities
  - f) Refrain from consuming alcohol products, cannabis, or recreational drugs while participating in Gymnastics Ontario's programs, activities, competitions, or events
  - g) In the case of minors, not consume alcohol, tobacco, or cannabis at any competition or event;
  - h) In the case of adults, not consume alcohol or cannabis in the Workplace or be impaired in any situation associated with Gymnastics Ontario's events (subject to any requirements for accommodation), and in situations where minors are present, and take reasonable steps to

- manage the responsible consumption of alcohol in adult-oriented social situations associated with Gymnastics Ontario's events
- i) Respect the property of others and not wilfully cause damage
  - j) Promote the sport in the most constructive and positive manner possible
  - k) When driving a vehicle with an Individual:
    - i. Not have his or her license suspended;
    - ii. Not be under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs or substances; and
    - iii. Have valid car insurance
  - l) Adhere to all federal, provincial, municipal and host country laws
  - m) Refrain from engaging in deliberate cheating which is intended to manipulate the outcome of a competition and/or not offer or receive any bribe which is intended to manipulate the outcome of a competition
  - n) Comply, at all times, with Gymnastics Ontario's bylaws, policies, procedures, and rules and regulations, as adopted and amended from time to time

### **Directors, Committee Members, and Staff**

7. In addition to section 7 (above), Gymnastics Ontario's Directors, Committee Members, and Staff will have additional responsibilities to:
- a) Function primarily as a Director or Committee Member or Staff Member of Gymnastics Ontario; 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 Gymnastics Ontario's business and the maintenance of Individuals' confidence
  - c) Ensure that Gymnastics Ontario's financial affairs are conducted in a responsible and transparent manner with due regard for all fiduciary responsibilities
  - d) Conduct themselves transparently, professionally, lawfully and in good faith in the best interests of Gymnastics Ontario
  - e) Be independent, 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
  - g) Keep informed about Gymnastics Ontario's activities, the sport community, and general trends in the sectors in which it operates
  - h) Exercise the degree of care, diligence, and skill required in the performance of their duties pursuant to the laws under which Gymnastics Ontario is incorporated
  - i) Respect the confidentiality appropriate to issues of a sensitive nature
  - j) Respect the decisions of the majority and resign if unable to do so
  - k) Commit the time to attend meetings and be diligent in preparation for, and participation in, discussions at such meetings
  - l) Have a thorough knowledge and understanding of all Gymnastics Ontario governance documents
  - m) Conform to the bylaws and policies approved by Gymnastics Ontario
  - n) Disclose any conflict of interest

### **Coaches**

8. 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) Accept and promote athletes' personal goals and refer athletes to other coaches and sports specialists as appropriate
- f) Provide athletes (and the parents/guardians of minor athletes) with the information necessary to be involved in the decisions that affect the athlete
- g) Act in the best interest of the athlete's development as a whole person
- h) Comply with Gymnastics Ontario's *Screening Policy*, if applicable
- i) Report to Gymnastics Ontario 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, cannabis, and/or tobacco
- k) Respect athletes from other clubs, 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 an intimate or sexual relationship with an athlete under the age of 18 or any athlete in which the coach maintains a position of trust or authority;
- m) Disclose any sexual or intimate relationship with an athlete over the age of 18 to Gymnastics Ontario and immediately discontinue any coaching involvement with that athlete;
- n) 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
- o) Dress professionally, neatly, and inoffensively.
- p) Use inoffensive language, taking into account the audience being addressed

### **Athletes**

9. 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;
- b) Participate and appear on-time 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 Gymnastics Ontario's rules and requirements regarding clothing and equipment
- e) Act in a sportsmanlike manner and not display appearances of violence, foul language, or gestures to other athletes, officials, coaches, or spectators

- f) Dress to represent the sport and themselves well and with professionalism
- g) Act in accordance with Gymnastics Ontario's policies and procedures and, when applicable, additional rules as outlined by coaches or managers

### **Officials**

10. In addition to section 7 (above), officials will have additional responsibilities to:

- a) Maintain and update their knowledge of the rules and rules changes
- b) Not publicly criticize other officials or any club or association;
- c) Work within the boundaries of their position's description while supporting the work of other officials
- d) Act as an ambassador of Gymnastics Ontario by agreeing to enforce and abide by national and provincial rules and regulations
- e) Take ownership of actions and decisions made while officiating
- f) Respect the rights, dignity, and worth of all individuals
- g) Act openly, impartially, professionally, lawfully, and in good faith
- h) Be fair, equitable, considerate, independent, honest, and impartial in all dealings with others
- i) Respect the confidentiality required by issues of a sensitive nature, which may include ejections, defaults, forfeits, discipline processes, appeals, and specific information or data about Individuals
- j) Honour all assignments unless unable to do so by virtue of illness or personal emergency, and in these cases inform the assignor or association at the earliest possible time
- k) When writing reports, set out the actual facts
- l) Dress in proper attire for officiating

### **Parents/Guardians and Spectators**

11. In addition to section 7 (above), parents/guardians and spectators involved at either Gymnastics Ontario or Member Clubs and activities will:

- a) Encourage athletes to compete within the rules and to resolve conflicts without resorting to hostility or violence
- b) Condemn the use of violence in any form
- c) Never ridicule a participant for making a mistake during a performance or practice
- d) Provide positive comments that motivate and encourage participants' continued effort
- e) Respect the decisions and judgments of officials, and encourage athletes to do the same
- f) Never question an official's or staff member's judgment or honesty
- g) Support all efforts to remove verbal and physical abuse, coercion, intimidation, and sarcasm
- h) Respect and show appreciation to all competitors, and to the coaches, officials and other volunteers
- i) Not harass competitors, coaches, officials, parents/guardians, or other spectators