

Code of Conduct Template

INTRODUCTION

The development of this national code of conduct template across Irish sport, is to incorporate the respect for, and the elimination of abuse towards referees, officials, coaches and players and to help promote good practice within all sport.

The code of conduct template outlines good practice procedures required of those participating in sport, regardless of what role they may play in doing so. It also aims to create an atmosphere of fairness, integrity, and respect among participants, coaches, athletes, officials, and supporters in sports. It covers the behaviour of all involved before, during, and after the sport or training is conducted, no matter the sporting environment.

Participants, Coaches, Supporters, Parents/Guardians, Referees/Officials, Clubs and other personnel should recognise the pivotal role that each and many others, play in the development of sport, and should always support one another when fulfilling their roles.

This code of conduct template addresses the minimum levels of behaviour, conduct and good practice procedures. Outlined within the code of conduct template, are the following relevant roles:

- Participants
- Coaches
- Supporters
- Parents/Guardians
- Referees/Officials
- Clubs & Club Members

It also emphasises the role of parents/guardians and supporters in supporting the positive development of young participants and avoiding actions that can have a lasting emotional effect on them.

Different sports organisations may have their own versions of a code of conduct based on their specific needs and values but where it is not available this code of conduct template can be implemented. Further below, the code of conduct template also highlights the disciplinary procedures or sanctions that may be applied for breaches of this code as well as procedures for reporting breaches of the code of conduct or used to update their current versions.

National Governing Bodies/clubs/committees should implement their own policies and procedures for dealing with breaches of their code of conduct. They should educate and encourage participants to report breaches of the code of conduct so matters can be dealt with as soon as possible.

POSITIVE CONDUCT



All participants (Coaches/Selectors/Assistants, Supporters, Parents/Guardians, Referees/Officials, Clubs and other personnel) should:

- Adopt the code of conduct as the basic level of agreement between the club and the participants, the coaches, referee/officials, parents/guardians and supporters and others who may be involved in the sport.
- Ensure that the sport is played and conducted in accordance with disciplined and sporting behaviour and acknowledge that it is not sufficient to rely solely upon the referees/officials to uphold the code of conduct.
- Promote the responsibility and accountability for their conduct in accordance with the policies, procedures and further codes of conduct in the sport.
- Respect fellow participants, members, officials, volunteers and opponents regardless of gender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, age, disability, race, religion, and membership of the Traveller community.
- Respect the decisions of all referees/officials, Committees and Councils.
- Maintain, demonstrate and promote the highest standards of respect.
- Demonstrate a positive attitude to the sport and activities.
- Listen to coaches, referees, and officials.
- Actively discourage participants from abusing referees, officials, members, or opponents.
- Promote the reputation of the sport and take all steps to prevent it from being brought into disrepute.
- Respect the rights, dignity and worth of every person.
- Act as good role models.
- Implement, support, and promote the code of conduct.
- Maintain, demonstrate and promote the highest standards of integrity.
- Promote the highest standards of personal conduct.
- Comply with the policies and procedures within the organisations.
- Promote and support fair play.
- Encourage and applaud good performances and effort from participants and opponents alike, regardless of the result.
- Thank opponents and officials at the end.
- Show respect to your Club's opponents. Without them there would be no sport or competitions.
- Only enter the sporting environment with the referee's/official's permission.
- Promote Fair Play and encourage all participants and fellow officials to always play by the rules of the sport.
- Ensure that all activities are inclusive and allow all players to participate in an enjoyable way.
- Involve parents/guardians and other club members in a culture of promotion of best practice.
- Ensure safe induction and supervision of volunteers/employees.
- Act with integrity and objectivity in sport.
- Encourage fair play and ensure safety is paramount in sport.
- Put welfare of participants first.
- Be qualified and up to date with the latest rules, coaching knowledge and skills.

POSITIVE CONDUCT CONTD.



- Avail of assessments, participate in continuous professional development when required and other supports to maintain and improve performance.
- If working with under 18's you must undertake agreed Garda Vetting and/or background Police checks within the jurisdictions in which they officiate and attend relevant child safeguarding training where specified and required by your NGB and Sport Ireland guidance.
- Demonstrate appropriate good behaviour by not using foul language, and by not engaging in abusive language or deeds or by harassing participants, supporters, coaches, or referees/officials.
- Show appreciation to volunteers, coaches, clubs, and officials.
- Communicate decisions to participants in an effective and constructive manner in consideration of the age groups taking part.
- Deal with dissent firmly and fairly.
- Remain positive when dealing with participants and/or coaches, parents/guardians, and supporters.
- Work as a team with other referee/officials when required.
- Maintain composure regardless of the circumstances.
- Report breaches of the code of conduct to the appropriate person or committee.
- Cooperate with any investigation in respect of an alleged breach of the code of conduct.
- Understand and implement the complaints and disciplinary procedures of their sport.
- Manage disciplinary matters appropriately.
- Report misconduct of participants or supporters' conscious of the fact that such matters may be followed up in accordance with rules set by a club or organisation.
- Ensure complaints including rumours are not ignored and are dealt with appropriately, following the relevant procedures.
- Report incidents/accidents to the relevant persons.
- Report incidents/accidents to the parents or guardians (if a child under the age of 18 is involved).
- Keep and store securely all documentation in a confidential manner with respect to meetings, correspondence, and minutes of committee meetings.
- Set up, maintain, revise, and implement policies and procedures in the best interests of participants and taking into consideration the best interest of the club/committee and/or National Governing Body.

CODE OF CONDUCT BREACHES



All participants (Coaches/Selectors/Assistants, Supporters, Parents/Guardians, Referees/Officials, Clubs and other personnel) must not:

- Shout, argue, abuse physically or verbally referees/officials, at any time.
- Shout, argue, abuse physically or verbally participants, supporters, parents guardians, or any other participant at any time.
- Shout at or argue with their coach, participants or opponents.
- Use violence towards participants, coaches, officials, opponents, or supporters.
- Use unfair or bullying tactics to gain advantage or isolate other participants.
- Use unacceptable language or racial and/or sectarian or homophobic references towards a participant, an opponent, coach, official or supporter by words, deeds, or gestures.
- Use foul language or provocative language/gestures or behaviour towards any participant, coach, referee/official or supporter.
- Use any other forms of abuse.
- Lose their temper.
- Abuse, threaten or intimidate a referee/official/participant/volunteer, on or off the sporting environment.
- Do anything which is likely to intimidate, offend, insult, humiliate or discriminate against any other person on the ground of their gender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, age, disability, race, religion, and membership of the Traveller community.
- Ridicule or scold a participant for making a mistake during the sport or competition.
- Use social media to abuse participants, opponents, coaches, referees/officials, volunteers or other individuals.
- Use social media or social media apps for the distribution of offensive content, to taunt, bully or racially abuse others.
- Use social media to implicate or undermine participants, opponents, coaches, referees/officials, volunteers or other individuals.
- Publish or cause to be published criticism of the way or any other club/organisation/committee handled or resolved any dispute or disciplinary matter resulting from a breach of the code of conduct or rules of the sport.
- Behave or act in any way that infringes the rules of the sport or that seeks to gain an unfair advantage.
- Aggressively challenge a referees/officials decision or integrity.
- Enter, before, during or after the sporting environment in which the sport is being conducted, unless authorised to do so.
- Berate your own child or any other child for their standard of play.
- Embarrass a child or use sarcastic remarks towards a player, official, volunteer or other individuals involved in your sport.
- Undertake any other unsporting like behaviour.

SELF-DECLARATIONS

I _____ acknowledge that I have read, understand, and accept the code of conduct and I agree to be bound by the areas set out in the code of conduct while participating or attending the sport in any capacity.

Signed: _____

Role(s): _____

Date: _____

REPORTING & SANCTIONS

Participants, Coaches, Supporters, Parents/Guardians, Referees/Officials & Clubs should report breaches of the code of conduct to the appropriate person or committee within the club or organisation, as per the reporting/complaints procedure.

Any breaches of the above-mentioned points within the code of conduct will be investigated by the relevant club/organisation/committee and/or National Governing Body and disciplinary proceedings in respect of a breach shall be conducted in accordance with the club/organisation/committee and/or National Governing Bodies disciplinary procedures set out in their policies and procedures.

The following is a short list of recommended sanctions, for consideration by the responsible club/organisation/committee and/or National Governing Body.

- A caution, a warning as to future conduct, or a reprimand
- A monetary fine
- The requirement to replay the sport at such time and at such venue as is thought fit
- The forfeiture of, and/or the granting to another club or clubs, the competition points
- The banning of club supporters from an event
- The suspension or expulsion, in part or in full, of the club, player or person for such period as may be deemed appropriate
- Such other penalty or sanction as may be deemed appropriate

Any breaches of conduct set out in the code of conduct will be investigated by the club/committee/National Governing Body involved. Disciplinary proceedings in respect of any breach shall be conducted in accordance with the disciplinary procedures.

Conduct giving rise to an alleged breach of the code of conduct shall be reviewed accordingly at the time the alleged breach occurred. The applicable disciplinary procedure shall be that in effect at the time the disciplinary action is commenced.

Incidents of alleged criminal behaviour or suspected criminal behaviour should be reported to the relevant authorities.

GLOSSARY

Participants

For the purpose of this code of conduct a participant is a person who takes part in a sporting activity, whether in a formal or informal capacity, within all National Governing Bodies recognised by Sport Ireland.

Coaches, Selectors, Assistants

A **coach** is a person who assists participants to develop their skills and abilities in a progressive way.

A **selector** is an individual who has responsibility for the selection of participants for teams, squads, competitions and events.

Assistants are those people who provide back-up to any of the roles outlined in this section and often such assistants are involved on an intermittent basis (e.g. provision of lifts to matches or competitions; checking equipment, etc.).

Supporters

A person(s) who is actively interested in and wishes success for a particular sports club/team.

Parents/Guardians

A person(s) who is the parent or guardian of a participant involved in the sport.

Referees/Officials

A referee/official is an individual charged with the responsibility of ensuring that the rules of an activity are adhered to in a formal way. This category includes referees, judges, umpires, etc.

Clubs

President, chairperson, secretary, treasurer, administrators and committee members are appointed to oversee club activities and the development of the club/organisation.

National Governing Bodies (NGBs)

The National Governing Bodies of Sport (NGBs) recognised by Sport Ireland.

Sporting Environment

Sporting environment is the condition & circumstance under which a sports person participates in sports or physical activity. It includes areas like grounds, indoor stadium, sports complex, pools, clubs, indoor play field, indoor halls, gymnasiums, podiums, courts, parks etc.

Sport Ireland contact information:

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