

IRC SafeSport Policy

Introduction:

IRC is committed to creating a safe and positive environment for athletes' physical, emotional and social development and to ensuring that it promotes an environment free of misconduct.

Misconduct in sport includes:

- Bullying
- Harassment
- Hazing
- Emotional misconduct
- Physical misconduct, and
- Sexual misconduct, including child sexual abuse

Prohibited Conduct:

Child Sexual Abuse

Any sexual activity with a child where consent is not or cannot be given. This includes sexual contact with a child that is accomplished by deception, manipulation, force or threat of force, regardless of the age of the participants, and all sexual interactions between an adult and a child, regardless of whether there is deception or the child understands the sexual nature of the activity.

Emotional Misconduct

A pattern of deliberate, non-contact behavior that has the potential to cause emotional or psychological harm to an athlete. Non-contact behaviors include:

- a. verbal acts
- b. physical acts
- c. acts that deny attention or support

Physical Misconduct

(1) Contact or non-contact conduct that results in, or reasonably threaten to, cause physical harm to an athlete or other sport participants; or

(2) Any act or conduct described as physical abuse or misconduct under federal or state law (e.g. child abuse, child neglect, assault).

Sexual Misconduct

(1) Any touching or non-touching sexual interaction that is (a) nonconsensual

or forced, (b) coerced or manipulated, or (c) perpetrated in an aggressive, harassing, exploitative or threatening manner;

(2) Any sexual interaction between an athlete and an individual with evaluative, direct or indirect authority. Such relationships involve an imbalance of power and are likely to impair judgment or be exploitative; or

(3) Any act or conduct described as sexual abuse or misconduct under federal or state law (e.g., sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, rape).

Bullying

An intentional, persistent and repeated pattern of committing or willfully tolerating physical and non-physical behaviors that are intended, or have the reasonable potential, to cause fear, humiliation or physical harm in an attempt to socially exclude, diminish or isolate the targeted athlete(s), as a condition of membership.

Harassment

A repeated pattern of physical and/or non-physical behaviors that (a) are intended to cause fear, humiliation or annoyance, (b) offend or degrade, (c) create a hostile environment or (d) reflect discriminatory bias in an attempt to establish dominance, superiority or power over an individual athlete or group based on gender, race, ethnicity, culture, religion, sexual orientation, gender expression or mental or physical disability.

Hazing

Coercing, requiring, forcing or willfully tolerating any humiliating, unwelcome or dangerous activity that serves as a condition for (a) joining a group or (b) being socially accepted by a group's members.

Note on Appropriate Physical Contact

Appropriate physical contact between athletes and coaches, staff members, contractors or volunteers is a productive and inevitable part of sport.

Athletes are more likely to acquire advanced physical skills and enjoy their sport participation through appropriate physical contact.

Physical contact with athletes – for safety, consolation and celebration – has multiple criteria in common which make them both safe and appropriate.

These include:

- the physical contact takes place in public
- there is no potential for, or actual physical or sexual intimacies during the physical contact
- the physical contact is for the benefit of the athlete, not to meet

emotional or other need of the adult

Reporting and Disciplinary Action:

Violation of this policy shall be reported to a member of the IRC Board of Directors. IRC will take a report in the way that is most comfortable for the person initiating a report including an anonymous, in-person, verbal or written report. Regardless of how you choose to report, it is helpful to IRC for individuals to provide, at a minimum, (1) the name of the complainant(s); (2) the type of misconduct alleged and the name(s) of the individual(s) alleged to have committed the misconduct. IRC will withhold the complainant's name on request, to the extent permitted by law.

IRC recognizes it can be difficult for an athlete, teammate, friend or family member to report an allegation of misconduct and strives to remove as many barriers to reporting as possible. IRC will investigate anonymous reports, but anonymous reporting can make it difficult to investigate or properly address allegations. IRC recognizes that there are varying levels of misconduct. For example, physical and sexual misconduct are serious violations that may result in immediate dismissal. In contrast, a youth participant who tells a single sexually risqué joke constitutes less serious misconduct and depending on the circumstances, might be dealt with more appropriately through dialogue and a verbal warning. In all cases, IRC's disciplinary procedures and actions will be proportionate, reasonable and applied fairly and equally.

On receipt of an allegation, the IRC BOD will determine in its discretion the appropriate steps to address the conduct based on several factors, including (i) the age of the complainant or victim, (ii) the age of the accused and (iii) the nature, scope, and extent of the allegations.

The disciplinary response will depend on the nature and seriousness of the incident and in extreme cases, misconduct will result in immediate summary dismissal, provided that the accused individual shall be advised of their right to a hearing. If the accused individual is a minor, IRC will contact his or her parents or guardians.

Coaches Working with Minors:

As a requirement of employment, all coaches working with minor athletes will be apprised of the IRC misconduct policy and be subject to a screening protocol consisting of checking of references and a criminal background check, the results of which must be satisfactory to the IRC Board of Directors.