

HTAC ATHLETE PROTECTION GUIDELINES

Definitions

The following terms have these meanings in these Guidelines:

“Persons in Authority” – An Individual who holds a position of authority within the Halifax Trojan Aquatic Club including, but not limited to, coaches, managers, support personnel, chaperones, and directors

Purpose

These athlete protection guidelines describe best practices on how Persons in Authority can maintain a safe sport environment for athletes.

Interactions with Athletes

Interactions between Persons in Authority and Athletes – the ‘Rule of Two’

The Halifax Trojans Aquatic Club (HTAC) requires that the ‘Rule of Two’ be followed for all Persons in Authority who interact with Athletes, to the maximum extent feasible.

The ‘Rule of Two’ is a directive that says that an Athlete must never be alone one on-one with an unrelated Person in Authority.

HTAC recognizes that fully implementing the ‘Rule of Two’ may not always be possible in some instances. Consequently, at a minimum, interactions between Persons in Authority and Athletes must respect the following:

- a) To the maximum extent possible, the training environment should be visible and accessible so that all interactions between Persons in Authority and Athletes are observable.
- b) Private and one-on-one situations that are not observable by another adult or athlete should be avoided to the maximum extent possible.
- c) A Vulnerable Participant may not be alone under the supervision of a Person in Authority unless prior written permission is obtained from the Vulnerable Participant’s parent or guardian.

Communications

Group messages, group emails or team pages should be used as the regular method of communication between Persons in Authority and athletes.

Persons in Authority should send personal texts or emails to individual athletes only when necessary and only for the purpose of communicating information related to team issues and activities (i.e., non-personal information) and a parent or guardian is required to be on the communication.

Parents and guardians have the right to request that their child not be contacted by

Persons in Authority using any form of electronic communication and/or to request that certain information about their child may not be distributed in any form of electronic communication.

The content of all electronic communication between Persons in Authority and athletes should be professional in tone and for the purpose of communicating information related to team issues or activities.

All communication between Persons in Authority and athletes should be between the hours of 6:00 am and midnight unless extenuating circumstances exist

No communication concerning drugs or alcohol use (unless regarding its prohibition) is permitted.

No sexually explicit language or imagery or sexually oriented conversation is permitted.

Persons in Authority are not permitted to ask athletes to keep a secret for them.

A Person in Authority should not become overly involved in an athlete's personal life.

Travel

Teams or groups of Athletes shall always have at least two Persons in Authority with them.

For mixed gender teams or groups of Athletes, there should be one Person in Authority from each gender to the extent possible.

If two Persons in Authority cannot be present, reasonable efforts should be made to supplement supervision with screened parents or other volunteers.

A Person in Authority cannot not be alone in a car with a single athlete unless the Person in Authority is the athlete's parent or guardian. A group of two or more athletes in a car with a Person of Authority is permitted.

A Person in Authority must not share a room or be alone in a hotel room with an athlete unless the Person in Authority is the athlete's parent or guardian.

Room or bed checks during overnight stays should be done by two Persons in Authority.

For overnight travel when athletes share a hotel room, roommates should be age appropriate and room assignments must be respectful of athletes' safety, individual requirements and rights.

In certain circumstances during travel one to one communication between a person in authority and an athlete may be necessary but should be limited. An example is trying to locate an athlete or relaying time sensitive information to an athlete. These interactions should be brief and only address the specific circumstances for which the

message is intended.

Locker Room / Changing Area / Meeting Room

Interactions between a Person in Authority and an individual athlete should not occur in any room where there is a reasonable expectation of privacy such as the locker room, washroom, or changing area. A second Person in Authority should be present for any necessary interaction in any such room.

Photography / Video

Parents/guardians will be made aware of the circumstances during which photographs may be taken and the potential uses by the organization during the registration process. Those parents or guardians who do not wish to allow the collection of or use of photographs of their swimmer will be directed to inform the organization and their wishes will be respected.

Photographs and video should be taken only in public view, observe generally accepted standards of decency, and be both appropriate for and in the best interest of the athlete.

The use of recording devices of any kind in rooms where there is a reasonable expectation of privacy is prohibited.

Examples of photos that should be edited or deleted include:

- Images with misplaced apparel or where undergarments are showing
- Suggestive or provocative poses
- Embarrassing images

Physical Contact

HTAC understands that some physical contact between Persons in Authority and athletes may be necessary for various reasons including, but not limited to, teaching a skill or tending to an injury.

Unless it is not possible because of serious injury or other circumstance, a Person in Authority should always clarify with an athlete where and why any touch will occur. The Person in Authority must make clear that he or she is *requesting* to touch the athlete and not *requiring physical* contact.

Infrequent, non-intentional physical contact, particularly contact that arises out of an error or a misjudgment on the part of the athlete during a training session, is permitted.

Making amends, such as an apology or explanation, is encouraged to further help educate athletes on the difference between appropriate and inappropriate contact.

Hugging, cuddling, physical horseplay, and physical contact initiated by the Person in Authority should not occur. HTAC is aware that athletes may initiate hugging or other physical contact with a Person in Authority for various reasons (e.g., such as celebrating after a successful performance or crying after a poor performance) but this physical contact

should always be limited.

Best Practices for Athlete Interactions

The goal of these guidelines is to ensure all interactions and communications are open, observable, and justifiable. Its purpose is to protect participants (especially minors) and coaches in potentially vulnerable situations by ensuring more than one adult is present. There may be exceptions for emergency situations.