

Policy Section	HR/Social
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## Athlete Protection Policy and Best Practices

### Scope of Policy

In the interest of maintaining a safe sport environment for everyone within the SKSC organization, SKSC has implemented the following SKSC *Athlete Protection Policy* describing how persons in position of authority shall maintain a safe sporting environment for all Athletes.

### Definitions

- Terms in this Policy are defined as follows:
  - Athlete** – An individual who is an Athlete Participant ( a swimmer) within SKSC who is subject to the policies of the Organization and to the *Code of Conduct and Ethics*. A *minor* is defined as any participant under the age of 19
  - Participants** – Refers to all categories of individual members and/or registrants defined in the By-laws of the Organization who are subject to the policies of the Organization, as well as all people employed by, contracted by, or engaged in activities with, the Organization including, but not limited to, employees, contractors, Athletes, coaches, instructors, officials, volunteers, managers, administrators, committee members, parents or guardians, spectators, committee members, and Directors and Officers.
  - Person in Authority** – Any Participant who holds a position of authority within the Organization including, but not limited to, coaches, instructors, officials, managers, support personnel, chaperones, committee members, and Directors and Officers.
  - Vulnerable Participants** – Includes minors and vulnerable adults (people who, because of age, disability or other circumstance, are in a position of dependence on others or are otherwise at a greater risk than the general population of being harmed by Persons in Authority).

### Best Practices between Persons in Authority and Swimmers– the ‘Rule of Two’

- SKSC supports the ‘Rule of Two’ be followed for all Persons in Authority who interact with Swimmers. 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.
- SKSC 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:
  - To the maximum extent possible, the training environment should be visible and accessible so that all interactions between Persons in Authority and Swimmers are observable.
  - Private and one-on-one situations that are not observable by another adult or Athlete should be reframed from or avoided whenever possible.
  - 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.

### Competitions and Training Sessions

- For competitions and training sessions, the SKSC supports:

- a) To the maximum extent possible, the training environment and or competition environment should be visible and accessible so that all interactions between Persons in Authority and Swimmers are observable.
- b) If the Vulnerable Participant is the first to arrive, the Athlete's parent should remain until another athlete or persons in authority arrives. Person in Authority should never be alone with a Vulnerable Participant prior to or following a competition or training session.
  - a. If a Vulnerable Participant would potentially be alone with a Person in Authority following a competition or training session, the Person in Authority should ask another Person in Authority (or a parent or guardian of another Athlete) to stay until all of the Athletes have been picked up.
  - b. If an adult is unavailable, another Athlete, who is preferably not a Vulnerable Participant, should be present in order to avoid the Person in Authority being alone with a Vulnerable Participant.
- c) Persons in Authority and Athletes should take steps to achieve transparency and accountability in their interactions. For example, a Person in Authority and an Athlete who know they will be away from other Participants for a lengthy period of time must inform another Person in Authority where they are going and when they are expected to return. In this case, the Persons in Authority should always be reachable by phone or text message.

### Communications

5. For communication between Persons in Authority and Athletes, the SKSC recommends:
  - a) Electronic communication between Persons in Authority and Athletes that is personal in nature should be avoided. If such personal communication is unavoidable, it must be recorded and be available for review by another Person in Authority and/or by the Athlete's parent/guardian (when the Athlete is a Vulnerable Participant).
    - a. Persons in Authority should refrain from sending texts, direct messages on social media to individual athletes. Persons of Authority should send emails to individual Athletes when necessary and only for communicating information related to team issues and activities . Messages e.g., non-personal information). Any such texts, messages or emails shall be professional in tone.
    - b. Parents/guardians may request that their child not be contacted by a Person in Authority using any form of electronic communication and/or may request that certain information about their child not be distributed in any form of electronic communication.
  - b) All communication between a Person in Authority and Athletes should fall within the reasonable business hours of operations, unless extenuating circumstances justify otherwise.
  - c) Communication concerning drugs or alcohol use (unless regarding its prohibition) is not permitted.
  - d) No sexually explicit language or imagery or sexually oriented conversation may be communicated in any medium.
  - e) Any Persons in Authority within the SKSC operations are not permitted to ask Athletes to keep a personal secret for them.

### Travel

6. For travel involving Persons in Authority and Athletes, the Organization recommends:
  - a) Teams or groups of Athletes shall always have at least two Persons in Authority with them.
    - a. For mixed gender teams or groups of Athletes, there should be one Person in Authority from each gender.
    - b. If two Persons in Authority cannot be present, reasonable efforts should be made to supplement supervision with screened parents or other volunteers.
  - b) To the maximum extent possible, no Person in Authority may drive a vehicle alone with an Athlete unless the Person in Authority is the Athlete's parent or guardian.
  - c) A Person in Authority may not share a hotel room or be alone with an Athlete unless the Person in Authority is the Athlete's parent/guardian or spouse.
  - d) Room or bed checks during overnight stays must be done by two Persons in Authority.

- e) For overnight travel when Athletes must share a hotel room, roommates must be age-appropriate and of the same gender identity.

### **Locker Rooms / Changing Areas**

- 7. For locker rooms, changing areas and other closed meeting spaces, the SKSC recommends:
  - a) Interactions between Persons in Authority and Athletes should not occur in any area where there is a reasonable expectation of privacy such as a locker room, washroom or changing area.
    - a. A second adult should be present for any necessary interaction between an adult and an Athlete in any such area.
    - b. If Persons in Authority are not present in the locker room or changing area, or if they are not permitted to be present, they should still be available outside the locker room or changing area and be able to enter the room or area if required, for reasons including but not limited to team communications and/or emergencies.

### **Photography / Video**

- 8. For all photography and video of an athlete, the SKSC recommends:
  - a) Photographs and video should only be taken in public view. Content must observe generally accepted standards of decency and be both appropriate for and in the best interest of the athlete.
  - b) The use of recording devices in areas where there is a reasonable expectation of privacy is strictly prohibited.
  - c) Examples of photos that shall be edited or deleted include:
    - i. Images with misplaced apparel or where undergarments are showing
    - ii. Suggestive or provocative poses
    - iii. Embarrassing images
  - d) It is the responsibility for individual athlete ( parent or guardian) to ask that their photo/video consent, is to be is declined (not used)

### **Physical Contact**

- 9. 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. For physical contact, the Organization recommends:
  - a) A Person in Authority must always request permission to make physical contact from the athlete in advance and clearly explain where and why the physical contact will occur.
    - a. The Person in Authority must make clear that they are requesting to touch the athlete and not requiring physical contact.
    - b. Infrequent, incidental physical contact during a training session is not considered a violation of policy.
  - b) Non-essential physical contact may not be initiated by the Person of Authority. It is recognized that some athletes may initiate non-essential physical contact such as hugging or other physical contact with a Person in Authority for various reasons (e.g., such as celebrating or crying after a poor performance). This physical contact should always occur in an open and observable environment.

### **Enforcement**

- 10. Any alleged violations of this *Athlete Protection Policy* shall be addressed pursuant to the *Discipline and Complaints Policy*.