

Ottawa Titans Water Polo Association

Policy Relating to Code of Conduct

As approved August 21, 2008 by Titans Water Polo Board of Directors.

Part One

Standard of Behaviour

The Ottawa Titans Water Polo Association establishes the standard of behaviour which is expected of all Titans members and participants, which for the purpose of the policy shall include all players, parents, coaches, officials, volunteers, directors, officers, committee chairs and members, team managers, administrators and employees (contract or otherwise) involved in any and all of the Ottawa Titans Water Polo Association's activities, programs and events.

The Ottawa Titans Water Polo Association is committed to providing an environment in which all individuals are treated with courtesy and respect. Members and participants shall conduct themselves at all times in a manner consistent with the values of the Association, Ontario Water Polo and Water Polo Canada, which includes honesty, fairness, integrity and mutual respect. During the course of all Titans activities, programs and events, members shall avoid behaviour which brings the Titans or the sport of water polo into disrepute, including but not limited to abusive use of alcohol, use of non-medical drugs and use of alcohol by minors. Members of the Titans shall refrain from comments or behaviours which are disrespectful, offensive, abusive, racist or sexist. In particular, behaviour which constitutes harassment or abuse will not be tolerated, and will be dealt with appropriately. Failure to comply with the Code of Conduct may result in a member losing all privileges which come with membership in the Ottawa Titans Water Polo Association and Ontario Water Polo Association, including the opportunity to participate in activities and events, both present and future.

All of the above mentioned groups, as part of their membership, will annually review and sign that they have read and understand the terms and conditions of the Code of Conduct.

Code of Conduct for Players

- I will do my best to demonstrate good sportsmanship at all times. I will not defend or engage in actions, in or out of the water, which are not consistent with good sportsmanship, including abusive, discriminatory, intimidating and/ or profane body language or gestures directed at anyone.
- I will be present for all practices and activities at which attendance is expected or required, and if I cannot be there, will notify the appropriate coach and/ or team manager.
- I will be on deck a minimum of 10 minutes in advance of the scheduled start of each practice (or earlier, as established by my coach).
- I will play and compete for my own enjoyment, as well as for my team and team mates. I will go beyond a 'win-at-all costs' attitude. I will respect my opponents.
- I will have fun, make friends, improve my skills and play safely.
- I will learn, understand and respect the rules of the game.
- I will respect the rights and consider the safety of other players, coaches, officials, administrators, volunteers and parents.

- ❑ I will refrain from any behaviour that could be constituted as ‘bullying’ or harassment, including, but not limited to: offensive, cruel, intimidating or humiliating behaviour; gossip or exclusion (direct or indirect); assertion of power through aggression; physical or mental harassment of a less powerful person by a more powerful person; unwanted remarks, jokes, comments, innuendos or taunts about a person’s looks, body, attire, age, race, religion, sex or sexual orientation.
- ❑ I will refrain from using tobacco when involved in Titans events, program or activities. I will not be in possession of any illegal substances and/ or performance enhancing drugs, and, if under the age of majority (or legal drinking age in Ontario), will not be in possession of or use alcohol.
- ❑ I will respect the facilities we practice and play in, as well as use for travel and accommodations. Any physical damage occurring to a facility, or cost arising from missing items/ vandalism in a situation that involves me, shall be the responsibility of myself (and in the case of a minor, my parents). If more than one person is sharing use of the facility or room, costs will be shared equally if there is no admission of guilt, and the Titans shall be responsible for collecting any such costs.

Code of Conduct for Coaches

- ❑ I will do my best to demonstrate good sportsmanship at all times. I will not defend or engage in actions, in or out of the water, which are not consistent with good sportsmanship, including abusive, discriminatory, intimidating and/ or profane body language or gestures directed at anyone.
- ❑ I will consistently display high personal and professional standards and project a positive image of the sport and of coaching.
- ❑ I will communicate with players, parents, officials, volunteers and administrators honestly, generously and with integrity. I will deal with difficult calls by officials appropriately (calmly and quietly), and within the rules of the governing body for Canadian water polo.
- ❑ I will treat players fairly and equally. This does not mean equal playing time. It means that: each player is as important as the next to the coach, and will be helped to improve their skills; in the case of misconduct, the discipline will be based solely on the act and not on the player’s ability.
- ❑ I will set attainable goals for the team and individual players while encouraging safety and fun for everyone.
- ❑ I will lead by example, and respect the rules of the game.
- ❑ I will work continuously to learn more about the game and to improve my coaching skills.
- ❑ I will pay attention to and consider changing social, family and economic environments that may influence the attitudes and behaviour of players. I will consider the academic pressures placed on student-athletes and conduct training and events in a manner that supports academic success.
- ❑ I will, under no circumstances, provide, promote or condone the use of drugs or performance-enhancing substances.
- ❑ I will also abide by the Code of Ethics of the Coaching Association of Canada and Coaches of Canada.

Code of Conduct for Parents

- ❑ I will do my best to demonstrate good sportsmanship at all times. I will never condone, permit, defend or engage in actions, in or out of the water, which are not consistent with good sportsmanship, including abusive, discriminatory, intimidating and/ or profane body language or gestures directed at anyone.
- ❑ I will encourage my child to do his or her best, have fun, and demonstrate good sportsmanship. I will teach my child how to win and lose gracefully and with dignity. I will lead by example.
- ❑ I will never ridicule or yell at my child for making a mistake.
- ❑ I will assist my child to understand and respect the rules of the game. I will encourage my child to remember that he or she is a part of a team, and to work for the good of the team.
- ❑ I will respect the rights and feelings of officials, coaches, players, volunteers and administrators. I will work to support, not undermine or interfere with, their efforts. I will never encourage my child to play the game in a manner inconsistent with the coach's direction or plan.
- ❑ I will communicate any worries or difficulties to the coach outside of the practice or game times.

Code of Conduct for Volunteers, Administrators and Contract/ Other Employees

- ❑ I will do my best to demonstrate good sportsmanship at all times. I will never condone, permit, defend or engage in actions, in or out of the water, which are not consistent with good sportsmanship, including abusive, discriminatory, intimidating and/ or profane body language or gestures directed at anyone.
- ❑ I will learn, understand, and respect the rules of the game, treating everyone fairly and generously, with honesty and integrity.
- ❑ I will encourage players to have fun, make friends, improve their skills, play safely and respect the rights and consider the safety of others.
- ❑ I will take appropriate action when necessary to protect or enhance the safety of players, coaches, officials, parents, and other volunteers or administrators.
- ❑ I will share confidential information only with the consent of those requesting confidentiality or in a way that individuals cannot be identified.

Part Two

Process and Procedures for Dealing with Infractions

Confidentiality and Neutrality

Ottawa Titans Water Polo Association recognizes the sensitive and serious nature of abuse of the Code of Conduct, in particular coming forward with a complaint or of being accused, and will strive to keep all matters related to the complaint confidential. However, if required by law to disclose information, the Association will do so.

It is critical that individuals receiving complaints act with complete neutrality. Just as the complainant has a right to make a complaint, the accused has a right to know that a complaint has been made, and to respond. There are two sides to every story, and the first task in sorting out the merits of the complaint is to gather the facts.

Types of Infractions

1. **Minor Infractions** are single incidents of breaching the expected standards of conduct that generally do not result in lasting harm to others. Examples of minor infractions include but are not limited to:
 - ❑ Single incidences of disrespectful comments or behaviour directed towards others;
 - ❑ Single incidences of unsportsmanlike conduct;
 - ❑ Being late for or absent from Titans Water Polo events and activities at which attendance is expected or required;
 - ❑ Single incidences of non-compliance with the policies and rules of Titans Water Polo.

All disciplinary situations involving minor infractions will be dealt with by the appropriate person having authority over the Member involved: this person may include, but is not restricted to, a coach, team manager, official, board member or senior staff/ contract member.

2. **Major infractions** are instances of misconduct that result, or have the potential to result, in harm to other persons, to Titans Water Polo or to the sport of water polo. Examples of major infractions include, but are not limited to:
 - ❑ Repeated minor infractions;
 - ❑ Activities or behaviour that interfere with a competition or with any athlete's preparation for a competition;
 - ❑ Pranks, jokes or other activities that endanger the safety of others;
 - ❑ Deliberate disregard for the policies and rules of Titans Water Polo;
 - ❑ Conduct that intentionally damages the image, credibility or reputation of Titans Water Polo, including entering into a conflict of interest;
 - ❑ Behaviour that constitutes bullying, harassment, sexual harassment or sexual misconduct;
 - ❑ Abusive use of alcohol, any use of alcohol by minors, use of illicit drugs and/ or narcotics, or use of banned performance enhancing drugs or methods.

Major infractions will be reviewed and decided using the disciplinary procedures set out in this policy.

Reporting of Complaint/ Disclosure

Any person having reasonable grounds, through the course of Titans business, activities or events, to believe that an infraction has occurred, should promptly report (and preferably document) this belief/ incident, in the case of a minor infraction, to a supervisory person, or, in the case of a suspected major infraction, to a member of the Titans Executive or to the General Manager, who will report it to the President (or designate, in his/ her absence). Anonymous complaints may be received and mean that there is a possibility that something is wrong, and therefore a discreet investigation is needed. It remains imperative that supporting, written documentation be obtained in order to determine the next step(s). Upon receiving the complaint, the President, or delegate, will determine whether the complaint is worthy of further investigation within ten (10) days of receipt, and within that time period, if appropriate, will initiate appointment of the Disciplinary Panel.

In the event that the alleged offense is so serious as to possibly jeopardize the safety of the complainant or others, the alleged offender may be removed from all activities/ related duties, pending an investigation, provided there is:

- ❑ Sufficient grounds to do so based on the original complainant's statement, and any supporting documentation/ evidence;
- ❑ They have informed, both verbally and in writing, the accused of his/ her right to be present during a formal hearing.

The Panel and Procedures

- ❑ An ad-hoc Disciplinary Panel made up of the President (or his/ her designate) who will Chair the Panel, plus any two additional individuals appointed by the President and/ or Vice-President, having no conflict of interest with the actions in question. These individuals could include coaches, parents, General Manager, or even an outside individual or expert.
- ❑ Decisions to be made by a majority vote.
- ❑ The panel members assume acknowledgement of confidentiality.
- ❑ The complainant and respondent be given written (electronic) notice of the day, time and place of the hearing, whether it be in person or by telephone. The respondent will have reasonable rights to present evidence and argument.
- ❑ The hearing is to be held in private.

Investigation and Intervention Process

The Disciplinary Panel shall consider:

- ❑ A summary of the complaint and relevant facts.
- ❑ A determination as to whether or not the acts complained of constitute a violation of the Code of Conduct.
- ❑ Disciplinary action against the respondent, where applicable, to consider: evidence presented; nature of the action; whether any physical contact was involved; whether it was an isolated incident or part of an ongoing pattern; the nature of the relationship between the complainant and the respondent; age of both the individual accused and victim(s); the respondent's past history; and, whether the respondent retaliated or initiated the action. Disciplinary precedents set by the Titans and Ontario Water Polo will be considered.
- ❑ Measures to remedy or mitigate any harm or loss suffered by the complainant, where applicable. These could include:

- ❑ Verbal or written apology;
 - ❑ Letter of reprimand;
 - ❑ Service or other voluntary contribution to Titans Water Polo;
 - ❑ Removal of certain privileges of membership, including certification;
 - ❑ Requirement to complete additional training or counseling;
 - ❑ Demotion;
 - ❑ Placement on probation for a determinate amount of time;
 - ❑ Temporary suspension from one or more practices, activities, or competitions;
 - ❑ A requirement that a parent be in attendance at practices or tournaments;
 - ❑ Termination of position and/ or participation;
 - ❑ Expulsion from membership;
 - ❑ Any combination of the above.
- ❑ It is understood that the above are representative penalties only, that they may be modified to fit the circumstances of the infraction, and that they are presented generally in order of severity.
 - ❑ Unless the panel decides otherwise, any disciplinary sanctions applied shall take effect immediately.
 - ❑ In the case of a tournament away from home, the head chaperone and coach, in consultation with the Titans' president or General Manager, may deem it necessary to take temporary action, including having a disruptive player sent home immediately. In this case, the parents will be notified and will be responsible for any expenses associated with the travel. An example of a situation would be use of alcohol by a minor, or use of illegal drugs. After the tournament, the case will be turned over to the Disciplinary Panel for any further discussion and decisions.

Appeal Procedures

The Appeals Committee is structured to review and render decisions on appeals, submitted by members of the Association in regards to decisions made by the Panel. The Appeals Committee will ONLY review a decision or hear an appeal under one or more of the following conditions:

- ❑ New relevant evidence that was not available to those persons on the Panel who made the decision that is being appealed.
- ❑ Irregularities in the original hearing's procedures that may have caused an unjust decision.
- ❑ The decision of the original hearing was too severe.

The Appeals Committee will be composed of the appellant or designate (i.e. the parent), a member of the original Panel, and two other persons from the Titans Board of Directors not on the original Panel, and having no conflict of interest.

Effect of Suspension or Expulsion

A person who has been expelled may apply to the Board for reinstatement. Subject to the bylaws, on receipt of an application for reinstatement, the Board shall review the application and, if in the opinion of the Board the application discloses information that may justify reinstatement, will take any steps in considers necessary to either be reinstated (with possible terms and conditions that the Board considers appropriate), or refuse to reinstate the person.

