



PO BOX 40081 Dupont PO, Toronto, ON M5R 0A2

LAST UPDATE

Policy created January 27, 2020
June 12, 2023

FREESTYLE ONTARIO PERSON IN AUTHORITY POLICY

INTRODUCTION

The following policy outlines an expectation of behavior for Freestyle Ontario (FO) members who are in a position of authority. This policy aligns with the Safe Sport movement to prevent the abuse of FO vulnerable persons.

FO recognizes the dynamic between coach and vulnerable person gives rise to a power imbalance and a culture of unquestioned trust that if used improperly, can result in abuse.

As such, it is imperative that all persons in positions of authority be held to a high standard of conduct. Abuse in sport, particularly sexual abuse and the grooming behaviour that precedes it, destroys the positive impact of sport and causes untold harm to victims and those around them. Consequently, FO has a strong obligation to establish and maintain systems that prevent abuse and respond to conduct that poses risk to FO vulnerable persons.

DEFINITIONS:

A. PERSON IN AUTHORITY: (PIA) Includes any person who holds a position of trust or authority over a “vulnerable person” pursuant to the role assigned to them by FO or an “FO Decision Maker”. PIAs include but are not limited to coaches, managers, trainers, officials, judges, staff, administrators, club directors, chaperones, third party service providers (i.e. strength and conditioning trainers or yoga instructors), and volunteers.

B. VULNERABLE PERSON: Any FO member who holds an athlete membership, OR a person under the age of 18 in contact with a PIA.

C. FO DECISION MAKER: A person who is authorized to decide on behalf of FO or an FO club and includes but is not limited to FO or club staff, coaches, directors and administrators.

D. INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOUR: Includes conduct by a PIA toward a vulnerable person that involves any form of sexualized interaction or that constitutes a boundary violation or is associated with grooming behaviour.

E. DAILY TRAINING ENVIRONMENT or DTE: The physical venue where athletes perform their training. Examples of a daily training environment or DTE include but are not limited to the entire ski hill property including the lodge, water ramp facilities, air bag facilities, trampoline facilities, gyms, etc... For the purposes of this policy, the term “daily training environment” or “DTE” also refer to the athlete’s competition venue.

1. PURPOSE OF CODE



PO BOX 40081 Dupont PO, Toronto, ON M5R 0A2

1. 1. FO values the safety, rights and well-being of our vulnerable persons and their families. It is the responsibility of every FO club, coach, volunteer and staff member to participate in the effort to create a safe environment for all FO participants.

1. 2. This policy is intended to protect FO participants from all types abuse and ensure that FO members act in a way that is conducive to maintaining the positive impact sport has on all participants.

2. APPLICATION OF THIS CODE

This Code is effective and can be enforced 24 hours a day and 7 days a week as long as an FO member is subject to the relationship between a PIA and vulnerable person defined in the definition section of this policy.

2. 1. Behaviour referred to in this Code of Conduct includes:

- 2. 1. a. One-time or continuous behaviour
- 2. 1. b. Conduct directed at an individual or group
- 2. 1. c. Conduct that was without intent to abuse power or trust
- 2. 1. d. Conduct that was without intent to harass or discriminate

3. OBLIGATIONS OF PERSONS IN AUTHORITY

3. 1. All PIAs must comply with this Code of Conduct including the reporting requirements.

3. 2. All PIAs must treat vulnerable persons with dignity and respect.

3. 3. Rule of Two: Any one-on-one interaction between a PIA and an individual vulnerable person must take place within earshot and view of a second PIA. If possible one of the PIAs should be the same gender as the vulnerable person. If a PIA is not available, another screened volunteer, parent or adult can be recruited. Screening must meet requirements of the FO Staff and Volunteer Screening Policy. An exception is made for medical emergencies.

The Rule of Two does not forbid a coaching environment where there is a single coach, working with multiple vulnerable persons. However, the Rule of Two must be followed for one-on-one interactions and coaches, administrators, and other PIA's must plan accordingly.

In addition, FO recognizes the unique DTE of our sport, and understands in the course of on-snow training PIAs may/will end up in situations where they are alone with a vulnerable person, such as riding a chairlift. These situations are to be avoided within reason, however excessive avoidance may upon occasion be unreasonably disruptive (for example, holding up a chairlift line). When determining if it is appropriate to break the Rule of Two, please follow the guidelines mentioned in sections 3. 3. a. and 4. 2. of this policy.

Another aspect of the DTE that poses a unique challenge is 1-on-1 on-snow feedback that occurs within the training course (e.g. mogul course, terrain park, etc...). This feedback



PO BOX 40081 Dupont PO, Toronto, ON M5R 0A2

generally takes place in view of other coaches/vulnerable persons but may at times occur within a 1-on-1 environment. This portion of coaching is integral to the sport, and FO recognizes its value, providing sections 3.3.a. and 4.2. of this policy are followed.

FO recognizes that one-on-one communication is sometimes integral to effective mental performance engagements with a qualified mental performance expert. For this reason, when appropriate, one-on-one communication and meetings between a mental performance expert are permitted providing the mental performance expert has the following qualifications:

Both of the following:

- PhD or Master's degree in mental performance or a related field
- Liability Insurance

And is also one of the following:

- Certified Mental Performance Consultant by Association of Applied Sport Psychology
- Professional Member of the Canadian Sport Psychology Association
- Licensed or registered psychologist

Even when a mental performance expert has the above qualifications, section 3.3.1. and 4.2 of this document should be followed.

3.3.a. Additional Rule of Two Guideline: All PIA's and vulnerable persons should be cognizant of the above mentioned unique challenges and be mindful of a pattern of behaviour taking shape where vulnerable persons are consistently put in the above situations by PIA's more than is necessary by the sport.

Please use section 4.2 of this document when overcoming the challenges of Freestyle Skiing's DTE in regard to the Rule of Two.

3.4. Importance of maintaining boundaries: All PIAs must establish, respect and maintain appropriate boundaries with vulnerable persons.

4. PROHIBITED BEHAVIOUR BY PERSONS IN AUTHORITY

4.1. A PIA must not engage in inappropriate behaviour or grooming behaviour.

4.2. In assessing whether behaviour is prohibited one should consider whether the behaviour would raise concerns in the mind of a reasonable observer. The behaviour may also be assessed by determining whose needs are being met (the vulnerable person or the PIA) and what objective appears to be guiding the interaction.

5. GROOMING CONDUCT



PO BOX 40081 Dupont PO, Toronto, ON M5R 0A2

The below activities, depending on the extent and severity may be a sign of grooming behaviour and should be watched for by all PIA's and vulnerable persons. In certain cases, some of these activities are prohibited.

- 5. a. Sexually oriented conversation or discussions about personal sexual activities;
- 5. b. Spending time with an individual vulnerable person outside of club, or sport related activities;
- 5. c. Excessive gift-giving to an individual vulnerable person;
- 5. d. Socially isolating a vulnerable person;
- 5. e. Restricting a vulnerable person's privacy
- 5. f. Providing drugs, alcohol or tobacco to a vulnerable person;
- 5. g. Becoming overly involved in a vulnerable person's personal life;
- 5. h. Making sexual or discriminatory jokes or comments to a vulnerable person;
- 5. i. Displaying material of a sexual nature in the presence of a vulnerable person;
- 5. j. Mocking or threatening a vulnerable person;
- 5. k. Special treatment and or favouritism of a vulnerable person for non-athletic purposes.

6. PHYSICAL CONTACT AND INNAPROPRIATE CONDUCT SPECIFICALLY PROHIBITED

- 6. A PIA shall not engage in the following:
 - 6. a. Physical contact that does not take place in public;
 - 6. b. Physical contact that is not for the athletic or sport specific benefit of the vulnerable person (i.e. instead it meets a need of the PIA);
 - 6. c. Continued physical contact that makes the vulnerable person uncomfortable whether expressed or not;
 - 6. d. Physical contact that a vulnerable person has specifically requested not occur.
 - 6. e. Any other physical conduct that would be considered by a reasonable person.
 - 6. f. Nudity or exposure of genitals in the presence of a vulnerable person;

7. COMMUNICATION PROTOCOL FOR PERSONS IN AUTHORITY

7. All persons in authority must comply with the following protocol when communicating with vulnerable persons:



PO BOX 40081 Dupont PO, Toronto, ON M5R 0A2

- 7. a. Group messages, group emails or team pages are to be used as the regular method of communication between PIAs and vulnerable persons;
- 7. b. PIAs may only send personal texts, direct messages on social media or emails to individual vulnerable persons when necessary and only for the purpose of communicating information related to issues or activities;
- 7. c. The content of all electronic communication between PIAs and vulnerable persons must be professional in tone and for the purpose of communicating information related to team issues or activities;
- 7. d. No communication concerning drugs or alcohol use (unless regarding its prohibition) is permitted between PIAs and vulnerable persons;
- 7. e. No sexually explicit language or sexually oriented conversation is permitted between PIAs and vulnerable persons;
- 7. f. PIAs are not permitted to request vulnerable persons to keep a secret for them;
- 7. g. PIAs may not send inappropriate or sexually explicit pictures or videos to vulnerable persons.

8. MANDATORY TRAVEL PROTOCOL FOR PERSONS IN AUTHORITY

- 8. All persons in authority must comply with the following protocol concerning transporting and traveling with vulnerable persons:
 - 8. a. No PIA shall drive a vulnerable person alone unless the PIA is a family member of the vulnerable person (see Rule of two).
 - 8. b. A PIA may not share a room with a vulnerable person unless the PIA is that vulnerable person's family member.
 - 8. c. A PIA may not be alone in a hotel room with a vulnerable person unless the PIA is that vulnerable person's family member.

9. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

- 9. 1. All PIAs have a duty to report allegations or suspicions regarding inappropriate behaviour to FO. This can be done by contacting the Executive Director.
- 9. 2. Violations of this code will be considered infractions of the FO Discipline Policy and will be dealt with using the steps outlined in that policy.
- 9. 3. A PIA that learns of a "child in need of protection" must report to a Children's Aid Society under the [Ontario Child Youth Family Services Act](#). This legal obligation includes a situation where a person becomes aware of the sexual abuse or exploitation of a child at the hands of a person having charge of the child. To locate your local Children's Aid Society, click on: <http://www.oacas.org/childrens-aid-child-protection/locate-a-childrens-aid-society>.