

16 SECTION SIXTEEN – CODE OF ETHICS

<i>Policy Name</i> CODE OF ETHICS AND CONDUCT POLICY		<i>Date of Approval by GNS</i> 06/9/2019	<i>Activation Date</i> 09/01/2019
<i>Approved By</i> GNS Board of Directors	<i>Linking To</i> 1. Provincial/National Safe Sport Policy 2. Abuse, Maltreatment and Discrimination Policy 3. Complaints and Discipline Policy 4. Screening Policy* 5. Travel Policy* 6. Safety, Medical, and Concussion Policy** 7. Inclusion Policy* 8. Anti-Doping Policy** 9. Social Media Policy* <i>*Gymnastics NS policies in these areas may differ from Gymnastics Canada. In any case, Gymnastics NS policies may be updated to align with Gymnastics Canada while keeping in line with our provincial requirements.</i> <i>**These policies are under revision at Gymnastics Canada. This list will be amended as additional policies are developed, revised and approved by Gymnastics Canada and Gymnastics Nova Scotia.</i>		<i>Replacing Previous Version</i> GNS Policy Manual Appendix I (July 2019)
<i>Review Cycle</i> Reviewed annually by the Gymnastics Canada Chief Executive Officer with recommendations to the Board of Directors. Gymnastics Nova Scotia will review any recommended revisions by Gymnastics Canada.			

16.1 ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT

Gymnastics Nova Scotia embraces our responsibility to create, foster, and preserve sport settings that ensure positive, healthy, and fulfilling experiences for all individuals. We believe that a Safe Sport environment is free from all forms of abuse, discrimination, harassment, and violence and prioritizes the welfare, safety, and rights of every participant at all times. A Safe Sport environment supports equitable opportunity, prohibits discriminatory practices, and is committed to providing an environment in which all individuals are treated with dignity, respect, and fairness. Further, we advocate for a sport culture in which participants feel supported in their physical, psychological, social, and emotional development and well-being. It is imperative that all participants are safe. As a primarily youth serving organization, **Gymnastics Nova Scotia** has a special responsibility to develop standards and mechanisms to help safeguard the children and youth in its programs and activities.

16.2 POLICY DESCRIPTION

Facilitating a Safe Sport environment is the collective responsibility of all individuals involved in the gymnastics community. The **Gymnastics Canada and Gymnastics Nova Scotia Code of Ethics** sets out the minimum expectations for acceptable behaviour for all individuals within the scope of this Policy. **Gymnastics Nova Scotia** also anticipates and expects that the conduct of all members in the gymnastics community will positively exceed these minimum standards.

The Gymnastics Nova Scotia **Codes of Conduct** for athletes, coaches, team personnel, judges, **Gymnastics Nova Scotia** Board of Directors, and member associations have similarly been developed to both guide and define additional expectations for conduct by individuals in those positions.

16.3 SCOPE OF POLICY

Gymnastics Nova Scotia's **Code of Ethics and Conduct Policy** applies to the persons and members listed below:

- All full-time and part-time employees (permanent, temporary, or fixed-term) of Gymnastics Nova Scotia, and all consultants, contractors, and other service providers who may provide services to Gymnastics Nova Scotia;
- Members of the Gymnastics Nova Scotia Board of Directors and committees;
- Athletes, coaches, managers, integrated support team members, judges, and technical observers participating in Gymnastics Nova Scotia competitions, training camps, tryouts, programs, and activities;

- d. Parents, guardians, and spectators in attendance at Gymnastics Nova Scotia training camps, tryouts, and competitions;
- e. All members of Gymnastics Nova Scotia;
- f. Coach developers;
- g. Volunteers at events hosted by Gymnastics Nova Scotia;
- h. Volunteers appointed by Gymnastics Nova Scotia to accompany teams to events, training camps, competitions, or other activities;
- i. Affiliate organizations and international guests; and
- j. Members of the public whose behaviour is directed at the persons and members listed above and occurs at any Gymnastics Nova Scotia competitions, training camps, tryouts, programs, events (including social events), or other activities

16.4 CODE OF ETHICS

16.4.1 My commitment to the Gymnastics Nova Scotia and Gymnastics Canada community

1. I will conduct myself in a manner that is of the highest moral, ethical, and professional standards, that embraces Gymnastics Nova Scotia's vision, mission, and values, and that is athlete-centered.
 - a. I will support the rights of all individuals, especially children and youth, and treat all individuals with the highest standards of respect, dignity, and integrity.
 - b. I will be accountable for my behaviour and actions at all times.
 - c. I will act on the conviction that the current and future well-being of athletes is more important than their success or my success in the sport.
 - d. I will create a culture of trust and safety and ensure that all individuals, especially children and youth, are provided active opportunities to use their voice, present ideas, opinions, and concerns, and are listened to and valued accordingly. I will respond promptly and appropriately to their concerns.
 - e. I will be aware of and care for my own physical, psychological, emotional, and social well-being to ensure I engage in my roles and responsibilities with Gymnastics Nova Scotia to the best of my abilities.
 - f. I will support and foster an inclusive sport environment for all participants regardless of race or perceived race, ancestry, citizenship, nationality or national origin, place of origin, ethnic or linguistic background or origin, colour, religion, political belief, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, marital status, family status, social condition or disadvantage, physical or mental disability, genetic characteristics, body type, athletic level or ability, or any other prohibited ground of discrimination in accordance with applicable human rights legislation.
 - g. I will disclose all actual, potential, or perceived conflicts of interest and consistently treat all individuals and organizations professionally, fairly, courteously, honestly, impartially, and with their best interests in mind, regardless of self-interest, personal goals, outside pressure, expectation of reward, fear of criticism, or other influences of this nature.
 - h. I will exercise transparency in decision-making, with all due regard to privacy and confidentiality as may be warranted.
 - i. I will respect the property of others and not willfully cause damage thereto.
 - j. I agree to adhere to the Canadian Anti-Doping Program and will not use, direct, or imply use, possess, distribute, or promote the use of cannabis, illegal substances, or performance-enhancing drugs. I understand that despite its legalization in Canada, cannabis continues to be a prohibited substance for which a positive test can still result in a sanction. I further understand that any infraction under the Canadian Anti-Doping Program shall be considered an infraction of this Policy and may be subject to further disciplinary action.
 - k. I will not use, direct, or imply use, possess, or distribute medication that does not belong me.
 - l. I will not distribute, and/or direct or imply others' use of medication prescribed to me.
 - m. If a minor, I will refrain from consuming (vaping, smoking, eating, or ingesting by any other means) alcohol, tobacco, cannabis, or any illegal substance at all times.
 - n. If an adult, I will refrain from consuming (vaping, smoking, eating, or ingesting by any other means) cannabis or any illegal substance at all times during Gymnastics Nova Scotia activities and events. Alcohol may be consumed from time to time at Gymnastics Nova Scotia-related business, social, and recreational events provided consumption is professionally reasonable and kept to a minimum. Under no circumstances will I operate a motor vehicle if my abilities to

do so are in any way impaired.

- o. I understand that I am prohibited from reporting to any Gymnastics Nova Scotia competitions, training camps, tryouts, programs, events, and other activities under the influence of non-prescription drugs including without limitation recreational cannabis and alcohol.
 - p. I will review, understand, and comply with my club's, provincial/territorial association's and Gymnastics Canada's policies, rules, regulations, and best practice guidelines and fulfill all obligations to the Provincial Team and/or National Team, if required.
 - q. I will abide by all conduct related policies linked to this Code of Ethics and Conduct, including but not limited to Gymnastics Nova Scotia and Gymnastics Canada's Safe Sport Policy and Abuse Maltreatment and Discrimination Policy, and will refrain from harassment of any kind.
 - r. I will respect, practice, and advocate the principles of Safe Sport in all activities, trainings, and competitive events related to Gymnastics Nova Scotia and Gymnastics Canada.
 - s. I will follow the Fédération Internationale de Gymnastique (FIG) Code of Ethics at FIG events and FIG sanctioned events and honour my role as an ambassador of Gymnastics Canada.
 - t. I will follow the Gymnastics Nova Scotia Code of Ethics at National events, National sanctioned events and Provincial team events and honour my role as an ambassador of Gymnastics Nova Scotia.
 - u. I will abide by all applicable federal, provincial, territorial, and municipal laws, as well as policies, rules, regulations, and standards of conduct established by any membership and/or licensing bodies to which I belong, and maintain good standing with these professional bodies at all times.
2. **As an employee, contractor, consultant, coach, coach developer, official, volunteer, or adult in a supervisory role**, I will also recognize the privilege, power, authority, and trust inherent to my role within the **Gymnastics Nova Scotia and Gymnastics Canada** community. I will embrace my responsibility to facilitate a safe and positive environment and take all reasonable measures to ensure that all participants are safeguarded from harm.
- a. I will comply with **Gymnastics Nova Scotia's** and Gymnastics Canada's screening measures and take responsibility for developing, utilizing, and maintaining knowledge and competencies relevant to my role in the gymnastics community.
 - b. I will establish and maintain clear, appropriate, and consistent boundaries with all participants, especially children and youth, that reflect Gymnastics Nova Scotia's and Gymnastics Canada's policies and best practice guidelines.
 - c. I will not, under any circumstances, behave in a sexual manner, or engage in a sexual or intimate relationship with any athlete or minor coach, official, or volunteer for whom I am responsible through a club, member association, or national team setting, or with any minor whatsoever. This includes but is not limited to the use of sexual jokes, language, and/or names, the display of sexually explicit materials, sexual solicitations or advances, participation in sexual touching and/or exploitation, and the use of, reference to, distribution of obscene or pornographic images or language, or participation in any kind of sexual activity.
 - d. I will refrain from engaging in exploitative, intimidating, discriminatory, abusive, neglectful, or corrupt relations of any kind, in-person or through the means of written communication, including but not limited to e-mail, text messaging, and social media, and will not use my power, authority, or trust to encourage or coerce others to engage in or view inappropriate, unethical, or illegal activities.
 - e. I will treat all allegations or suspicions of misconduct seriously and immediately report any concern for the welfare of participants, especially children and youth, to Gymnastics Nova Scotia and/or Gymnastics Canada and, if warranted, to the appropriate law enforcement authorities and/or children's aid society.
 - f. I will fully cooperate with any investigations conducted or directed by Gymnastics Canada, provincial and territorial member associations, local clubs, and/or any law enforcement authorities.
 - g. I will notify Gymnastics Nova Scotia and/or Gymnastics Canada if I am facing any criminal charges, ongoing criminal investigations, convictions, or bail conditions.
 - h. I will remain aware of and comply with all of Gymnastics Nova Scotia's bylaws, policies, rules, and other relevant regulations, as amended from time to time.
 - i. I will not attempt to cover up or conceal any conduct of an individual that is, or may be, in

breach of this Code of Ethics and Conduct Policy.

- j. I will promote a Safe Sport environment, adhere to and attend all training in relation to this Policy and other relevant policies, ensure that the measures and procedures set out herein are followed by others, and ensure that others have received the necessary information and instructions to protect themselves from behaviour that contravenes any of the applicable policies.

16.5 CODES OF CONDUCT

In addition to the Code of Ethics outlined in 16.4 above, certain key positions within the Gymnastics Nova Scotia and Gymnastics Canada community have Codes of Conduct to which they must adhere at all times in order to remain in good standing with Gymnastics Nova Scotia and Gymnastics Canada.

16.5.1 Athlete Rights and Code of Conduct

Gymnastics Nova Scotia is an athlete-centered organization and, as such, strives to ensure that each athlete's experience is one of quality, safety and enjoyment.

16.5.1.1 Athlete Rights

Athletes should have expectations of their sport as well as the sport having expectations of the athletes. Athletes have the right to:

- a. participate in a safe, healthy, and inclusive environment;
- b. have qualified, experienced, and athlete-centered leadership that attends to the well-being and developmental needs of athletes;
- c. participate in a transparent and clean sport environment that has fair officiating, clear rules, and appropriate training and competition schedules.
- d. feel empowered, use their voice, and share in the leadership and decision-making of their sport experience;
- e. have appropriate opportunities for proper preparation for competitions;
- f. receive information that is important to athlete well-being and be advised of all opportunities to strive for success;
- g. access education related to the sport, participation, welfare and safety, as well as, work or study throughout active participation in gymnastics, should the athlete wish to do so.
- h. be respected, treated with dignity, and safeguarded from abuse, harassment, or discrimination;
- i. report misconduct without fear of reprisal;
- j. know, understand, protect, and advocate for their rights.

16.5.1.2 Athlete Code of Conduct

When participating in competitions, training, team activities, or traveling to or from any activity or event assigned by Gymnastics Nova Scotia or Gymnastics Canada, athletes must follow Gymnastics Nova Scotia's and Gymnastics Canada's Code of Ethics and standards and expectations for conduct.

In addition to abiding by the Code of Ethics, athletes must:

- a. help foster a safe, healthy, and positive gymnastics environment;
- b. have respect for themselves and others and be courteous to coaches, judges, managers, volunteers, spectators, staff members, competitors, and others in the training and competitive environment;
- c. report physician-prescribed medication, i.e., controlled substances that may impair their ability to perform or affect the safety or well-being of others, to the appropriate integrated support team representative of Gymnastics Nova Scotia or Gymnastics Canada, and avoid the use of, advocating for, condoning, promoting, or distributing of any prescription drugs or banned substances, including cannabis;
- d. report any health-related concerns in a timely fashion, wherein such concerns may limit the athlete's ability to travel, train, compete or, in the case of carded athletes, interfere with one's ability to fulfill requirements under the Athlete Assistance Program
- e. ensure all communications on social media are respectful of Gymnastics Nova Scotia, Gymnastics Canada, the team, other teams, support staff, judges, volunteers, and others in the training and competitive environment;
- f. acknowledge and follow instructions from coaches, responsible adults, and other persons of authority at events and when travelling, for their own safety and protection and that of

- others; and
- g. report any conduct that is perceived to contravene this **Code of Ethics and Conduct** to Gymnastics Nova Scotia as soon as possible, in accordance with the reporting procedures set out in the **Complaints and Discipline Policy and Procedures**.

16.5.2 Coaches' Code of Conduct

Coach-athlete and coach-parent relationships are privileged ones. Coaches play a pivotal role in the personal and athletic development of the athletes they coach and serve as key role models through which the values and goals are demonstrated, fostered, and upheld. Coaches must recognize, understand, and be sensitive to the inherent power, authority, and trust their position holds. As such, coaches owe a duty of care to all athletes and young coaches or judges in their gymnastics environment.

Gymnastics Nova Scotia and Gymnastics Canada have adopted the Coaching Association of Canada's National Coaching Certification Program (NCCP) Code of Ethics that describes the fundamental values of safety, responsible coaching, engaging in relations with integrity, respecting athletes, and honouring sport. These values have been embedded into the Gymnastics Nova Scotia and Gymnastics Canada **Code of Ethics** and the **Coaches' Code of Conduct**.

In addition to abiding by the Code of Ethics, coaches must:

- a. embrace the responsibility to facilitate and advocate for a safe, healthy, and inclusive environment;
- b. act in the best interests of all participants involved in programs and activities;
- c. establish and advocate for open and observable training and competitive environments, meetings, medical treatments, and travel with children and youth;
- d. ensure that the training or competition site is safe at all times and act quickly and appropriately in the case of emergency;
- e. accurately represent education, certifications, experience, competitive achievements, and eligibility necessary for the role;
- f. encourage behavioural change and foster learning through positive feedback, constructive criticism, problem-solving, and other forms of positive discipline;
- g. refrain from harmful practices such as, without limitation: hitting, name-calling, yelling, excessive training, denying attention, restricting adequate nutrition, using insults, threats or intimidation;
- h. communicate consistently and openly with all members of the community, especially athletes and parents and legal guardians, and empower them to share in decision-making processes related to athletic development, health and well-being, commercial activities, or recognition;
- i. treat all athletes equally and refrain from displaying favouritism, giving special privileges, sending personalized gifts, or creating opportunities to engage privately with a particular athlete or athlete's family outside of the sport context;
- j. refrain from one-on-one personal communication with minor athletes through emails, texts, letters, or phone calls and always include parents, legal guardians, or other responsible adults in these communications;
- k. refrain from offering unauthorized or one-on-one transportation to an athlete;
- l. respect all judges and volunteers and refrain from attempting to intimidate, embarrass, or improperly influence any individual responsible for judging or administering a competition; and
- m. report any conduct that is perceived to contravene this **Code of Ethics and Conduct** to Gymnastics Nova Scotia as soon as possible, in accordance with the reporting procedures set out in the **Complaints and Discipline Policy and Procedures**.

16.5.3 Team Personnel Code of Conduct

In addition to abiding by the Code of Ethics, team managers, Integrated Support Team members, non-coaching appointees, team delegates and officials, volunteers, and any other personnel must:

- a. embrace the responsibility to facilitate and advocate for a safe, healthy, and inclusive environment;
- b. act in the best interests of all participants involved in programs and activities;
- c. communicate consistently and openly with all members of the community, especially athletes and parents and legal guardians, and empower them to share in decision-making processes related to athletic development, health, and well-being;
- d. establish and advocate for open and observable environments for training, competition, and medical assistance, treatment, and support;
- e. treat all athletes equally and refrain from displaying favouritism, giving special privileges, sending personalized gifts, or creating opportunities to engage privately with a particular athlete or athlete's

- family outside of the sport context;
- f. refrain from one-on-one personal communication with minor athletes through emails, texts, letters, or phone calls and always include parents, legal guardians, or other responsible adults in these communications;
- g. abide by all applicable laws, policies, rules, and regulations, and standards of conduct established by the applicable licensing body governing each medical support staff, and maintain membership in good standing with these licensing bodies;
- h. always respect and uphold the confidentiality of personal and/or medical information and share pertinent information with appropriate personnel only;
- i. maintain appropriate records as required by Gymnastics Nova Scotia, Gymnastics Canada and/or the applicable licensing body in which the individual belongs;
- j. respect judges and volunteers and refrain from attempting to intimidate, embarrass, or improperly influence any individual responsible for judging or administering a competition; and
- k. report any conduct that is perceived to contravene this **Code of Ethics and Conduct** to Gymnastics Nova Scotia as soon as possible, in accordance with the reporting procedures set out in the **Complaints and Discipline Policy and Procedures**.

16.5.4 Judges' Code of Conduct

In addition to abiding by the Code of Ethics, Gymnastics Nova Scotia judges must:

- a. conduct all events according to the rules of Gymnastics Nova Scotia, Gymnastics Canada and the Fédération Internationale de Gymnastique (FIG);
- b. be completely unbiased;
- c. avoid judging a gymnast they are coaching or are related to;
- d. not allow anything to influence or give the appearance of affecting their judgment in rendering fair and impartial scores;
- e. act professionally, honour, and support Gymnastics Nova Scotia and/or Gymnastics Canada as an ambassador;
- f. not criticize or attempt to explain other judges' judgments or decisions to coaches, teams, or affiliates;
- g. avoid judging at meets where they hold a bias for or against a particular team or individual;
- h. refrain from officiating the level at which they may compete;
- i. take advantage of professional development and educational opportunities to ensure up to date awareness and understanding of the changes and evolution of the sport;
- j. respect all volunteers and refrain from attempting to intimidate or embarrass any individual responsible for administering a competition; and
- k. report any conduct that is perceived to contravene this **Code of Ethics and Conduct** to Gymnastics Nova Scotia as soon as possible, in accordance with the reporting procedures set out in the **Complaints and Discipline Policy and Procedures**.

16.5.5 Gymnastics Nova Scotia Board of Directors and Committee Members' Code of Conduct

In addition to abiding by the Code of Ethics, a Director and/or Committee member must:

- a. represent the best interests of the organization as a whole, while respecting the needs and priorities of members, and focus efforts on advancing and strengthening the values, mission, and current and future direction of the organization;
- b. refrain from serving on the Board for their own personal advantage or for the individual advantage of their family, friends, or supporters;
- c. abide by the Gymnastics Nova Scotia policies on confidentiality and conflict of interest;
- d. approach all Board and Committee issues with an open mind, honesty, critical thought, and with the intent to make decisions that are strictly in the organization's best interests;
- e. respect and uphold the trust of those who elected or appointed them to the Board or committee;
- f. exercise authority as a Board or Committee member only when acting in a meeting with the full Board or Committee or as delegated by the Chair; and
- g. report any conduct that is perceived to contravene this **Code of Ethics and Conduct** to Gymnastics Nova Scotia as soon as possible, in accordance with the reporting procedures set out in the **Complaints and Discipline Policy and Procedures**.

16.5.6 Member Association Code of Conduct

In addition to abiding by the Code of Ethics, the Member Association must:

- a. manage the association and its programs with the best interests of its athletes, coaches, and its

- member clubs in mind;
- b. govern the association with integrity, transparency, and strong competency in operations;
- c. emphasize fair play, stage appropriate skill development, and provide a safe, healthy, and inclusive sport environment in all of the association's programs and activities;
- d. ensure that the sport is conducted in an environment that is free of cannabis, illegal substances, or alcohol abuse;
- e. encourage professional development for coaches, coach developers, instructors, and judges;
- f. ensure that association members are aware of the expectations of conduct as registered participants of Gymnastics Nova Scotia and Gymnastics Canada; and
- g. report any conduct that is perceived to contravene this **Code of Ethics and Conduct** to Gymnastics Nova Scotia as soon as possible, in accordance with the reporting procedures set out in the **Complaints and Discipline Policy and Procedures**.

16.6 ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Gymnastics Canada and Gymnastics Nova Scotia wishes to acknowledge the broad influence of resource documents and policies from several child and youth serving organizations including, Canadian Centre for Child Protection and Skate Canada, in the creation of this Code of Ethics and Conduct.

16.7 CONFIRMATION OF COMPLIANCE WITH THE CODE OF ETHICS AND CONDUCT

The above commitments constitute Gymnastics Canada's and Gymnastics Nova Scotia's **Code of Ethics and Conduct Policy**. Every individual within the scope of this Policy will be expected to confirm their understanding of and intention to comply with the Gymnastics Canada and Gymnastics Nova Scotia **Code of Ethics and Conduct Policy**.

Registered Participant Declaration:

By signing this document, I _____ (name), agree to demonstrate the standards of this Code of Ethics and understand that any violation of this **Code of Ethics and Conduct Policy** is a very serious offence that may result in disciplinary and remedial action as per the Gymnastics Canada and Gymnastics Nova Scotia **Complaints and Discipline Policy**, including but not limited to written warnings, educational training, mediation, loss of privileges, termination of employment or contract, probation, suspension, or expulsion from membership. A violation may result in Gymnastics Nova Scotia and/or Gymnastics Canada contacting law enforcement officials or taking legal action where necessary.

I further understand and acknowledge that in order to conduct an investigation and render a decision, Gymnastics Nova Scotia and/or Gymnastics Canada may obtain and use personal information relating to registered participants as well as other parties involved in the investigation of the member. Where disciplinary action is undertaken as a result of a final report, Gymnastics Nova Scotia and Gymnastics Canada may, in its discretion, disclose the report findings to other amateur sport organizations or other organizations or institutions with a need to know the information or where required or permitted by applicable law.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent or Guardian Declaration (where participant is under 18):

I, _____ (name), parent/guardian of _____ (participant name), declare that I have read and understand Gymnastics Canada's and Gymnastics Nova Scotia's **Code of Ethics and Conduct Policy** and have discussed the **Code of Ethics and Conduct Policy** with the participant in my care. I am confident that the participant in my care understands the **Code of Ethics and Conduct Policy** and agrees to abide by it.

Signature: _____ Date: _____