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FOR REVIEW BY PSCB BOARD May 2023

## **DISCIPLINE, COMPLAINTS AND DISPUTE RESOLUTION POLICY**

### **POLICY STATEMENT**

PacificSport Columbia Basin believes in the fair and equitable treatment of all members, athletes, staff and volunteers and non-adversarial dispute resolution. In cases where dispute resolution is unsuccessful, supported complaints, disagreements or challenges between athletes, staff and volunteers must be settled through a fair, effective, and peaceful dispute resolution.

### **DEFINITIONS**

The following terms have these meanings in this Policy:

*“Case Manager”* - individual appointed by the organization responsible for overseeing the investigation and resolution of a disciplinary case or complaint.

*“Clients”* - Users of PacificSport Columbia Basin services, including on-site services, such as athletes, coaches, and other personnel connected to a team or athlete;

*“Complaint”* - Expression of dissatisfaction or concern about the behavior or actions of a member of an organization or community.

*“Complainant”* - The Party alleging an infraction;

*“Challenges”* – A formal appeal or review process aimed at overturning or modifying a decision that has been made by an individual or organization.

*“Days”* - Days irrespective of weekend and holidays;

*“Discipline”* - The enforcement of standards of conduct and the application of consequences for violations of those standards.

*“Disagreements”* -Differences of opinion or disputes that arise between the complainant and the organization regarding the handling, investigation, or resolution of a complaint.

*“Dispute”* - A disagreement or conflict between two or more parties related to a perceived violation of the organization's policies or standards of conduct.

*“Employees and Volunteers”* - Individuals employed by, or engaged in activities on behalf of, PacificSport Columbia Basin including: staff members, contract personnel, volunteers, practicum students, researchers, administrators, Board members, or volunteers;

*“Mediation Unsuccessful”* - a situation where parties involved in a dispute fail to reach an agreement or resolution through the mediation process.





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*“Respondent”* - The alleged infracting Party;

*“Parties”* - The Complainant, Respondent, and any other Individuals or persons affected by the complaint;

*“Staff”* - Any individual employed by, or engaged in activities on behalf of, PacificSport Columbia Basin including employees, contract personnel, practicum students, volunteers, researchers, and administrators.

*“Supported Complaints”* - Complaints that have been investigated and found to be valid or justified based on evidence, facts, or reasonable grounds.





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## APPLICATION

PacificSport Columbia Basin will provide an environment in which all members, athletes, staff and volunteers involved with PacificSport Columbia Basin are treated with respect. Association with PacificSport Columbia Basin, as well as participation in its activities, brings many benefits and privileges. At the same time, employees and volunteers are expected to fulfill certain responsibilities and obligations including complying with PacificSport Columbia Basin policies, bylaws, rules and regulations, and Staff Code of Conduct. Irresponsible behavior by staff can result in severe damage to the integrity of PacificSport Columbia Basin. Conduct that breaches these values may be subject to sanctions pursuant to this Policy. Since discipline may be applied, PacificSport Columbia Basin provides staff with the mechanism outlined in this Policy so that complaints are handled fairly, expeditiously, and affordably.

This Policy applies to all members, athletes, staff, and volunteers. This policy applies to discipline matters that may arise during the course of PacificSport Columbia Basin business, activities, and events including but not limited to, contact with clients, travel associated with PacificSport Columbia Basin activities, the PacificSport Columbia Basin office environment, and any meetings.

Discipline matters and complaints arising within the business, activities, or events organized by entities other than PacificSport Columbia Basin will be dealt with pursuant to the policies of these other entities unless requested and accepted by PacificSport Columbia Basin at its sole discretion.

## PROCEDURES

### Reporting a Complaint

1. Any members, athletes, staff and volunteer may report any complaint to the PacificSport Columbia Basin office. Such a complaint must be in writing and signed and must be filed within fourteen days of the alleged incident. Anonymous complaints may be accepted at the discretion of PacificSport Columbia Basin.
2. Clients or staff members may only report complaints directed at PacificSport Columbia Basin employees or volunteers as defined in the Definitions Section. Complaints against clients should be directed to the client's National or Provincial sport organization.
3. A Complainant wishing to file a complaint outside of the fourteen-day period must provide a written statement giving reasons for an exemption from this limitation. The decision to accept, or not accept, the complaint outside of the fourteen-day period will be at the sole discretion of the Executive Director and/or Designate of PacificSport Columbia Basin. This decision may not be appealed.





### **Dispute Resolution and Mediation**

1. Before any complaint proceeds to the formal stage, the dispute will first be referred to PacificSport Columbia Basin's Executive Director (or designate) for review, with the objective of resolving the dispute via alternate dispute resolution (ADR) and/or mediation in accordance with the procedures noted below.
2. PacificSport Columbia Basin supports the principles of Alternate Dispute Resolution (ADR) and is committed to the techniques of negotiation, facilitation, and mediation as effective ways to resolve disputes. Alternate Dispute Resolution also avoids the uncertainty, costs, and other negative effects associated with lengthy appeals or complaints, or with litigation.
3. PacificSport Columbia Basin encourages all Employees, Volunteers and Clients to communicate openly, collaborate, and use problem-solving and negotiation techniques to resolve their differences. PacificSport Columbia Basin believes that negotiated settlements are usually preferable to outcomes resolved through other dispute resolution techniques. Negotiated resolutions to disputes with and among Employees, Volunteers and Clients are strongly encouraged.
4. Opportunities for Alternate Dispute Resolution may be pursued at any point in a dispute within PacificSport Columbia Basin when all parties to the dispute agree that such a course of action would be mutually beneficial.

### **CASE MANAGER**

1. Should the review by PacificSport Columbia Basin Executive Director (or designate) not resolve the dispute, PacificSport Columbia Basin Executive Director or Chair of the Board will appoint an impartial Case Manager to oversee management and administration of complaints submitted in accordance with this Policy and such appointment is not appealable.

The Case Manager is not required to be associated with PacificSport Columbia Basin. The Case Manager has an overall responsibility to ensure procedural fairness, and to implement this Policy in a timely manner. More specifically, the Case Manager has a responsibility to:

- Determine whether the complaint is frivolous or vexatious and within the jurisdiction of this Policy. If the Case Manager determines the complaint is frivolous or vexatious or outside the jurisdiction of this Policy, the complaint will be dismissed immediately. The Case Manager's decision to accept or dismiss the complaint may not be appealed;
- Determine if the complaint is a minor or major infraction;
- Appoint the Panel, if necessary, in accordance with this Policy;
- Coordinate all administrative aspects of the complaint;
- Provide administrative assistance and logistical support to the Panel as required; and
- Provide any other service or support that may be necessary to ensure a fair and timely proceeding.





2. The Case Manager will inform the Parties if the incident is to be dealt with as a minor infraction or major infraction and the matter will be dealt with according to the applicable section relating to the minor or major infraction.
3. This Policy does not prevent an appropriate person having authority from taking immediate, informal or corrective action in response to behavior that constitutes either a minor or major infraction. Further sanctions may be applied in accordance with the procedures set out in this Policy.

## **MINOR INFRACTIONS**

1. Minor infractions are **single incidents** of failing to achieve expected standards of conduct that generally do not result in harm to others or to PacificSport Columbia Basin. Examples of minor infractions can include, but are not limited to, a single incident of:
  - Disrespectful, offensive, abusive, racist, or sexist comments or behavior;
  - Disrespectful conduct such as outbursts of anger or argument;
  - Conduct contrary to the values of PacificSport Columbia Basin;
  - Being late for, or absent from, PacificSport Columbia Basin events and activities at which attendance is expected or required;
  - Non-compliance with PacificSport Columbia Basin's policies, procedures, rules, or regulations; and
  - Minor violations of PacificSport Columbia Basin's *Code of Conduct*.
2. All disciplinary situations involving minor infractions will be dealt with by the appropriate person who has authority over both the situation and the individual involved. The person in authority can be, but is not restricted to being, staff, organizers, or PacificSport Columbia Basin decision-makers.
3. Provided that the Staff being disciplined is told the nature of the infraction and has an opportunity to provide information concerning the incident, procedures for dealing with minor infractions will be informal (compared to the procedures for major infractions) and will be determined at the discretion of the person responsible for discipline of such infractions (as noted above).
4. Penalties for minor infractions, which may be applied singularly or in combination, include the following:
  - Verbal or written reprimand from PacificSport Columbia Basin to one of the Parties;
  - Verbal or written apology from one Party to the other Party;
  - Any other sanction considered appropriate for the offense.
5. Minor infractions that result in discipline will be recorded and records will be maintained by Pacific Sport Columbia Basin. Repeat minor infractions may result in further such incidents being considered a major infraction.





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6. Minor infractions will be reported to the board for debrief at the next board meeting.

### **MAJOR INFRACTIONS**

1. Major infractions are instances of failing to achieve the expected standards of conduct that result, or have the potential to result, in harm to other persons or to PacificSport Columbia Basin. Examples of major infractions include, but are not limited to:
  - Repeated minor infractions;
  - Any incident of hazing;
  - Incidents of physical abuse;
  - Behavior that constitutes harassment, sexual harassment, or sexual misconduct;
  - Pranks, jokes, or other activities that endanger the safety of others;
  - Conduct that intentionally interferes with a competition or with any athlete's preparation for a competition;
  - Conduct that intentionally damages PacificSport Columbia Basin's image, credibility, or reputation;
  - Disregard for PacificSport Columbia Basin's bylaws, policies, rules, and regulations;
  - Major or repeated violations of PacificSport Columbia Basin's Code of Conduct;
  - Intentionally damaging PacificSport Columbia Basin property;
  - Abusive use of alcohol, any use or possession of alcohol by minors, or use or possession of illicit drugs and narcotics; and
  - Any possession or use of banned performance enhancing drugs or methods.
2. Major infractions occurring within competition may be dealt with immediately, if necessary, by an appropriate person having authority. In such situations, disciplinary sanctions will be for the duration of the competition, training, activity, or event only. Further sanctions may be applied but only after review of the matter in accordance with the procedures set out in this policy. This review does not replace the appeal provisions of this policy.
3. Major infractions will be handled using the Procedure for Major Infraction Hearing set out in this policy, except where a dispute resolution procedure contained within a contract, employee agreement, or other formal written agreement takes precedence.

### **PROCEDURE FOR MAJOR INFRACTION HEARING**

1. The Case Manager shall notify the Parties that the complaint is potentially legitimate, and the incident shall be dealt with as a major infraction. The Case Manager shall then decide the format under which the complaint will be heard. This decision is at the sole discretion of the Case Manager and may not be appealed.
2. The Case Manager will appoint a Discipline Panel, which shall consist of a single Adjudicator, to hear the complaint. In extraordinary circumstances, and at the discretion of the Case Manager, a panel of three persons may be appointed to hear the complaint. The Case Manager will select individuals who are impartial and have relevant expertise or experience in the area of the complaint. These individuals may include staff members throughout the Regional Sport Alliance, Board Members from the sport





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community, or other sector volunteers like Coaches and Officials. In this event, the Case Manager will appoint one of the panel's members to serve as the Chair.





3. If the Respondent acknowledges the facts of the incident, the Respondent may waive the hearing in which case the Panel will determine the appropriate disciplinary sanction. The Panel may still hold a hearing for the purpose of determining an appropriate sanction.
4. If a Party chooses not to participate in the hearing, the hearing will proceed in any event.
5. The Case Manager will determine the format of the hearing, which may involve an oral in-person hearing, an oral hearing by telephone, a hearing based on a review of documentary evidence submitted in advance of the hearing, or a combination of these methods. The hearing will be governed by the procedures that the Case Manager deems appropriate in the circumstances, provided that:
  - The Parties will be given appropriate notice of the date, time, and place of the hearing;
  - Copies of any written documents which the parties wish to have the Panel consider will be provided to all Parties in advance of the hearing;
  - The Parties may be accompanied by a representative, advisor, or legal counsel at their own expense;
  - The Panel may request that any other individual participate and give evidence at the hearing;
  - The Panel may allow as evidence at the hearing any oral evidence and document or thing relevant to the subject matter of the complaint, but may exclude such evidence that is unduly repetitious and shall place such weight on the evidence as it deems appropriate; and
  - The decision will be by a majority vote of Panel members.
6. If a decision may affect another party to the extent that the other party would have recourse to a complaint or an appeal in their own right, that party will become a Party to the complaint in question and will be bound by the decision.
7. In fulfilling its duties, the Panel may obtain independent advice.

## **DECISION**

After hearing the matter, the Panel will determine whether an infraction has occurred and, if so, the sanctions to be imposed. Within fourteen (14) days of the hearing's conclusion, the Panel's written decision, with reasons, will be distributed to all Parties, the Case Manager, and PacificSport Columbia Basin. In extraordinary circumstances, the Panel may first issue a verbal or summary decision soon after the hearing's conclusion, with the full written decision to be issued before the end of the fourteen (14) day period. The decision will be considered a matter of public record unless decided otherwise by the Panel.







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## **SANCTIONS**

1. The Panel may apply the following disciplinary sanctions, singularly or in combination, for major infractions:
  - Verbal or written reprimand from PacificSport Columbia Basin to one of the Parties;
  - Verbal or written apology from one Party to the other Party;
  - Service or other voluntary contribution to PacificSport Columbia Basin;
  - Expulsion or dismissal from PacificSport Columbia Basin;
  - Payment of the cost of repairs for property damage;
  - Initiation of a Complaints process with related Provincial Sport Organizations or National Sport Organizations.
  - Any other sanction in accordance with PacificSport Columbia Basin's HR Policy; and
  - Any other sanction considered appropriate for the offense.
2. Unless the Panel decides otherwise, any disciplinary sanctions will begin immediately. Failure to comply with a sanction as determined by the Panel will result in automatic suspension until such time as compliance occurs.
3. Major infractions that result in discipline will be recorded and records will be maintained by PacificSport Columbia Basin.

## **SUSPENSION PENDING A HEARING**

PacificSport Columbia Basin may determine that an alleged incident is of such seriousness as to warrant suspension of an Individual pending a hearing and a decision of the Panel and/or completion of the criminal process.

## **CRIMINAL CONVICTIONS**

A Staff conviction for any of the following Criminal Code offences will be deemed a major infraction under this Policy and will result in dismissal from PacificSport Columbia Basin:

- Any child pornography offences;
- Any sexual offences;
- Any offence of physical or psychological violence;
- Any offence of assault; and
- Any offence involving trafficking of illegal drugs.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY**

The discipline and complaints process is confidential and involves only the Parties, the Case Manager, the Panel, and any independent advisors to the Panel. Once initiated and until a decision is released none of the parties will disclose confidential information relating to the discipline or complaint to any person not involved in the proceedings.





## **TIMELINES**

If the circumstances of the complaint are such that adhering to the timelines outlined by this Policy will not allow a timely resolution to the complaint, the Panel may direct that these timelines be revised.

## **RECORDS AND DISTRIBUTION OF DECISIONS**

Minor and major infractions that result in discipline shall be recorded and maintained by PacificSport Columbia Basin. Minor and major infractions that result in discipline will be reported to the Board of Directors. PacificSport Columbia Basin and other PacificSport Centres may be advised of any decisions. Decisions are matters of public interest and shall be publicly available with the names of the individuals redacted. Names of persons disciplined may be disclosed to the extent necessary to give effect to any sanction imposed.

## **FINAL AND BINDING DECISION**

The decision of the Panel will be binding on the parties and on all PacificSport Columbia Basin Staff, subject only to the provisions of PacificSport Columbia Basin's Dispute Resolution Policy and/or the rules of the Sport Dispute Resolution Centre of Canada.

