



Bowls Alberta *& Member Clubs*



Safe Sport Statement

Bowls Alberta and its Member Clubs (hereafter referred to as the Organizations) have a fundamental obligation and responsibility to protect the health, safety, and physical and mental well-being of every individual that is involved in the Alberta Bowls community.

The Organizations take situations involving misconduct or maltreatment very seriously. For this reason, they collectively are committed to enacting and enforcing strong, clear, and effective policies and processes for preventing and addressing all forms of misconduct or maltreatment.

The Organizations' policies are first intended to prevent issues from arising by communicating expected standards of behavior. Secondly, they are intended to promote a Safe Sport environment in a manner that allows for consistent, immediate, appropriate, and meaningful action should any issues arise.

The Organizations recognise the development of the Universal Code of Conduct to Prevent and Address Maltreatment in Sport (UCCMS) and the responsibilities of Bowls Canada Boulingrin (BCB) to integrate the UCCMS into its policies. Bowls Alberta and therefore also its Member Clubs are committed to align their safe sport policies with BCB and with the UCCMS.

WHAT IS SAFE SPORT?

Safe sport can be understood as physical and emotional safety, which includes concussion and injury prevention, and environments free from bullying, abuse, harassment, discrimination, and other forms of maltreatment.

Safe Sport is the new normal and things that may have been accepted in the past may no longer be accepted today. Everyone has a responsibility to know what has changed and how their personal behaviour may have to realign. You cannot have safe sport without equity, diversity, and inclusion as fundamental principles as we all work together to create safe, welcoming, and inclusive lawn bowling environments where people want to stay and belong!

WHY IS SAFE SPORT IMPORTANT?

We all deserve to participate in sport environments that are accessible, inclusive, safe, and free from all forms of Maltreatment by others.

HOW DO WE ENSURE SAFE SPORT?

All participants, administrators, athletes, coaches and officials who work/participate within Canada's national sport system must follow the Universal Code of Conduct to Prevent and Address Maltreatment in Sport (UCCMS), which prohibits all forms of maltreatment. Our Safe Sport Policy Suite is for all Participants at any level of competition (community/recreational/club, provincial/territorial, and national) and is aligned and consistent with the UCCMS to make sure we align with all sport organizations at all levels with the same standards and same approach to safe sport. Every participant in every sport plays a role in ensuring Safe Sport and it begins with education and a shift in culture.

Overview of Creating Safe Sport Environments



Commitment to True Sport Principles

1. The Organizations share a commitment to the following True Sport Principles:
 - a. **Go for It** – Rise to the challenge – always strive for excellence. Discover how good you can be.
 - b. **Play Fair** – Play honestly – obey both the letter and spirit of the rules. Winning is only meaningful when competition is fair.
 - c. **Respect Others** – Show respect for everyone involved in creating your sporting experience, both on and off the field. Win with dignity and lose with grace.
 - d. **Keep it Fun** – Find the joy of sport. Keep a positive attitude both on and off the field.
 - e. **Stay Healthy** – Place physical and mental health above all other considerations – avoid unsafe activities. Respect your body and keep in shape.
 - f. **Include Everyone** – Share sport with others. Ensure everyone has a place to play.
 - g. **Give Back** – Find ways to show your appreciation for the community that supports your sport and helps make it possible.

Pledge

2. The Organizations pledge to embed the True Sport Principles in its governance and operations in the following ways:
 - a. **Code of Conduct Standards** – adopt a Code of Conduct and Ethics that are expected to be followed by Participants.
 - b. **Members Pledge** – require members to sign a pledge with their annual membership registration.
 - c. **Athlete Protection** – work towards providing every coach and other leaders within our organizations with general and sport-specific athlete protection guidelines.
 - d. **Dispute Resolution and Investigations** – will have dispute resolution processes that are confidential and procedurally fair and that require independent investigation for certain alleged violations of the conduct code.
 - e. **Strategy** – will have a strategic plan that reflects the organizations’ mission, vision, and values.
 - f. **Governance** – will work towards a diverse blend of sport leaders and will adhere to principles of good governance.
 - g. **Risk Management** – will intentionally manage risks to its operations working towards implementation of a *Risk Management Policy*.

Commitment to a Sport Environment Free from Maltreatment

3. The Organizations make the following commitments to sport environments free from Maltreatment:
 - a. All Participants in sport can expect to play, practice, and compete, work, and interact in an environment free from Maltreatment.
 - b. Addressing the causes and consequences of Maltreatment is a collective responsibility and requires the deliberate efforts of all Participants.
 - c. Participants in positions of trust and authority have the general responsibility to protect the health and well-being of all other Participants.
 - d. All Participants recognize that Maltreatment can occur regardless of age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, race, ethnicity, Indigenous status, or level of physical and intellectual disability and their intersections. Moreover, it is recognized that those from traditionally marginalized groups have increased vulnerability to experiences of Maltreatment.

- e. Adult Participants have a specific ethical and statutory duty and the additional responsibility to respond to incidents of Maltreatment involving Minors and other Vulnerable Participants.
- f. All Participants recognize that individuals who have experienced Maltreatment may experience a range of effects that may emerge at different time points and that can profoundly affect their lives.

Conduct Standards

4. The Organizations will adopt and maintain a **Code of Conduct and Ethics** in line with Bowls Canada Boulingrin and the current UCCMS version. General standards of appropriate conduct and prohibited conduct applies to all participants and specific standards are described for positions within the Organizations. The Code of Conduct and Ethics will have specific stakeholder sections, including but not limited, to:

- a. Directors and Committee Members
- b. Athlete Support Personnel
- c. Athletes
- d. Officials
- e. Parents/Guardian and Spectators



5. An index for the Code of Conduct and Ethics, and all Safe Sport Policies, will contain detailed definitions of key terms, including Maltreatment, Harassment and Discrimination. These terms are meant to educate and help provide safe environments for all as well as assist in carrying out policies and procedures when required. The key terms defined in the index are capitalized throughout the Safe Sport Statement and Policies and are consistent with the definitions within the UCCMS.

6. Bowls Alberta will adopt and maintain *Athlete Protection Protocols* that can be used by coaches, managers, medical personnel, and other Persons in Authority. Bowls Alberta may provide training on the protocols and take steps to ensure the protocols are being implemented. Bowls Alberta in consultation with their Head Coaches will conduct a regular review of the protocols and/or modify new content as appropriate. Member Club with programs for Vulnerable Athletes are encouraged to adopt the *Athlete Protection Protocols* and ensure those working with Vulnerable Athletes are aware and adhere to them.

7. The Organizations will annually ensure that Participants, as required, receive up-to-date training for any Safe Sport initiatives, courses or policies if and when they are substantially updated to include new information or resources.

Resources

8. Bowls Alberta will regularly provide updated information to their Member Clubs and the Participants about resources and training related to Safe Sport. Resources and training opportunities can include but are not limited to: NCCP modules, Respect in Sport for Activity Leaders, and CAC Safe Sport Training.



Participant Engagement

9. Bowls Alberta and Member Club will engage with athletes to determine the level of success of their athlete protection measures as well as to identify any gaps or athlete concerns. This engagement may take the form of anonymous athlete surveys, athlete involvement in Organizational decision-making or independently led athlete outreach consultations.

Dispute Resolution

10. Should any Participants involved with the Organizations including but not limited to Athletes, coaches, officials, volunteers, and parents/guardians of Athletes, wish to report any instance of misconduct or maltreatment, they may do so directly to the appropriate Organization's SSO, who will then determine the appropriate forum and manner to address the complaint. Alternatively, a complaint can go directly to the Bowls Alberta SSO. In extreme situations or levels of conflict of interest, the report may go directly through Bowls Canada Bowling's reporting mechanism or through the Canadian Sport HELP line (link below).



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11. The Organizations will adopt and maintain dispute resolution policies that will include:
 - a. Discipline and Complaints Policy / Investigation Procedures
 - b. Dispute Resolution Policy
 - c. Appeal Policy
 - d. Reciprocity Policy
12. Taken together, the suite of dispute resolution policies will include the following features:
 - a. An impartial (and independent, when appropriate) individual or entity to whom complaints can be submitted i.e. SSO of Bowls Alberta or of a member club;
 - b. Recommended sanctions for violations of conduct standards;
 - c. A mechanism for suspension of individuals pending the conclusion of the process;
 - d. Non-biased and experienced chairpersons, decision-makers and investigators (where applicable);
 - e. Protection from reprisal for submitting complaints;
 - f. Opportunity for alternative dispute resolution;
 - g. Investigations of complaints where circumstances merit; and
 - h. In-event discipline procedures.

Alignment

13. The Organizations recognize the importance of safe sport for all participants across the province. The Organizations will adopt a Reciprocity Policy that will require:

- a. Organizations to report discipline decisions to Bowls Alberta. Bowls Alberta will use discretion to share the discipline decisions with member clubs and with BCB.
- b. The Organizations will report its discipline decisions to any and all the appropriate affiliated organizations. (i.e. Professional Lawn Bowls Association, organized indoor groups)
- c. The Organizations recognize and will enforce sanctions imposed by BCB and all affiliated organizations.



Obligations – Reporting and Third-Party Case Management

14. The policies of the Organizations include requirements that certain complaints must be reported to government entities, local police services, and/or child protection agencies.

15. The policies of the Organizations include requirements that complaints must be received by the appropriate organization but also provides an alternative mechanism of reporting to an impartial individual who has no conflict of interest or bias with respect to the issuing complaint. (i.e. BA or BCB)

Records

16. The Organizations will retain records of decisions that have been made pursuant to the policies. Depending on the severity of the misconduct or likelihood of recurring misconduct, the records may be shared with other individuals or organizations including, but not limited to, national sport organizations, provincial/territorial sport organizations, multi-sport organizations, and government entities.

Living Documents

16. Bowls Alberta will continually monitor and evaluate its policies, practices, and procedures and notify their member clubs of updates and additional policies.

