

Canadian Underwater Games Association Code of Conduct

Purpose:

CUGA is committed to advancing a sports environment and culture that is respectful, inclusive, and supportive of club and player development. All participants can expect to play, practice, compete, and interact in a safe environment.

This document outlines the conduct expected of all Individuals during CUGA-related business and the procedures to follow if there is a complaint about an Individual's conduct.

CUGA coaches have additional responsibilities outlined in this document.

Definitions:

The following terms have these meanings in this Code:

- **Individuals:** All CUGA members, as well as those engaged in activities with CUGA including but not limited to players, coaches, managers, volunteers, and the CUGA Executive.
- **CUGA Related Business:** Any coaching activity, CUGA-sanctioned event, or other business by or on behalf of CUGA including, but not limited to, games, practices, tryouts, training camps, competitions, and tournaments. This also includes all communications with and from an individual while they are fulfilling a role with CUGA.
- **Parties:** The complainant(s) and subject(s) of the complaint.
- **Complaint Review Committee:** This group, which includes the Executive by default but is open to volunteers from the general membership, will address the reported complaint from the initial response through to the decision response. This committee will be chaired by a member of the Executive and reports to the CUGA Executive.
- **CUGA Executive:** The Executive is defined by the CUGA Constitution to consist of the President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary, and Past President.
- **Infraction:** single or multiple incidents of failing to achieve expected standards of conduct that may result in harm to others, to Individuals, CUGA, or to the public. See Appendix A for examples.
- **CUGA:** Canadian Underwater Games Association
- **Conflict of Interest:** A member of the Complaint Review Committee shall be deemed to be in a conflict of interest if they have a sufficient enough personal interest in the outcome of the adjudication of a complaint that it may reasonably call into doubt their ability to adjudicate the complaint without bias or prejudice. Some examples of personal interests that could cause a conflict of interest could be, but are not limited to, financial matters, involvement in the incident in question, close personal relationships, standing on a national team, etc.

Individuals have the following responsibilities:

1. Treat others with respect and dignity.
2. Consistently treat others fairly and reasonably.
3. Demonstrate the spirit of sportsmanship, leadership and ethical conduct.
4. Ensure adherence to the rules of the sport and the spirit of those rules.
5. Act, when appropriate, to correct or prevent practices that are unjustly discriminatory.

6. Focus comments or criticism appropriately and avoid public criticism of participants, coaches, officials, volunteers, or CUGA.
7. Accept and consider feedback with respect to their own actions and take positive steps to resolve.
8. Refrain from any behaviour that constitutes harassment, where harassment is defined as comment or conduct directed towards an individual or group, which is offensive, abusive, racist, sexist, degrading, or malicious. Types of behaviour that constitute harassment include, but are not limited to:
 - Written, online, or verbal abuse, threats, or outbursts
 - Unwelcome remarks, jokes, comments, innuendo, or taunts
 - Leering or other suggestive or obscene gestures
 - Condescending or patronizing behaviour which is intended to undermine self-esteem, diminish performance or adversely affect playing conditions
 - Retaliation or threats of retaliation against an individual who reports harassment to CUGA
9. Refrain from any behaviour that constitutes sexual harassment, where sexual harassment is defined as unwelcome sexual comments and sexual advances, requests for sexual favours, or conduct of a sexual nature. Types of behaviour that constitute sexual harassment include, but are not limited to:
 - Sexist jokes
 - Display of sexually offensive material
 - Sexually degrading words used to describe a person
 - Inquiries or comments about a person's sex life
 - Unwelcome sexual flirtations, advances, or propositions
 - Persistent unwanted contact

Coaches:

CUGA coaches agree to follow the NCCP Code of Ethics (2020), which describes five Ethical Principles and the corresponding Standards of Behaviour Expected of Coaches.

Principle	Standards of Behaviour Expected by Coaches
Leadership and Professionalism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Understand the authority that comes with your position and make decisions that are in the best interest of all participants ● Share your knowledge and experience openly ● Maintain the athlete-centered approach to coaching so that every participant's well being is a priority ● Be a positive role model ● Maintain confidentiality and privacy of participants' personal information
Health And Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Recognize and minimize vulnerable situations to ensure the safety of participants ● Prioritize a holistic approach when planning and delivering training and competition ● Advocate for, and ensure appropriate supervision of participants, including the Rule of Two ● Participate in education and training to stay current on practices to ensure the continued safety of your participants ● Understand the scope of your role and skills and call upon others with specialized skills when needed to support your participants
Respect and Integrity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Provide equitable opportunity and access for all ● Establish a respectful and inclusive sport environment where all participants can raise questions or concerns ● Obey the rules and participate honestly and respectfully ● Be open, transparent and accountable for your actions

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Maintain objectivity when interacting with all participants
Rule of Two	The goal of the Rule of Two is to ensure all interactions and communications are open, observable and justifiable. The purpose is to protect participants (especially minors) and coaches in potentially vulnerable situations by ensuring more than one adult is present. There may be exceptions for emergency situations.

Coaches who do not follow the NCCP Code of Ethics may have violated the CUGA Code of Conduct and may be subject to sanctions.

Coaches have the following additional responsibilities:

Athlete Safety

- Ensure a safe environment by selecting activities and establishing controls that are suitable for the age, experience, ability, and fitness level of the involved athletes.
- Prepare athletes systematically and progressively, using appropriate time frames and monitoring physical and psychological adjustments while refraining from using training methods or techniques that may harm athletes.
- Avoid compromising the present and future health of athletes by communicating and cooperating with sport medicine professionals in the diagnosis, treatment, and management of athletes' medical and psychological treatments.

Athlete Development

- Support the coaching staff of a training camp, provincial/territorial team, or national team; should an athlete qualify for participation with one of these programs.
- Act in the best interest of the athlete's development as a whole person.
- Respect coaches.
- Respect athletes playing with other teams and, in dealings with them, not encroach upon topics or actions which are deemed to be within the realm of 'coaching', unless after first receiving approval from the coaches who are responsible for the athletes.

Athlete Protection

- Self-report any ongoing criminal investigation, conviction, or existing bail conditions, including those for violence, child pornography, or possession, use, or sale of any illegal substance.
- Not engage in a sexual relationship with an athlete under 18 years old or an intimate or sexual relationship with an athlete over the age of 18 if the individual is in a position of power, trust, or authority over the athlete.
- Recognize the power inherent in the position of coach and respect and promote the rights of all participants in sport.

Complaint Process

Anyone, including but not limited to CUGA members, parents, athletes, club representatives may report a complaint. Complaints should be submitted to complaints@cuga.org.

- Complaints must be in writing and signed, and must be filed within six (6) months of the alleged incident. Anonymous complaints may be accepted at the sole discretion of the CUGA Complaint Review Committee.

- A complainant wishing to file a complaint outside of the six (6) month period must provide a written statement giving reasons for an exemption to this limitation. The decision to accept, or not accept, the complaint outside of the six (6) month period will be at the sole discretion of the Complaint Review Committee. This decision may not be appealed.

Review Process

- The complainant will receive email acknowledgment of receipt of the complaint.
- The Complaints Review Committee will determine the possibility of conflict of interest between its members and anyone involved in the complaint process. Committee members deemed in potential conflict will recuse themselves from the process. A minimum of 3 Committee members must be available to oversee the process, if that number cannot be met a call will be placed to the membership for (an) additional member(s) to temporarily join the committee..
- The Complaints Review Committee will review and determine initial steps within 14 days of complaint receipt. These steps may include, but are not restricted to review of the presented material and collection of further information relevant to the issue.
- Subsequently, the Complaints Review Committee will conduct a thorough review; this review will include, within reasonable measures, an attempt to reach out to all the Parties or other witnesses/participants. Exceptions are permitted, but rationale must be documented (e.g. retaliation, risk to a vulnerable individual, legal implications). The committee will facilitate mediation with the Parties if appropriate, determine possible infractions, and determine sanctions if warranted.
- The written decision, including reasons, sanctions, and possible follow-up, will be sent to all the Parties.
- Unless the Committee decides otherwise, any disciplinary sanctions will begin immediately.
- Archive all documentation related to the complaint for 7 years.

Appeal Process

Appeals must be filed in writing, providing reasons for the request, within 7 days of receipt of the Complaint Review Committee's decision.

The Complaint Review Committee will review the request and make a decision. The same conflict of interest requirements apply here as those outlined above.

The decision, with reasons, will be communicated in writing to the appellant. The outcome of the appeal process cannot be appealed.

Confidentiality

The complaint and discipline process is confidential and involves only the Parties, the Executive, the Complaints Review Committee, and any independent advisors to the Committee. 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. Individuals involved in the complaint may be asked to keep the names and identities confidential of underage or vulnerable individuals involved in the complaint following its resolution, at the discretion of the Executive and Complaints Review Committee.

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Appendix A: Examples of Infractions and Sanctions

Infraction examples include, but are not limited to:

- Disrespectful, offensive, abusive, racist, or sexist comments or behaviour
- Disrespectful conduct such as outbursts of anger or argument
- Non-compliance with, or disregard for, CUGA policies, procedures, rules, or regulations
- Physical abuse
- Behaviour that constitutes harassment, sexual harassment, or sexual misconduct
- Conduct that intentionally interferes with a competition or with any athlete's preparation for a competition
- Any possession or use of banned performance enhancing drugs or methods, or condoning such use by others
- Retaliation against any person for making a complaint or participating in the complaint process.
- Direct or indirect interference with the complaint review and investigation process.
- Knowingly filing a false complaint allegation.
- Conduct that intentionally damages the image, credibility, or reputation of CUGA

Sanctions may include:

- Verbal or written reprimand from CUGA
- Verbal or written apology by offender
- Removal of certain privileges for a designated period of time
- Suspension from certain competitions, activities, or events
- Suspension or expulsion from CUGA
- Payment of the cost of repairs for property damage
- Any other sanction considered appropriate for the infraction