Child Protection Code of Conduct

Policy category: Safe Sport / Child Protection
Approved by: Squamish United FC Board of Directors
Effective date: November 15, 2026
Review date: Annually

1. Purpose

Squamish United FC (SQUFC) is committed to providing a safe, inclusive, respectful and positive soccer environment for all children and youth.

The purpose of this policy is to protect participants under the age of 18 from abuse, maltreatment, harassment, neglect, exploitation and inappropriate behaviour.

All individuals involved with SQUFC share responsibility for creating and maintaining an environment where the safety, dignity and well-being of every participant are prioritized.

This policy is guided by Canada Soccer's Safe Sport principles, including the Universal Code of Conduct to Prevent and Address Maltreatment in Sport (UCCMS) and the Rule of Two.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all individuals involved in SQUFC activities, including:

- Board members and administrators
- Coaches and assistant coaches
- Team managers and team officials
- Employees and volunteers
- Players and participants
- Parents and guardians
- Any individual representing or working with the club

The policy applies during all club-related activities, including training sessions, matches, tournaments, travel, team events, meetings, camps and electronic communications.

3. General standards of behaviour

All adults working with or around children at SQUFC must:

- Treat every participant with dignity, respect and fairness.
- Prioritize the physical, emotional and psychological safety of children.
- Maintain appropriate professional boundaries.
- Provide an inclusive environment free from discrimination, bullying, harassment and abuse.
- Use positive, age-appropriate and constructive communication.
- Respect the rights, privacy and individuality of every participant.
- Avoid favouritism, inappropriate relationships or situations that create conflicts of interest.
- Act immediately when they become aware of behaviour that may put a child at risk.

The needs and well-being of the child must always come before winning, performance, selection or personal interests.

4. Prohibited conduct

The following behaviours are strictly prohibited within SQUFC.

Physical misconduct

- Hitting, striking, shaking, pushing or physically harming a participant.
- Using physical punishment or exercise as punishment.
- Any unnecessary or inappropriate physical contact.
- Ignoring or disregarding a participant's physical safety.

Psychological and emotional misconduct

- Humiliating, threatening, intimidating or degrading a participant.
- Yelling, insulting, belittling or using language intended to cause emotional harm.
- Bullying, discrimination, harassment or intimidation.
- Threatening a participant's selection, playing time or participation as a means of control.

Sexual misconduct

- Any form of sexual abuse, exploitation or harassment.
- Sexual comments, jokes, gestures or inappropriate conversations with a minor.
- Inappropriate physical contact or exposure.
- Soliciting, creating, possessing or sharing sexual images of minors.
- Developing inappropriate or secretive relationships with participants.

Neglect and inappropriate behaviour

- Failing to provide reasonable supervision.
- Leaving children unattended or placing them in unsafe situations.
- Denying access to water, food, appropriate medical attention or necessary safety equipment.
- Using alcohol or illegal substances while supervising participants.
- Engaging in behaviour that compromises the safety or well-being of a child.

5. Rule of Two and supervision

SQUFC follows Canada Soccer's Rule of Two principles to ensure interactions between adults and participants are open, observable and justifiable.

The following expectations apply:

- At least two screened and authorized adults should be present when interacting with participants.
- One-to-one interactions between an adult and a minor must be avoided wherever reasonably possible.
- Meetings, conversations and individual instruction should take place in observable environments.
- Doors should remain open or meetings should occur in visible spaces.
- Parents or guardians should be informed when individual interactions are necessary.
- Where an unavoidable situation requires one-to-one interaction, appropriate safeguards must be used, including visibility, notification and documentation where appropriate.

The Rule of Two applies to in-person activities, transportation, accommodation and electronic communications.

6. Changing rooms and personal privacy

All participants have the right to privacy and dignity.

- Adults must respect participant privacy in changing rooms, washrooms and other private spaces.
- Adults should not change, shower or otherwise share private spaces with participants.
- Adults must not be alone in a changing room with a minor.

- Photography and video recording are prohibited in changing rooms and washrooms.
- Coaches and team officials should establish clear expectations around changing room supervision.
- Participants should be provided with reasonable privacy when changing or attending to personal needs.

7. Electronic communication and social media

Communication between adults representing SQUFC and minor participants must remain professional, appropriate and transparent.

- Club-related communication should use approved team or club communication channels.
- Parents or guardians should be included in communications with younger participants.
- Adults must not engage in private, secretive or inappropriate direct messaging with minors.
- Communication must be relevant to soccer activities and appropriate for the participant's age.
- Adults must not request or share inappropriate photographs, videos or personal information.
- Social media interactions must maintain appropriate professional boundaries.

8. Transportation and travel

The safety of participants must be considered during all club-related transportation and travel.

- Parents and guardians are responsible for arranging transportation unless otherwise agreed.
- Adults should avoid transporting a minor alone wherever reasonably possible.
- Where individual transportation is unavoidable, parent or guardian consent must be obtained in advance and stay connected (phone or video call) during the transport process
- Parents or guardians should be informed of departure, arrival and travel arrangements.
- All drivers must hold a valid driver's licence and appropriate insurance.
- Participants must use appropriate seatbelts and safety restraints.
- Overnight accommodation arrangements must protect participant privacy and follow the Rule of Two.

9. Screening and training

All coaches, team officials, employees and volunteers working with minors must complete the appropriate screening and training requirements established by SQUFC and its governing organizations.

These requirements may include:

- Criminal Record Check with Vulnerable Sector Check, where applicable.
- Completion of required Safe Sport education.
- Respect in Sport or equivalent training, where required.
- Acknowledgement of the SQUFC Code of Conduct and relevant club policies.
- Additional training or screening as determined by the club.

SQUFC reserves the right to restrict or remove an individual's access to participants if required screening or training has not been completed.

10. Reporting concerns and incidents

Every member of the SQUFC community has a responsibility to report suspected abuse, maltreatment, misconduct or behaviour that may compromise the safety or well-being of a child.

SQUFC follows the reporting structure below.

First point of contact – Technical Director

- All concerns, complaints or suspected breaches of this policy should be reported to the Technical Director at technicaldirector@squamishunited.ca as the primary club contact.
- The Technical Director is responsible for receiving the concern, documenting the information and determining the appropriate next steps.
- The Technical Director must prioritize participant safety and escalate concerns to the appropriate authorities or governing organizations when required.
- The Technical Director must not independently investigate allegations of abuse or attempt to resolve serious child protection concerns internally.

Second point of contact – Board of Directors

- If the concern involves the Technical Director, or an individual does not feel comfortable reporting to them, the concern should be reported directly to the Board of Directors at president@squamishunited.ca.

- If an individual is dissatisfied with how a concern has been handled, they may escalate the matter to the Board of Directors.
- The Board of Directors is responsible for ensuring concerns are appropriately addressed and that suitable safeguarding measures are in place.
- If a concern involves a member of the Board, it should be directed to another uninvolved Board member or the appropriate external reporting authority.

External reporting and immediate safety

- If a child is in immediate danger, contact 911.
- In British Columbia, anyone who has reason to believe a child or youth may be in need of protection has a legal duty to report this concern directly to the Ministry of Children and Family Development or the appropriate delegated Indigenous child and family services agency.
- Concerns involving potential criminal conduct must be reported to the appropriate law enforcement authorities.
- Individuals may also report concerns directly through the applicable BC Soccer, Canada Soccer or independent Safe Sport reporting channels.

Internal reporting to SQUFC does not replace or delay any legal obligation to report directly to child protection authorities or law enforcement.

All reports will be treated seriously, handled sensitively and shared only with those who need to know. Retaliation against anyone who raises a concern or participates in a reporting process is strictly prohibited.

11. Response and consequences

SQUFC will take all reports and concerns seriously and respond in a timely, fair and appropriate manner.

The Technical Director, or the Board of Directors where appropriate, will ensure that:

- Immediate steps are taken to protect participants where necessary.
- Concerns are documented and handled appropriately.
- Matters are referred to BC Soccer, Canada Soccer, independent Safe Sport authorities, child protection services or law enforcement when required.
- Individuals are not permitted to interfere with or compromise an external investigation.
- Appropriate interim measures are considered while a concern is being addressed.

Depending on the nature and seriousness of the concern, SQUFC may implement disciplinary measures, including suspension or removal from club activities or membership.

All responses will prioritize participant safety, procedural fairness and compliance with applicable organizational policies and legal requirements.

12. Commitment and acknowledgement

SQUFC believes that child protection is everyone's responsibility.

All individuals involved with the club are expected to understand, respect and follow this policy. Failure to comply may result in disciplinary action or removal from club activities.

By participating in SQUFC activities, individuals acknowledge their responsibility to contribute to a safe, respectful and supportive environment for all children and youth.

Squamish United FC is committed to ensuring that every child can participate in soccer in an environment where they feel safe, respected, valued and supported.