Recruitment and Training for Child Protection

Policy category: Safe Sport / Child Protection
Approved by: Squamish United FC Board of Directors
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Review date: Annually

1. PURPOSE

Squamish United Football Club (SQUFC) is committed to providing a safe, inclusive, respectful, and positive environment for all children participating in club activities.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all individuals engaged by, appointed to, or volunteering with the Club in roles involving children are appropriately recruited, screened, trained, supported, and monitored.

This policy establishes the Club's standards and procedures for:

- Recruitment and screening of coaches, staff, volunteers, and team personnel.
- Mandatory child protection and safe sport training.
- Safeguarding responsibilities and professional conduct.
- Ongoing monitoring, compliance, and accountability.
- The prevention, recognition, and reporting of child maltreatment and safeguarding concerns.

This policy is intended to align with the Canada Soccer Guide to Safety, applicable BC Soccer requirements, provincial legislation, and recognized safe sport standards.

2. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Squamish United Football Club is guided by the following principles:

2.1. All children have the right to participate in football in an environment that is safe, respectful, inclusive, and free from abuse, neglect, harassment, discrimination, bullying, and exploitation.

2.2. The Club recognizes its legal, ethical, and organizational responsibility to protect children and promote their wellbeing.

2.3. Individuals working with children must be suitable for their roles and demonstrate appropriate behaviour, judgement, professionalism, and respect for boundaries.

2.4. Recruitment, screening, training, and monitoring are essential components of the Club's child protection and safeguarding responsibilities.

2.5. Child protection is a shared responsibility among the Board, Technical Director, coaches, staff, volunteers, parents, guardians, and participants.

2.6. The Club will take reasonable steps to prevent harm, identify concerns, respond appropriately to disclosures or incidents, and ensure that child protection concerns are addressed promptly.

3. RECRUITMENT AND SCREENING PROCESS

3.1 Position Descriptions

All positions involving contact with children, including coaches, team personnel, staff, and volunteers, must have clearly defined roles and responsibilities.

Position descriptions shall include, where applicable:

- Role responsibilities and expectations.
- Professional conduct and boundaries when working with children.
- Child protection and safeguarding responsibilities.
- Required qualifications, certifications, and training.
- Screening and background check requirements.
- Expectations regarding supervision, communication, travel, and reporting.

The Club will ensure individuals understand the expectations associated with their role before commencing their duties.

3.2 Application Requirements

Individuals applying for positions involving children may be required to provide:

- A completed Club application or registration form.
- A resume or summary of relevant experience and qualifications, where applicable.
- References from individuals who can speak to their suitability for working with children.

- Disclosure of relevant disciplinary history, safeguarding concerns, suspensions, or restrictions relating to their involvement in youth sport or other child-serving environments.

The Club reserves the right to request additional information where necessary to assess an individual's suitability.

3.3 Reference Checks

The Club will conduct reference checks for individuals applying for positions involving children, where appropriate to the role.

Reference checks may include verification of:

- Previous experience working with children or youth.
- Professional conduct and reliability.
- Suitability for a role involving responsibility for children.
- Any known concerns relating to behaviour, professional boundaries, safeguarding, or disciplinary history.

The Club may contact previous organizations, employers, or references to verify information provided by an applicant.

3.4 Police Background Checks

All individuals in designated child-facing roles must complete the background screening required by the Club and applicable governing bodies.

Screening may include:

- Criminal Record Check (CRC).
- Vulnerable Sector Check (VSC).
- Additional screening or disclosure requirements where required by legislation, Canada Soccer, BC Soccer, or the Club.

Police background checks must be renewed at least every three years, or more frequently if required by applicable legislation, governing bodies, or Club requirements.

The Club may require an updated check at any time where circumstances warrant.

Failure to complete, renew, or comply with the required screening process may result in an individual being prohibited from participating in activities involving children until compliance is achieved.

3.5 Interview Process

Where appropriate to the role, the Club will conduct interviews with prospective coaches, staff, and volunteers.

Interviews may include:

- Behaviour-based questions relating to previous experience.
- Scenarios involving discipline, conflict, boundaries, supervision, and communication with children.
- Questions relating to safeguarding responsibilities and reporting concerns.
- Assessment of the applicant's alignment with the Club's values and expectations.
- Confirmation of their understanding of professional conduct and child protection requirements.

The Club will assess an individual's suitability based on qualifications, experience, character, references, screening results, and overall alignment with the Club's safeguarding expectations.

3.6 Approval & Onboarding

Individuals may only commence duties involving children once the Club has confirmed that all applicable onboarding requirements have been completed.

Prior to commencing their role, individuals must:

- Complete required screening and background checks.
- Complete mandatory training applicable to their role.
- Review and sign all required Club policies and codes of conduct.
- Confirm their understanding of child protection responsibilities and reporting procedures.
- Receive an appropriate orientation to Club procedures, expectations, and safeguarding requirements.

Required documents may include:

- Canada Soccer Code of Conduct and Ethics.
- Code of Conduct to Protect Children.
- Youth Athlete Code of Conduct.
- Parent Code of Conduct, where applicable.
- SQUFC Child Protection Policy.
- SQUFC Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy.

- SQUFC Electronic Communication Policy.
- Other applicable Club policies.

The Club may restrict, suspend, or withdraw an individual's involvement where screening, training, or onboarding requirements have not been met.

4. CHILD PROTECTION TRAINING REQUIREMENTS

4.1 Mandatory Training for Coaches, Staff & Volunteers

All coaches, staff, and volunteers working in designated child-facing roles must complete the mandatory training required by the Club, Canada Soccer, BC Soccer, and applicable safe sport standards.

Training requirements may include:

- Respect in Sport – Activity Leader Program.
- Rule of Two Training.
- Additional safe sport or child protection training required by the Club or governing bodies.

Training shall address, where applicable:

- Recognizing and preventing child maltreatment.
- Appropriate professional boundaries.
- Safe communication and interactions with children.
- Grooming behaviours and warning signs.
- Responding to disclosures of abuse or misconduct.
- Reporting obligations and procedures.
- Appropriate supervision and safeguarding practices.
- Creating safe, inclusive, and respectful environments.

Individuals must complete the required training within the timelines established by the Club and applicable governing bodies.

4.2 Annual Refresher Training

The Club will require ongoing child protection education and refresher training to ensure individuals remain informed of their responsibilities.

Annual refresher training or education will address, where applicable:

- Recognizing signs of abuse, maltreatment, grooming, and misconduct.
- Responding appropriately to safeguarding concerns.
- Reporting procedures and duty to report.
- Professional boundaries and appropriate conduct.
- Updates to Club policies, Canada Soccer standards, or provincial requirements.
- Safe sport expectations and the responsibilities of coaches and team personnel.

The Club will maintain records of completed training and monitor compliance.

4.3 Specialized Training for Key Roles

Individuals with designated safeguarding, leadership, or supervisory responsibilities may be required to complete additional training relevant to their roles.

4.3.1 Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO)

The Designated Safeguarding Officer may be required to undertake additional education and training relating to:

- Safeguarding concern management.
- Documentation and recordkeeping.
- Reporting to appropriate authorities.
- Maintaining confidentiality and handling sensitive information.
- Supporting individuals who disclose concerns or experience harm.
- Understanding referral processes and external safeguarding resources.
- Managing safeguarding concerns in accordance with Club policy and applicable legislation.

4.3.2 Coaches & Team Personnel

Coaches and team personnel may be required to undertake additional education relating to:

- Positive behaviour management and appropriate discipline.
- Safe supervision and participant management.
- Safe travel and accommodation practices.
- Appropriate digital communication with youth.
- Injury reporting and emergency procedures.
- Concussion recognition, reporting, and return-to-play protocols.
- Maintaining professional boundaries and appropriate coach-player relationships.

5. SAFEGUARDING MEASURES

5.1 Codes of Conduct

All relevant individuals must review, acknowledge, and sign applicable codes of conduct and safeguarding documents before commencing their duties and renew their acknowledgement annually, or as required by the Club.

These may include:

- Canada Soccer Code of Conduct and Ethics.
- Code of Conduct to Protect Children.
- Youth Athlete Code of Conduct.
- Parent Code of Conduct.
- SQUFC policies and codes of conduct.

The Club will communicate its behavioural expectations and take appropriate action where conduct fails to meet these standards.

5.2 Rule of Two

Squamish United Football Club will implement and follow the Rule of Two in accordance with Canada Soccer and applicable safe sport requirements.

Interactions between adults and children must be open, observable, and interruptible wherever reasonably possible.

The Rule of Two applies to Club activities and interactions, including:

- Training sessions and matches.
- Meetings, evaluations, and player discussions.
- Travel and transportation.
- Changing areas and facilities.
- Digital communications.
- Club events and activities outside the regular soccer environment.

The Club will take reasonable steps to ensure that no adult is placed in a situation where they are alone and unobserved with a child, except where unavoidable circumstances arise and appropriate safeguards are implemented.

Coaches, staff, volunteers, parents, and team personnel are responsible for understanding and implementing the Rule of Two.

5.3 Reporting System

The Club will maintain clear procedures for reporting child protection concerns, misconduct, suspected abuse, inappropriate behaviour, or breaches of safeguarding policies.

The reporting process must:

- Identify clear points of contact within the Club.
- Provide confidential reporting options where possible.
- Ensure concerns are taken seriously and addressed promptly.
- Protect the privacy of those involved to the extent possible.
- Maintain secure documentation of reported concerns and actions taken.
- Ensure reports are directed to the appropriate authorities when required.

All individuals involved with the Club have a responsibility to report suspected child abuse or maltreatment in accordance with applicable legislation. Internal reporting to the Club does not replace or delay an individual's legal duty to report directly to the appropriate authorities.

Where there is an immediate risk to a child, emergency services must be contacted.

5.4 Monitoring & Evaluation

Squamish United Football Club will take reasonable steps to monitor the implementation and effectiveness of its recruitment, screening, training, and safeguarding practices.

Monitoring may include:

- Reviewing and updating child protection and safeguarding policies.
- Monitoring screening and background check completion.
- Monitoring mandatory training and certification compliance.
- Reviewing supervision practices and implementation of the Rule of Two.
- Assessing compliance with Club codes of conduct and policies.
- Seeking feedback from players, parents, guardians, coaches, staff, and volunteers.
- Identifying areas for improvement in Club safeguarding practices.

The Club will address identified gaps and take appropriate corrective action where necessary.

5.5 Safe Environment Measures

The Club is committed to creating and maintaining safe environments across all football activities.

Safeguarding measures shall include, where applicable:

- Safe facilities, equipment, and playing environments.
- Emergency Action Plans and emergency response procedures.
- Concussion recognition, reporting, and management protocols.
- Safe travel, transportation, and accommodation procedures.
- Appropriate supervision and participant management.
- Electronic communication and digital safety guidelines.
- Anti-bullying, harassment, and discrimination policies.
- Appropriate reporting, investigation, and response procedures.

All coaches, staff, volunteers, and team personnel are expected to actively contribute to maintaining a safe environment for children.

6. CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT & COMPLIANCE

6.1. Squamish United Football Club will regularly review its recruitment, screening, training, and safeguarding practices to ensure they remain aligned with Canada Soccer, BC Soccer, applicable provincial legislation, and recognized safe sport standards.

6.2. The Club will review and update training requirements annually or when significant changes occur to legislation, governing body requirements, or safeguarding standards.

6.3. Policies and procedures will be reviewed following safeguarding incidents, reported concerns, identified gaps, or changes in best practices, where appropriate.

6.4. The Club will promote a culture where children are encouraged to speak up, ask questions, express concerns, and have their voices heard and respected.

6.5. The Club will take reasonable steps to ensure that all individuals understand that safeguarding is an ongoing responsibility and that compliance with recruitment, screening, training, and conduct requirements is a condition of involvement in Club activities.

6.6. Failure to comply with this policy may result in corrective action, suspension, removal from duties, or termination of involvement with the Club, in accordance with applicable Club policies and procedures.

7. RESPONSIBILITY & IMPLEMENTATION

7.1. The **Technical Director** is responsible for overseeing the implementation and day-to-day administration of this policy, including recruitment, screening, training compliance, onboarding, and monitoring of coaches, staff, and volunteers.

7.2. The **Board of Directors** is responsible for organizational oversight, ensuring the Club maintains appropriate child protection, recruitment, screening, and training policies and procedures, and reviewing compliance as required.

7.3. All coaches, staff, volunteers, team personnel, parents, guardians, and participants are responsible for contributing to a safe environment and complying with the Club's child protection and safeguarding policies.

7.4. The Club will ensure that responsibility for safeguarding is understood throughout the organization and that concerns are addressed through the appropriate reporting and response procedures.