



Bergen County Rowing Academy

*Recognizing, Reducing and Responding to Misconduct in Sport:
Creating Your Strategy*

SafeSport | WHERE YOUR GAME PLAN STARTS

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TRAINING AND EDUCATION

Our policies and procedures require staff members and/or volunteers to report abuse, misconduct and violations of its Participant Safety Handbook. To do so, staff members (coaches, riggers, admin, support staff at boathouses) and/or volunteers (volunteer coaches, parent chaperones, referees, other volunteers) should have a basic understanding of sexual abusers, as well as “grooming,” the most common strategy offenders use to seduce their victims. Using a combination of attention, affection and gifts, offenders select a child, win the child’s trust (and the trust of the child’s parent or guardian), manipulate the child into sexual activity, and keep the child from disclosing abuse.

Accordingly, staff members and/or volunteers complete an awareness training concerning misconduct in sport before performing services for the Bergen County Rowing Academy. Misconduct in sport includes:

- Bullying
- Harassment
- Hazing
- Emotional misconduct
- Physical misconduct, and
- Sexual misconduct, including child sexual abuse

Staff members and/or volunteers must successfully complete the training and the quiz after the test.

Those staff members and/or volunteers who are required to take awareness training will take athlete awareness training every two (2) years, or no more than 30 day(s) before they have contact with athletes.

APPLICANT SCREENING

Staff members, contractors and/or volunteers must consent to, and pass, a formal applicant screening process before performing services for CLUB.

Elements of our screening process include, as applicable, successful completion of an application, interview, reference check and criminal background check.

EDUCATION ABOUT CLUB'S PROTECTION POLICIES

To deter applicants who may be at risk of abusing athletes or participants from applying for positions, the Bergen County Rowing Academy educates its applicants about its protection policies and offers applicants an early opt-out by:

- Requiring awareness training before placement and/or before working with athletes and participants
- Informing applicants about our policies and procedures relevant to prevention
- Asking applicants to review and agree to our policies and procedures before proceeding with the process
- Requiring applicants to sign a document acknowledging review of our policies and procedures

WRITTEN APPLICATIONS

Each applicant for a position will complete an application form consisting of personal, identifying information and a general release with applicant's signature.

The written application will:

- Ask about previous work and volunteer experiences
- Ask questions intended to illicit information concerning high-risk behaviors
- Provide a written release for contacting personal references and performing a criminal background check, including an indemnification clause
- Ask open-ended questions that encourage broad answers
- Use disclosure statements to ask applicants about previous criminal arrests or convictions for sexual offenses, violence against youth and other violent criminal offenses or felonies

PERSONAL INTERVIEW

Appropriate staff will interview applicants whose experience and credentials are considered a fit for available positions. During this interview, the Bergen County Rowing Academy will ask questions to encourage discussion, clarify responses and expand on the applicant's answers to questions from the written application.

REFERENCES

References of applicants will be contacted (either by phone or in writing) and asked specific questions regarding the applicant's professional experiences, demeanor and appropriateness for involvement with minor athletes and participants.

RELEASE

Each applicant will also provide a signed release, consistent with federal, state and local laws regulating employment practices, that allows references to speak freely about the applicant's qualifications without fear of reprisal and authorizing the Bergen County Rowing Academy to obtain information concerning an applicant's past employment, volunteer experience and information provided by the applicant during the screening process (i.e., written application and personal interview).

See Part 2, Sample Forms and Documents, and the Appendix for additional Applicant Screening Resources.

SAMPLE

CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECK POLICY

All applicants will be asked to undergo a criminal background check that complies with the Fair Credit Reporting Act **before** providing services for the Bergen County Rowing Academy. Through this criminal background check, the Bergen County Rowing Academy will utilize reasonable efforts to ascertain past criminal history of an applicant.

PROCESS

The Criminal Background Check Consent and Waiver Release form must be submitted and the applicant cleared before he or she may perform services for the Bergen County Rowing Academy.

On receipt of the Criminal Background Check Consent and Waiver Release form, the Bergen County Rowing Academy will request that its vendor perform the criminal background check. As part of its criminal background check, the Bergen County Rowing Academy will, at a minimum and without limitation,

- (1) perform a national search of state criminal repositories;
- (2) perform a search of state sexual offender registries; and
- (3) verify a person's identification against his or her social security number or other personal identifier.

POTENTIALLY DISQUALIFYING FACTORS

Criminal History

The Bergen County Rowing Academy will use a criminal background check to gather information about an applicant's prior criminal history. The information revealed by the criminal background check may disqualify an applicant from serving as a staff member, contractor and/or volunteer.

Information that could disqualify an applicant includes, but is not limited to, arrests, pleas of no contest and criminal convictions—especially if the underlying criminal behavior involved sex or violence.

Pending Court Cases

No decision will be made on an individual's eligibility for work as a new staff member, contractor and/or volunteer if they have a pending court case for any of the potentially disqualifying offenses until the pending case concludes. If, however, during the case's pendency, the organization undertakes an independent investigation and conducts a hearing, any determination may be used to disqualify the individual.

Full Disclosure

Each applicant has the affirmative duty to disclose his or her criminal history. Failing to disclose or intentionally misrepresenting an arrest plea or conviction history in an application or any other information provided by an applicant during the screening process is grounds for employment, volunteer and/or membership revocation or restriction, regardless of when the offense is discovered.

- If an applicant (1) is arrested, (2) pleas or (3) is convicted of a crime other than a traffic

Part 1: Strategy 2: Screening and Selecting Staff Members and/or Volunteers

offense during the screening process, the applicant is required to disclose such information immediately.

- In the event a person is serving as a staff member, contractor or volunteer and (1) is arrested, (2) pleads or (3) is convicted after the completion of the screening process, he or she has an affirmative duty to disclose such information immediately to his or her supervisor or CLUB administrator.
- **Any applicant who has been banned by another sport organization, as temporarily or permanently ineligible, must self-disclose this information. A failure to disclose is a basis for disqualification for potential applicants.**

FINDINGS

Notice of findings will be provided to:

- (1) The designated contact of the Bergen County Rowing Academy that submitted the application;
- (2) The Board President the Bergen County Rowing Academy;

The Bergen County Rowing Academy's criminal background check report will return a "red light" or "green light" score. A green light score means that the background check vendor located no records that would disqualify the applicant. A green light score, however, is not a certification of safety or permission to bypass/ignore other screening efforts. Other disqualifying factors may exist, and can be revealed through an interview, reference checks and a completed application.

Note: A "green light" finding does not mean that an individual is safe to work with children. Instead a "green light" indicates that no criminal history was found that would disqualify the individual from working with children.

A **red light** finding means the criminal background check revealed criminal records, which suggest the applicant "does not meet the criteria" and is not suitable for organization employment or volunteer assignment.

Individuals who are subject to disqualification under a "red light" finding may challenge the accuracy of the reported information reported by the criminal background check vendor.

Appeal to Criminal Background Check Vendor

APPEAL TO CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECK VENDOR

Any disqualified individual has the right to dispute the findings of the criminal background check directly with the Bergen County Rowing Academy's approved Criminal Background Check Vendor. A disqualified individual may not appeal the automatic disqualification or the results of the findings of the criminal background check vendor to the United States Rowing Association. The United States Rowing

Part 1: Strategy 2: Screening and Selecting Staff Members and/or Volunteers

Association is required by the policy to accept the findings of the approved criminal background check vendor.

Individuals automatically disqualified are excluded from participation in any Bergen County Rowing Academy sanctioned events and/or activities.

FREQUENCY OF CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECKS

Criminal background checks will be refreshed every five years or as otherwise required by law, for staff members and/or volunteers who are 18 years of age or older and perform services for the Bergen County Rowing Academy.

AFFIRMATIVE DUTY TO DISCLOSE

If, during the course of employment or participation in the Bergen County Rowing Academy's program, a staff member or volunteer is accused, arrested, indicted or convicted of a criminal offense against a child, it is the duty and responsibility of the staff member or volunteer to notify an immediate supervisor, a Bergen County Rowing Academy administrator or a member of the Bergen County Rowing Academy's Participant Safety Committee.

OTHER POTENTIALLY DISQUALIFYING FACTORS

Even if an applicant passes a criminal background check, other factors may disqualify an applicant. An individual may be disqualified and prohibited from providing services for the Bergen County Rowing Academy if the individual has:

- Been held liable for civil penalties or damages involving sexual or physical abuse of a minor
- Been subject to any court order involving any sexual or physical abuse of a minor, including but not limited to domestic order or protection
- A history with another organization (employment, volunteer, etc.) of complaints of sexual or physical abuse of minors
- Resigned, been terminated or been asked to resign from a position - paid or unpaid - due to complaint(s) of sexual or physical abuse of minors
- A history of other behavior that indicates they may be a danger to participants in the Bergen County Rowing Academy; or
- Not met the job requirements

REVIEW OF DISQUALIFIERS

The Bergen County Rowing Academy will review its disqualifiers every two years or as otherwise required or modified by law.

RECORDS

Records are secured onsite for a period indicated by applicable law or until the applicant is no longer affiliated with the Bergen County Rowing Academy, whichever date is later.

ATHLETE PROTECTION POLICY

COMMITMENT TO SAFETY

Overview

In the event that any staff member or volunteer observes inappropriate behaviors (i.e., policy violations), suspected physical or sexual abuse, or misconduct, it is the personal responsibility of each staff member and volunteer to immediately report his or her observations to an immediate supervisor, a Bergen County Rowing Academy administrator or a member of the Bergen County Rowing Academy's Participant Safety Committee.

The Bergen County Rowing Academy is committed to creating a safe and positive environment for athletes' physical, emotional and social development and to ensuring that it promotes an environment free of misconduct.

Staff members and volunteers should not attempt to evaluate the credibility or validity of child physical or sexual abuse allegations as a condition for reporting to appropriate law enforcement authorities. Instead, it is the responsibility of each staff member and volunteer to immediately report suspicions or allegations of child physical or sexual abuse to an immediate supervisor, Bergen County Rowing Academy administrator or a member of the Bergen County Rowing Academy's Participant Safety Committee. Complaints and allegations will be addressed under the Bergen County Rowing Academy's Disciplinary Rules and Procedure.

The Bergen County Rowing Academy recognizes that the process for training and motivating athletes will vary with each coach and athlete, but it is nevertheless important for everyone involved in sport to support the use of motivational and training methods that avoid misconduct.

Application

This Policy applies to

- Staff members, volunteers, and parent chaperones.
- The Bergen County Rowing Academy athletes and participants Parents, separate USR from Parent- mandatory reporting regardless of abuse source.

Staff members, volunteers, athletes and participants shall refrain from all forms of misconduct, which include:

- Bullying
- Harassment
- Hazing
- Emotional misconduct
- Physical misconduct
- Sexual misconduct, including child sexual abuse.

PROHIBITED CONDUCT

Child Sexual Abuse

- (1) Any sexual activity with a child where consent is not or cannot be given. This includes sexual contact with a child that is accomplished by deception, manipulation, force or threat of force, regardless of the age of the participants, and all sexual interactions between an adult and a child, regardless of whether there is deception or the child understands the sexual nature of the activity.

Note concerning peer-to-peer child sexual abuse: Sexual contact between minors also can be abusive. Whether or not a sexual interaction between children constitutes child sexual abuse turns on the existence of an aggressor, the age difference between the children, and/or whether there is an imbalance of power and/or intellectual capabilities.

- (2) Any act or conduct described as child sexual abuse under federal or state law.

Exception

None

Examples

Sexually abusive acts may include sexual penetration, sexual touching or non-contact sexual acts such as verbal acts, sexually suggestive electronic or written communications, exposure or voyeurism.

Emotional Misconduct

- (1) A pattern of deliberate, non-contact behavior that has the potential to cause emotional or psychological harm to an athlete. Non-contact behaviors include:

- a. verbal acts
- b. physical acts
- c. acts that deny attention or support

- (2) Any act or conduct described as emotional abuse or misconduct under federal or state law (e.g. child abuse, child neglect).

Exception

Emotional misconduct does not include professionally-accepted coaching methods of skill enhancement, physical conditioning, team building, discipline or improving athletic performance.

Examples

Examples of emotional misconduct prohibited by this policy include, without limitation:

- (1) **Verbal Acts.** A pattern of verbal behaviors that (a) attack an athlete personally (e.g., calling them worthless, fat or disgusting) or (b) repeatedly and excessively yelling at a particular participant

or participants in a manner that serves no productive training or motivational purpose.

- (2) **Physical Acts.** A pattern of physically aggressive behaviors, such as (a) throwing sport equipment, water bottles or chairs at, or in the presence of, participants; or (b) punching walls, windows or other objects.
- (3) **Acts that Deny Attention and Support.** A pattern of (a) ignoring an athlete for extended periods of time or (b) routinely or arbitrarily excluding participants from practice.

Note: Bullying, harassment, and hazing, defined below, often involve some form of emotional misconduct.

Physical Misconduct

- (1) Contact or non-contact conduct that results in, or reasonably threaten to, cause physical harm to an athlete or other sport participants; or
- (2) Any act or conduct described as physical abuse or misconduct under federal or state law (e.g. child abuse, child neglect, assault).

Exceptions

Physical misconduct does not include professionally-accepted coaching methods of skill enhancement, physical conditioning, team building, appropriate discipline or improving athlete performance. For example, hitting, punching, and kicking are well-regulated forms of contact in combat sports, but have no place in swimming.

Examples

Examples of physical misconduct prohibited by this Policy include, without limitation:

- (1) **Contact offenses.** Behaviors that include:
 - (a) punching, beating, biting, striking, choking or slapping an athlete;
 - (b) intentionally hitting an athlete with objects or sporting equipment;
 - (c) providing alcohol to an athlete under the legal drinking age (under U.S. law);
 - (d) providing illegal drugs or non-prescribed medications to any athlete;
 - (e) encouraging or permitting an athlete to return to play pre-maturely following a serious injury (e.g., a concussion) and without the clearance of a medical professional;
 - (f) prescribing dieting or other weight-control methods (e.g., weigh-ins, caliper tests) without regard for the nutritional well-being and health of athlete.
- (2) **Non-contact offenses.** Behaviors that include:
 - (a) isolating an athlete in a confined space (e.g., locking an athlete in a small space);
 - (b) forcing an athlete to assume a painful stance or position for no athletic purpose (e.g. requiring an athlete to kneel on a harmful surface);

(c) withholding, recommending against or denying adequate hydration, nutrition, medical attention or sleep.

Note: Bullying, harassment and hazing, defined below, often involve some form of physical misconduct.

Sexual Misconduct

- (1) Any touching or non-touching sexual interaction that is (a) nonconsensual or forced, (b) coerced or manipulated, or (c) perpetrated in an aggressive, harassing, exploitative or threatening manner;
- (2) Any sexual interaction between an athlete and an individual with evaluative, direct or indirect authority. Such relationships involve an imbalance of power and are likely to impair judgment or be exploitative; or
- (3) Any act or conduct described as sexual abuse or misconduct under federal or state law (e.g. sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, rape)

Note: An imbalance of power is always assumed between a coach and an athlete.

Types of Sexual Misconduct

Types of sexual misconduct include:

- (1) sexual assault,
- (2) sexual harassment,
- (3) sexual abuse, or
- (4) any other sexual intimacies that exploit an athlete. **Minors cannot consent to sexual activity with an adult**, and all sexual interaction between an adult and a minor is strictly prohibited.

Exceptions

None

Examples

Examples of sexual misconduct prohibited under this Policy include, without limitation:

- (1) **Touching offenses.** Behaviors that include:
 - (a) fondling an athlete's breasts or buttocks
 - (b) exchange of reward in sport (e.g., team placement, scores, feedback) for sexual favors
 - (c) genital contact
 - (d) sexual relations or intimacies between persons in a position of trust, authority and/or evaluative and supervisory control over athletes or other sport participants.

Comment

(1) Authority and Trust. Once the unique coach-athlete relationship is established, the authority and trust on the part of the coach over the athlete shall be assumed, regardless of age. Accordingly, sexual interaction or intimacies between a coach and an athlete or other participant are prohibited, regardless of age, both during coaching and during that period following coaching if an imbalance in power could jeopardize effective decision-making.

Imbalance of Power. Factors relevant to determining whether there is an imbalance of power include, but are not limited to: (a) the nature and extent of the coach's supervisory, evaluative or other authority over the athlete being coached; (b) the actual relationship between the parties; (c) the parties' respective roles; (d) the nature and duration of the sexual relations or intimacies; (e) the age of the coach; (f) the age of the athlete or participant; (g) and whether the coach has engaged in a pattern of sexual interaction with other athletes or participants.

(2) Exception. This section does not apply to a pre-existing relationship between two spouses or life partners.

- (2) **Non-touching offenses.** Behaviors that include:
 - (a) a coach discussing his or her sex life with an athlete
 - (b) a coach asking an athlete about his or her sex life
 - (c) coach requesting or sending a nude or partial-dress photo to athlete
 - (d) exposing athletes to pornographic material
 - (e) sending athletes sexually explicit or suggestive electronic or written messages or photos (e.g. "sexting")
 - (f) deliberately exposing an athlete to sexual acts
 - (g) deliberately exposing an athlete to nudity (except in situations where locker rooms and changing areas are shared)

- (h) sexual harassment; specifically, the sexual solicitation, physical advances, or verbal or nonverbal conduct that is sexual in nature, and
 - a. is unwelcome, offensive or creates a hostile environment, and the offending individual knows or is told this
 - b. is sufficiently severe or intense to be harassing to a reasonable person in the context.

Bullying

- (1) An intentional, persistent and repeated pattern of committing or willfully tolerating physical and non-physical behaviors that are intended, or have the reasonable potential, to cause fear, humiliation or physical harm in an attempt to socially exclude, diminish or isolate the targeted athlete(s), as a condition of membership
- (2) Any act or conduct described as bullying under federal or state law

Exceptions

Bullying does not include group or team behaviors that (a) are meant to establish normative team behaviors, or (b) promote team cohesion.

For example, bullying does not include verbal admonitions to encourage team members to train harder and to push through a difficult training regimen.

Examples

Examples of bullying prohibited by this Policy include, without limitation:

- (1) **Physical behaviors.** Behaviors that include (a) hitting, pushing, punching, beating, biting, striking, kicking, choking, or slapping an athlete; (b) throwing at, or hitting an athlete with, objects such as sporting equipment.
- (2) **Verbal and emotional behaviors.** Behaviors that include (a) teasing, ridiculing, intimidating; (b) spreading rumors or making false statements; or (c) using electronic communications, social media, or other technology to harass, frighten, intimidate or humiliate (“cyber bullying”).

Harassment

- (1) A repeated pattern of physical and/or non-physical behaviors that (a) are intended to cause fear, humiliation or annoyance, (b) offend or degrade, (c) create a hostile environment or (d) reflect discriminatory bias in an attempt to establish dominance, superiority or power over an individual athlete or group based on gender, race, ethnicity, culture, religion, sexual orientation, gender expression or mental or physical disability; or
- (2) Any act or conduct described as harassment under federal or state law

Exceptions

None

Examples

Examples of harassment prohibited by this Policy include, without limitation:

- (1) **Physical offenses.** Behaviors that include (a) hitting, pushing, punching, beating, biting, striking, kicking, choking or slapping an athlete or participant; (b) throwing at or hitting an athlete with objects including sporting equipment.
- (2) **Non-physical offenses.** Behaviors that include (a) making negative or disparaging comments about an athlete's sexual orientation, gender expression, disability, religion, skin color, or ethnic traits; (b) displaying offensive materials, gestures, or symbols; (c) withholding or reducing playing time to an athlete based on his or her sexual orientation.

Hazing

- (1) Coercing, requiring, forcing or willfully tolerating any humiliating, unwelcome or dangerous activity that serves as a condition for (a) joining a group or (b) being socially accepted by a group's members; or
- (2) Any act or conduct described as hazing under federal or state law

Exception

Hazing does not include group or team activities that (a) are meant to establish normative team behaviors or (b) promote team cohesion.

Examples

Examples of hazing prohibited by this Policy include, without limitation:

- (1) requiring, forcing or otherwise requiring the consumption of alcohol or illegal drugs
- (2) tying, taping or otherwise physically restraining an athlete
- (3) sexual simulations or sexual acts of any nature
- (4) sleep deprivation, otherwise unnecessary schedule disruption or the withholding of water and/or food
- (5) social actions (e.g. grossly inappropriate or provocative clothing) or public displays (e.g. public nudity) that are illegal or meant to draw ridicule
- (6) beating, paddling or other forms of physical assault
- (7) excessive training requirements focused on individuals on a team

Comment: Activities that fit the definition of hazing are considered to be hazing regardless of an athlete's willingness to cooperate or participate.

WILLFULLY TOLERATING MISCONDUCT

It is a violation of this Athlete Protection Policy if a staff member and/or volunteer knows of misconduct, but takes no action to intervene on behalf of the athlete(s), participant(s), staff member, and/or volunteer.

REPORTING

Although these policies are designed to reduce child sexual abuse and other misconduct, it can still occur. Staff members, volunteers and participants of the Bergen County Rowing Academy shall follow the reporting procedures set forth in the Bergen County Rowing Academy's Reporting Policy. **The Bergen County Rowing Academy does not investigate suspicions or allegations of child physical or sexual abuse, or attempt to evaluate the credibility or validity of such allegations, as a condition of reporting suspicions or allegations to the appropriate law enforcement authorities.**

VIOLATIONS

Violations of the Athlete Protection Policy shall be reported pursuant to our Reporting Policy and will be addressed under our Disciplinary Rules and Procedure.

SUPERVISION OF ATHLETES AND PARTICIPANTS

During training and competition, the Bergen County Rowing Academy strives to create two-deep leadership and minimize one-to-one interactions to create a safe training environment and to protect athletes and participants.

APPROPRIATE ONE-ON-ONE INTERACTIONS

Individual Meetings

An individual meeting may be necessary to address an athlete's concerns, training program, or competition schedule. Under these circumstances, coaches, staff members and/or volunteers are to observe the following guidelines:

- Any individual meeting should occur when others are present and where interactions can be easily observed
- Where possible, an individual meeting should take place in a publicly visible and open area, such as the corner of a gym or pool deck
- If an individual meeting is to take place in an office, the door should remain unlocked and open
- If a closed-door meeting is necessary, the coach, staff member and/or volunteer must inform another coach, staff member and/or volunteer and ensure the door remains unlocked

Individual Training Sessions

An individual training session(s) with an athlete or participant may also be desired or necessary. Under these circumstances, written permission of a minor athlete's parents or guardians is required in advance of the individual training session(s), and the Bergen County Rowing Academy encourages parents and guardians to attend the training session.

PROHIBITED ONE-ON-ONE INTERACTIONS

Except as set forth above, minor athletes and participants will not be left unattended or unsupervised during Bergen County Rowing Academy activities and Bergen County Rowing Academy coaches, staff members and/or volunteers are prohibited from being alone with an individual athlete or participant in any room or building.

PHYSICAL CONTACT WITH ATHLETES

What

Policy describes the purpose and limits of appropriate physical contact between athletes and other relevant participants and identifies the person and/or entity to whom unacceptable forms of physical contact should be reported.

Why

In almost all sports, coaching an athlete requires some amount and type of physical contact. Such contact may be with parts of the body that, in a non-sport context, may be inappropriate (e.g., positioning an athlete's leg or torso, or spotting an athlete to ensure they will not be injured by a fall). Physical contact is also natural and appropriate when celebrating victories and achievement or consoling athletes after a loss or injury.

Physical contact policies provide all organization members with clarity and guidance for contact with athletes. These policies provide athletes with safer training conditions to perform and to receive the benefits of sport.

Elements

- Encourages appropriate physical contact with athletes
- Describes when it may be appropriate to make physical contact with athletes, including examples
- Lists criteria for appropriate/inappropriate physical contact
- Lists prohibited physical contact
- Lists reportable forms of prohibited physical contact with athletes
- States that some prohibited physical contact may require a report to the appropriate law enforcement authorities
- Identifies person and/or entity to whom unacceptable forms of physical contact should be reported
- States that all members will honor an expressed personal desire for decreased or no physical contact, where such decreased contact is feasible in the relevant training and competition environment

PHYSICAL CONTACT WITH ATHLETES

Appropriate physical contact between athletes and coaches, staff members, contractors or volunteers is a productive and inevitable part of sport. Athletes are more likely to acquire advanced physical skills and enjoy their sport participation through appropriate physical contact. However, guidelines for appropriate physical contact reduce the potential for misconduct in sport.

APPROPRIATE PHYSICAL CONTACT

The Bergen County Rowing Academy adheres to the following principles and guidelines in regards to physical contact with our athletes:

Common Criteria for Appropriate Physical Contact

Physical contact with athletes – for safety, consolation and celebration – has multiple criteria in common which make them both safe and appropriate. These include:

- the physical contact takes place in public
- there is no potential for, or actual, physical or sexual intimacies during the physical contact
- the physical contact is for the benefit of the athlete, not to meet an emotional or other need of an adult

Safety

The safety of our athletes is paramount and in many instances we make the athletic space safer through appropriate physical contact. Examples include:

- spotting an athlete so that they will not be injured by a fall or piece of equipment
- positioning an athlete's body so that they more quickly acquire an athletic skill, get a better sense of where their body is in space, or improve their balance and coordination
- making athletes aware that they might be in harm's way because of other athletes practicing around them or because of equipment in use
- releasing muscle cramps

Celebration

Sports are physical by definition and we recognize participants often express their joy of participation, competition, achievement and victory through physical acts. We encourage these public expressions of celebration, which include:

- greeting gestures such as high-fives, fist bumps, and brief hugs
- congratulatory gestures such as celebratory hugs, "jump-arounds" and pats on the back for any form of athletic or personal accomplishment

Consolation

It may be appropriate to console an emotionally distressed athlete (e.g., an athlete who has been injured or has just lost a competition). Appropriate consolation includes publicly:

- embracing a crying athlete
- putting an arm around an athlete while verbally engaging them in an effort to calm them down (“side hugs”)
- lifting a fallen athlete off the playing surface and “dusting them off” to encourage them to continue competition

PROHIBITED PHYSICAL CONTACT

Prohibited forms of physical contact, which shall be reported immediately under our Reporting Policy include, without limitation:

- asking or having an athlete sit in the lap of a coach, administrator, staff member or volunteer
- lingering or repeated embraces of athletes that go beyond the criteria set forth for acceptable physical contact
- slapping, hitting, punching, kicking or any other physical contact meant to discipline, punish or achieve compliance from an athlete
- “cuddling” or maintaining prolonged physical contact during any aspect of training, travel or overnight stay
- playful, yet inappropriate contact that is not a part of regular training, (e.g., tickling or “horseplay” wrestling)
- continued physical contact that makes an athlete obviously uncomfortable, whether expressed or not
- any contact that is contrary to a previously expressed personal desire for decreased or no physical contact, where such decreased contact is feasible in a competitive training environment.

VIOLATIONS

Violations of this policy must be reported to a supervisor, a Bergen County Rowing Academy administrator, or member of the Participant Safety Committee and violations will be addressed under our Disciplinary Rules and Procedure. Some forms of physical contact may constitute child physical or sexual abuse that **must be reported to appropriate law enforcement authorities.**

ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS AND SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

What

Policy describes acceptable uses of mobile and electronic devices and social media and emphasizes transparent communication, separate from and in addition to any general policies an organization may already have in place.

Why

Effective communication concerning travel, training schedules and administrative issues among administrators, staff, coaches, athletes and their families is critical. However, the use of mobile devices, web-based applications, social media and other forms of electronic communications increases the possibility for improprieties and misunderstandings, and also provides would-be offenders with unsupervised access to an athlete. The improper use of mobile and electronic communications can result in misconduct and adherence to a policy for mobile and electronic communication reduces these risks.

Elements

- States appropriate criteria for mobile and electronic communications between athletes and administrators, coaches, staff and/or volunteers
- States appropriate criteria for use of social media between athletes and administrators, coach, staff, and/or volunteers

ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS AND SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

As part of the Bergen County Rowing Academy's emphasis on athlete safety, all electronic communications between a coach and athlete must be professional in nature and for the purpose of communicating information about team activities.

As with any communication, the content of any electronic communication should be readily available to share with the athlete's family. At the request of a parent or guardian, any email, electronic text, social media or similar communication will copy or include the athlete's parents or guardians.

FACEBOOK, MYSPACE, BLOGS AND SIMILAR SITES

Coaches may not have athletes of the Bergen County Rowing Academy's Team join a personal social media page. Athlete members and parents can friend the official the Bergen County Rowing Academy's Team page and coaches can communicate to athlete members through the site. All posts, messages, text, or media of any kind between coach and athlete must be professional in nature and for the purpose of communicating information about team activities or for team-oriented motivational purposes.

TWITTER, INSTANT MESSAGING AND SIMILAR MEDIA

Coaches and athletes may "follow" each other. Coaches cannot "re-tweet" athlete message posts. All posts between coach and athlete must be for the purpose of communicating information about team activities.

EMAIL AND SIMILAR ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS

Athletes and coaches may use email to communicate. All email content between coach and athlete must be professional in nature and for the purpose of communicating information about team activities. Where the coach is a staff member and/or volunteer, email from a coach to any athlete should come from the club website email center (the coach's return email address will contain "Coach@BCRowingAcademy.org").

TEXTING AND SIMILAR ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS

Texting is allowed between coaches and athletes. All texts between coach and athlete must be professional and for the purpose of communicating information about team activities.

ELECTRONIC IMAGERY

From time to time, digital photos, videos of practice or competition, and other publicly obtainable images of the athlete – individually or in groups – may be taken. These photos and/or videos may be submitted to local, state or national publications, used in club videos, posted on club or club associated websites, or offered to the club families seasonally on disc or other electronic form. It is the default policy of the Bergen County Rowing Academy to allow such practices as long as the athlete or athletes are in public view and such imagery is both appropriate and in the best interest of the athlete and the club. Imagery must not be contrary to any rules as outlined in the Bergen County Rowing Academy's Participant Safety Handbook.

REQUEST TO DISCONTINUE ALL ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS OR IMAGERY

The parents or guardians of an athlete may request in writing that their child not be contacted by any form of electronic communication by coaches (photography or videography).

MISCONDUCT

Social media and electronic communications can also be used to commit misconduct (e.g., emotional, sexual, bullying, harassment, and hazing). Such communications by coaches, staff, volunteers, administrators, officials, parents or athletes will not be tolerated and are considered violations of our Participant Safety Handbook.

VIOLATIONS

Violations of the Bergen County Rowing Academy's Electronic Communications and Social Media Policy should be reported to your immediate supervisor, a Bergen County Rowing Academy administrator or a member of the Bergen County Rowing Academy's Participant Safety Committee for evaluation. Complaints and allegations will be addressed under the Bergen County Rowing Academy's Disciplinary Rules and Procedure.

LOCKER ROOMS AND CHANGING AREAS—*for* NATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

The United States Rowing Association is concerned with locker room activities between minors, minors and adults, adults being alone with individual minors in locker rooms and changing areas, with non-official or non-related adults having unsupervised access to minor participants and with inappropriate behavior among adults in locker rooms.

As part of the United States Rowing Association's commitment to safety, USRowing requires its clubs to publish practices for locker rooms and changing areas. Clubs must include the following information in their Locker Rooms and Changing Areas policy:

- **Supervision.** The Bergen County Rowing Academy must have and describe BCRA's practices for supervising and monitoring locker rooms and changing areas
- **Prohibited Conduct.** BCRA's policy must prohibit hazing, bullying, harassment and other forms of misconduct, as set forth in BCRA's Athlete Protection Policy
- **User of Recording Devices.** BCRA's policy must prohibit the use of a device's recording capabilities, including voice recording, still cameras and video cameras
- **Meetings.** For individual meetings with a minor participant and a coach in a locker room, BCRA requires that at least one additional responsible adult be with the coach.

LOCKER ROOMS AND CHANGING AREAS—*for* LOCAL CLUBS

The following guidelines are designed to maintain personal privacy as well as to reduce the risk of misconduct in locker rooms and changing areas.

FACILITIES

The following is a description of our practice and competition facilities to allow athletes and their families to plan their use:

We practice at:

This location has: A convenience station

Sample locker room descriptions:

No locker room or changing facilities. Athletes will be expected to come dressed for practice and to change and shower at home.

Our home competitions will be held at: OVERPECK COUNTY PARK. The location has a convenience station and no locker rooms.

When we travel for competition the facilities may differ from location to location. We will work with the host team to provide as much information about the locker room and changing areas as early as possible, and post that information as soon as it's available.

MONITORING

The Bergen County Rowing Academy does not have predictable and limited use of locker rooms and changing areas (e.g., immediately before and following practices and competitions).

MIXED-GENDER TEAMS

If the team consists of both male and female athlete, both female and male privacy rights must be given consideration and appropriate arrangements made.

USE OF CELL PHONES AND OTHER MOBILE RECORDING DEVICES

Cell phones and other mobile devices with recording capabilities, including voice recording, still cameras and video cameras increase the risk for different forms of misconduct in locker rooms and changing areas. As a result, **THERE WILL BE NO USE OF A DEVICE'S RECORDING CAPABILITIES IN THE LOCKER ROOMS OR CHANGING AREAS.**

Violations of this policy will be addressed under the Disciplinary Rules and Procedure and may result in the sanctions as set forth therein, including temporary suspension from competition.

TRAVEL—*for* LOCAL CLUBS

Travel will be a standard aspect of our competitive season and the Bergen County Rowing Academy has established policies to guide our travel, minimize one-on-one interactions and reduce the risk of misconduct. Adherence to these travel guidelines will increase athlete safety and improve the competitive experience while keeping travel a fun and enjoyable experience.

LOCAL AND TEAM TRAVEL

We distinguish between travel to training, practice and local competition (“local travel”), and team travel involving a coordinated overnight stay (“team travel”).

Local Travel

Local travel occurs when the Bergen County Rowing Academy does not sponsor, coordinate, or arrange for travel. For local travel, athletes or their parents/guardians (for minor athletes) are responsible for making all travel arrangements. In these instances it is the responsibility of the athlete or their parents/guardians (for minor athletes) to ensure the person transporting the athlete maintains all safety and legal requirements, including, but not limited to, a valid driver’s license, proper insurance, well maintained vehicle, and compliance with all state laws.

In an effort to minimize one-on-one interactions, BCRA staff members, coaches and/or volunteers, who are not also acting as a parent, should not drive alone with an unrelated athlete and should only drive with at least two other athletes or another adult at all times, unless otherwise agreed to in writing by the athlete’s parent or guardian in advance of travel. In any case where a staff member and/or volunteer is involved in the athlete’s local travel, a parental release is required in advance. Efforts must be made to ensure that staff and/or volunteers are not alone with an athlete or participant, by, e.g., picking the athletes up in groups.

Coaches, staff members and volunteers who are also an athlete’s guardian may provide shared transportation for any athlete(s). We encourage guardians to pick up their athlete first and drop off their athlete last in any shared or carpool travel arrangement. We also recommend completing a shared travel declaration form signed by the parents/guardians of any minor athlete who is being transported as part of such a carpool arrangement.

Team Travel

Team travel is overnight travel that occurs when the Bergen County Rowing Academy sponsors, coordinates or arranges for travel so that our teams can compete locally, regionally, nationally or internationally. Because of the greater distances, coaches, staff, volunteers and chaperones will often travel with the athletes. However, no coach, staff member, or volunteer will engage in team travel without the proper safety requirements in place, including valid drivers’ licenses, proper insurance, well-maintained vehicles and compliance with all state laws.

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BCRA makes efforts to provide adequate supervision through coaches and other adult chaperones. For team travel, hotels and air travel will be booked in advance by BCRA. Athletes will share rooms, with 2-4 athletes assigned per room depending on accommodations. BCRA will also notify hotel management should any special arrangements be warranted. For instance, we will ask hotels to block pay per view channels and we will request an additional large room or suite so that our members and athletes may socialize as a group. Meetings do not occur in hotel rooms, and we will reserve a separate space for adults and athletes to socialize.

We encourage family members who wish to stay in the team hotel to do so. If family members do not stay in the team hotel, we encourage all athletes to call parents and guardians regularly and allow for any unscheduled calls by either the athlete or parent/guardian.

TRAVEL NOTIFICATION

When possible, the Bergen County Rowing Academy will provide reasonable advance notice before team travel. Notice will include the dates, location and duration of competition. Travel notice will also include designated team hotels for overnight stays as well as a contact person within BCRA. This individual will be the point of contact to confirm your intention to travel and to help with travel details.

BCRA will post specific travel itineraries when they become available. These will include a more detailed, hour-by-hour itinerary as well as contact information for team travel chaperones.

MIXED-GENDER AND MIXED-AGE TRAVEL

The Bergen County Rowing Academy is made up of male and female athletes across various ages. Athletes will only share a room with other athletes of the same sex and age group. Athletes will also be grouped by age and sex for the purposes of assigning an appropriate chaperone. We will make every effort to provide these groups at least one chaperone of the same sex. However, we rely on parents to serve as chaperones and may be limited in providing this match.

Regardless of gender, a coach shall not share a hotel room or other sleeping arrangement with an athlete (unless the coach is the parent, guardian, sibling or spouse of that particular athlete). Where an adult is registered both as a coach and an athlete member of BCRA, and is functioning primarily as a coach, he or she may share sleeping arrangements with another registered coach.

COACH AND STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES

During team travel, coaches and staff members will help athletes, fellow coaches and staff members adhere to policy guidelines, including, without limitation, the Travel Policy, Locker Rooms and Changing Areas Policy and Reporting Policy.

If a coach or staff member transports an athlete or other organization member in their private car for

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team travel, a copy of the coach's or staff member's valid driver's license is required.

When not practicing, training, competing, or preparing for competition, coaches and staff will monitor the activities of athletes, fellow coaches and staff during team travel. Coaches and staff will:

- a. prepare athletes for team travel and make athletes aware of all expectations. Supplemental information will be given to parents/guardians of athletes who are considered inexperienced travelers, new or relatively new to team travel, or who are under the age of 14
- b. familiarize themselves with all travel itineraries and schedules before the initiation of team travel
- c. conform to, and monitor for others' adherence, the Athlete Protection Policy and all policies during team travel
- d. encourage minor athletes to participate in regular, at least daily, scheduled communications with their parents/guardians
- e. help athletes be on time for all team commitments (as possible)
- f. assist with team travel logistical needs (as possible)
- g. support chaperones and/or participate in the monitoring of athletes for adherence to curfew restrictions set based on age and competition schedule as listed in travel itinerary
- h. ensure athletes are complying with hotel room restrictions based on gender or age bracket requirements
- i. make certain that athletes are not alone in a hotel room with any adult apart from a family member; this includes coaches, staff and chaperones
- j. not use drugs or alcohol in the presence of minors or be under the influence of alcohol or drugs while performing their coaching duties
- k. immediately report any concerns about physical or sexual abuse, misconduct, or policy violations
- l. notify parents before taking any disciplinary action against a minor athlete if the athlete is traveling without his or her parents.

CHAPERONE RESPONSIBILITIES

Chaperones accompany team travel to ensure that the athletes, coaches, staff, and volunteers adhere to the Bergen County Rowing Academy's policy guidelines. While these include the travel policy, it also includes all other relevant policies contained in BCRA's Participant Safety Handbook.

If a chaperone has not undergone a criminal background check and BCRA's awareness training, the chaperone will not be permitted to have any one-on-one interactions with athletes or other youth participants. If a chaperone has undergone a criminal background check and awareness training, he or she may have appropriate one-on-one interactions as outlined in BCRA's Participant Safety Handbook.

If a chaperone will be operating a private car for team travel, a copy of the chaperone's valid driver's

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license is required.

Chaperones will monitor the activities of all coaches, staff members, volunteers and athletes during team travel. Specifically, chaperones will:

- a. familiarize themselves with all travel itineraries and schedules before team travel
- b. monitor for adherences to club policies during team travel
- c. encourage minor athletes to participate in regular, at least daily, scheduled communications with their parents/guardians
- d. help athletes be on time for all team commitments (as possible)
- e. assist coaches, staff and other volunteers with team travel logistical needs (as possible)
- f. monitor athletes for adherence to curfew restrictions set based on age and competition schedule as listed in travel itinerary
- g. ensure athletes comply with hotel room restrictions based on gender or age bracket requirements
- h. not use drugs or alcohol in the presence of minors or be under the influence of alcohol or drugs while performing their chaperone duties
- i. make certain that athletes are not alone in a hotel room with any adult apart from a family member; this includes coaches, staff and chaperones
- j. immediately report any concerns about sexual and physical abuse, misconduct or policy violations to a CLUB administrator or a member of CLUB's Participant Safety Committee.

REPORTING POLICY

Every Bergen County Rowing Academy staff member and/or volunteer must report:

- (1) violations of the Participant Safety Handbook,
- (2) misconduct as defined in BCRA's Athlete Protection Policy, and
- (3) suspicions or allegations of child physical or sexual abuse.

As a matter of policy, the Bergen County Rowing Academy does not investigate suspicions or allegations of child physical or sexual abuse or attempt to evaluate the credibility or validity of such allegations as a condition for reporting to the appropriate law enforcement authorities.

Reporting Child Physical or Sexual Abuse

Child Physical or Sexual Abuse

Staff members and/or volunteers at BCRA are required to report suspicions or allegations of child sexual abuse by a colleague or co-worker, to:

- (1) their immediate supervisor,
- (2) a BCRA administrator,
- (3) a member of BCRA's Participant Safety Committee and,
- (4) where applicable, **appropriate law enforcement authorities.**

Grooming

Because sexual abusers "groom" children for abuse – the process used by offenders to select a child, to win the child's trust (and the trust of the child's parent or guardian), to manipulate the child into sexual activity and to keep the child from disclosing abuse – it is possible that a staff member and/or volunteer may witness behavior intended to groom a child for sexual abuse. All questions or concerns related to inappropriate, suspicious or suspected grooming behavior should be directed to an immediate supervisor, a BCRA administrator or a member of the BCRA Participant Safety Committee.

Peer-to-Peer Sexual Abuse

Approximately 1/3 of all child sexual abuse occurs at the hands of other children and the obligation to report extends to peer-to-peer child sexual abuse. Whether or not a sexual interaction between children constitutes child sexual abuse turns on the existence of an aggressor, the age difference between the children, and/or whether there is an imbalance of power or intellectual capabilities. **If you have any concerns that an interaction between children may constitute sexual abuse, report it to the appropriate law enforcement authorities and a BCRA supervisor, a BCRA administrator or a member of BCRA's Participant Safety Committee immediately.**

Reporting Misconduct and Policy Violations

If any staff member and/or volunteer receives an allegation or observes misconduct or other inappropriate behavior, such as grooming, that is not reportable to the appropriate law enforcement

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authorities, it is the responsibility of each staff member and/or volunteer to report their observations to:

- (1) their immediate supervisor,
- (2) a BCRA administrator or
- (3) a member of BCRA's Participant Safety Committee.

the Bergen County Rowing Academy also encourages member parents, athletes and other sport participants to communicate violations of BCRA's Participant Safety Handbook and/or allegations and suspicions of child physical and sexual abuse to a BCRA administrator or member of BCRA's Participant Safety Committee. Where applicable, parents may also report to the appropriate law enforcement authorities.

REPORTING PROCEDURE

To Whom to Report

Staff members and volunteers may report to any supervisor or BCRA administrator with whom they are comfortable sharing their concerns. You may also report to any member of its Participant Safety Committee, which includes the following three designated Incident Review Officials (IROs):

- Clemens Reinke, President & Head Coach, (201) 320-2951, info@BCRowingAcademy.org
- Melanie Barrett, Treasurer, (201) 522-7076, mf26@columbia.edu

A staff member and/or volunteer may, and in many cases must, report any allegation of child physical or sexual abuse to relevant law enforcement authorities.

How to Report

The Bergen County Rowing Academy will take a report in the way that is most comfortable for the person initiating a report including an anonymous, in-person, verbal or written report. Regardless of how you choose to report, it is helpful to BCRA for individuals to provide, at a minimum, (1) the name of the complainant(s); (2) the type of misconduct alleged and the name(s) of the individual(s) alleged to have committed the misconduct.

Reporting Form

Individuals reporting child physical or sexual abuse or other misconduct may complete an Incident Report Form. Information on this form will include:

- 1) the name(s) of the complainant(s)
- 2) the type of misconduct alleged
- 3) the name(s) of the individual(s) alleged to have committed the misconduct
- 4) the approximate dates the misconduct was committed
- 5) the names of other individuals who might have information regarding the alleged misconduct
- 6) a summary statement of the reasons to believe that misconduct has occurred

The Bergen County Rowing Academy will withhold the complainant's name on request, to the extent permitted by law.

A copy of BCRA's Reporting Form can be found at: www.bcrowingacademy.org

CONFIDENTIALITY, ANONYMOUS REPORTING AND BAD-FAITH ALLEGATIONS

Confidentiality

To the extent permitted by law, and as appropriate, BCRA will keep confidential the complainant's name on request, not make public the names of potential victims, the accused perpetrator or the people who made a report of child physical and sexual abuse to the authorities.

Anonymous Reporting

CLUB recognizes it can be difficult for an athlete, teammate, friend or family member to report an allegation of misconduct and strives to remove as many barriers to reporting as possible. **Anonymous reports may be made without the formality of completing an Incident Report Form:**

- by completing the Reporting Form without including their name
- by expressing concerns verbally to a BCRA administrator or a member of BCRA's Participant Safety Committee
- through email, texts or notes left for a BCRA administrator or a member of BCRA's Participant Safety Committee.

However, anonymous reporting may make it difficult for the Bergen County Rowing Academy to investigate or properly address allegations.

All suspicions of child physical or sexual abuse will be reported to the appropriate law enforcement authorities.

"Whistleblower" Protection

Regardless of outcome, BCRA will support the complainant(s) and his or her right to express concerns in good faith. BCRA will not encourage, allow or tolerate attempts from any individual to retaliate, punish, allow or in any way harm any individual(s) who reports a concern in good faith. Such actions against a complainant will be considered a violation of our Participant Safety Handbook and grounds for disciplinary action.

Bad-Faith Allegations

A report of abuse, misconduct or policy violations that is malicious, frivolous or made in bad faith is prohibited. Such reports will be considered a violation of our Participant Safety Handbook and grounds for disciplinary action. Depending on the nature of the allegation, a person making a malicious, frivolous or bad-faith report may also be subject to civil or criminal proceedings.

HOW REPORTS ARE HANDLED

Suspicious or Allegations of Child Physical or Sexual Abuse

Reporting to Law Enforcement and/or Child Protective Services

An independent investigation can harm youth and/or interfere with the legal investigative process. BCRA, its staff members and/or volunteers **do not attempt to evaluate the credibility or validity of child physical or sexual abuse as a condition for reporting to appropriate law enforcement authorities**. As necessary, however, BCRA may ask a few clarifying questions of the minor or person making the report to adequately report the suspicion or allegation to law enforcement authorities.

For mandatory reporting laws, visit www.childwelfare.gov.

Immediate Suspension or Termination

When an allegation of child physical or sexual abuse is made against a staff member, youth and/or volunteer, BCRA may immediately remove that individual from contact with any children in the program until the allegation has been investigated by an official agency. As necessary, BCRA may suspend or change the assignment of a staff member and/or volunteer.

In those cases where the Ted Stevens Act may apply, the accused individual will be offered a hearing. A hearing under the Ted Stevens Act will not necessarily affect BCRA's ability to immediately suspend or terminate the accused individual from employment or performing services for organization.

A staff member or volunteer's failure to report to a supervisor, a BCRA administrator or member of the Participant Safety Committee is a violation of this policy and grounds for termination of a staff member and/or dismissal of a volunteer.

Misconduct and Policy Violations

The Bergen County Rowing Academy addresses internally alleged policy violations and misconduct – bullying, harassment, hazing, emotional, physical and sexual – that are not reportable under relevant state or federal law. Staff members and/or volunteer must report policy violations and misconduct to an immediate supervisor, BCRA administrator or member of BCRA's Participant Safety Committee.

BCRA may also investigate allegations of child physical or sexual abuse that are reportable, if such investigation does not interfere with any ongoing criminal investigation or prosecution for abuse. Such allegations may include:

- Emotional abuse
- Abuse reported outside the relevant statutes of limitation
- Allegations of abuse that were reported to authorities, but: (a) legal authorities did not press criminal charges; (b) criminal charges were filed, but not pursued to trial; or (c) the alleged offender was acquitted at trial

NOTIFICATION

Following the Bergen County Rowing Academy's notice of a credible allegation that results in the removal of an employee, coach or other volunteer, BCRA may consider the circumstances in which it will notify other parents of athletes with whom the accused individual may have had contact. In BCRA's discretion, as appropriate, and after consultation with counsel, BCRA may notify its staff members,

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contractors, volunteers, parents, and/or athletes of any allegation of child physical or sexual abuse or other criminal behavior that (1) law enforcement authorities are actively investigating; or (2) that BCRA is investigating internally. Advising others of an allegation may lead to additional reports of child physical or sexual abuse and other misconduct.

SAMPLE

DISCIPLINARY RULES AND PROCEDURE

While the Bergen County Rowing Academy endeavors to provide support and guidance to participants on a day-to-day basis, it is also important for BCRA to have a formal procedure for disciplinary action to address alleged violations of its policies and other inappropriate behaviors, which is consistent with BCRA's Bylaws and Constitution.

APPLICATION

This Policy is used to address the following allegations against staff members, athletes, participants and/or volunteers:

- Violations of BCRA's policies; and/or
- Child abuse (emotional, physical or sexual) that does not involve an ongoing legal investigation or criminal prosecution.

The Bergen County Rowing Academy will not investigate an allegation of child physical or sexual abuse if it undermines or interferes with a pending legal investigation or criminal prosecution.

DISCIPLINARY RULES

BCRA recognizes that there are varying levels of misconduct. For example, physical and sexual misconduct are serious violations that may result in immediate dismissal. In contrast, a youth participant who tells a single sexually risqué joke constitutes less serious misconduct and depending on the circumstances, might be dealt with more appropriately through dialogue and a verbal warning. In all cases, BCRA's disciplinary procedures and actions will be proportionate, reasonable and applied fairly and equally.

DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURE

On receipt of an allegation, BCRA will determine in its discretion the appropriate steps to address the conduct based on several factors, including (i) the age of the complainant or victim, (ii) the age of the accused and (iii) the nature, scope, and extent of the allegations.

BCRA will address allegations against a staff member and/or volunteer under its Employment Policies and Procedures, Bylaws and Constitution.

BCRA's disciplinary response will depend on the nature and seriousness of the incident and in extreme cases, misconduct will result in immediate summary dismissal, provided that the accused individual shall be advised of their right to a hearing. If the accused individual is a minor, BCRA will contact his or her parents or guardians.

DISCIPLINARY ACTION

Sanctions for violations of the Participant Safety Handbook will be proportionate and reasonable under the circumstances. In addition to day-to-day guidance, the BCRA may take the following disciplinary actions, without limitation:

- Inform the individual's direct-line supervisor or, in the case of a youth participant, the youth's parent or guardian
- Provide the individual with guidance, redirection and instruction
- Temporary suspension from competition
- File a formal incident report
- Issue a verbal warning
- Issue a written and/or final written warning
- Implement a limited access agreement (e.g., limiting an individual's access to certain buildings or to youth)
- Provide informed supervision, where at least one staff member is informed of the allegation and is instructed to vigilantly supervise the accused participant or stakeholder in his or her interactions with the program and/or organization
- Engage in restorative practices, i.e., creation of a respectful and safe dialogue when a misunderstanding or harm has occurred
- Suspend or terminate employment or membership

ONGOING EMPLOYMENT AND/OR PARTICIPATION

On receipt of a credible and specific allegation of child abuse or other serious misconduct (e.g., physical and sexual abuse as defined in our Athlete Protection Policy), BCRA may immediately suspend or terminate the accused individual to ensure participant safety.

COMPLAINANT PROTECTION

Regardless of outcome, CLUB will support the complainant(s) and his or her right to express concerns in good faith. BCRA will not encourage or tolerate attempts to retaliate, punish or in any way harm any individual(s) who report(s) a concern in good faith. Such actions will be grounds for disciplinary action.

BAD-FAITH ALLEGATIONS

Any individual who alleges misconduct under the Participant Safety Handbook that, upon review, is determined to be malicious, frivolous or made in bad faith will be a violation of our Participant Safety Handbook. Bad-faith allegations may also be subject to criminal or civil proceedings.

INVESTIGATION AND ADJUDICATION—*for* RESOLVING ALLEGATIONS UNDER THE TED STEVENS ACT

The Bergen County Rowing Academy utilizes this Investigation and Adjudication procedure to resolve those allegations that are governed by the Ted Stevens Act. A hearing under the Ted Stevens Act will not necessarily affect CLUB'S ability to immediately suspend or terminate an accused individual.

On receipt of:

- (1) an allegation of misconduct, as defined in BCRA's Athlete Protection Policy, that does not involve child physical or sexual abuse
- (2) an adverse employment determination by a local club for emotional, physical or sexual misconduct as set forth in BCRA's Athlete Protection Policy

BCRA shall determine the appropriate steps to address the conduct based on several factors, including (i) the age of the complainant or victim, (ii) the age of the accused and (iii) the nature, scope and extent of the allegations. Such steps may include, without limitation:

- The collection of additional information from the individual in question, other individuals with potential knowledge or evidence of the incident or the accused individual
- Formal investigation and hearing
- Retention of legal counsel or investigation services to investigate and/or make a recommendation as to whether a violation of the relevant policy has occurred and/or a recommendation as to the appropriate sanction

Where serious allegations of misconduct are at issue (e.g., physical and sexual misconduct as defined in our Athlete Protection Policy), BCRA may elect in its discretion to undertake a full investigation and hearing before determining the appropriate disciplinary action. **This investigation and/or hearing will in no way interfere with an ongoing criminal investigation or prosecution.**

SUSPENSION BEFORE FINAL RESOLUTION

If the reported complaint or employment/membership decision by a local member club indicates that an individual's continued employment, membership or participation poses a risk of ongoing physical or emotional harm, BCRA may wish to suspend the accused individual pending final resolution of the complaint to eliminate any danger to an athlete, sport participant or other individual. In such instances, BCRA will provide the individual with notice and offer her/him an opportunity to contest the suspension.

BCRA may suspend the accused individual where there is a reasonable belief that the individual has committed emotional, physical or sexual misconduct. Evidence which may be found sufficient to support a reasonable belief includes, at a minimum:

- the suspension or termination of employment or membership by one of organization's member clubs
- an Incident Report Form with specific and credible information
- other legal documentation or report supporting a reasonable belief that the individual has committed emotional, physical or sexual misconduct, including abuse of a child (e.g., a criminal indictment).

For the purposes of this Policy, a suspension from sport involvement shall mean that for the duration of the period of suspension, the accused individual may not participate in any capacity or in any role in the business, events, or activities of the BCRA.

Any suspension before final resolution may be appealed to APPEAL BODY at the written request of the accused individual within 10 days of the suspension.

INVESTIGATION

As appropriate, and at its discretion, BCRA may institute a formal investigation and hearing procedure to address serious allegations of misconduct (e.g., physical and sexual misconduct). However, CLUB anticipates that an investigation and hearing will be undertaken to address only the most serious allegations and patterns of behavior that warrant significant sanctions. **Accordingly, the Bergen County Rowing Academy anticipates that this disciplinary procedure will be used rarely.**

If an investigation is conducted, the complainant, victim and accused individual shall have the right to:

- a) Receive written notice of the report or complaint, including a statement of allegations
- b) Present relevant information to the investigator(s)
- c) Legal counsel, at his or her own expense

HEARING

Procedural Safeguards

In every case where a hearing is warranted pursuant to this Policy, an adjudication shall be conducted that shall in all cases comply with BCRA's bylaws. The adjudication shall further conform to the provisions and principles set out hereafter. However, deviations in one or more of the procedural safeguards are permitted, provided the following conditions are satisfied:

- a) The individual is informed of the allegations and evidence brought against him or her
- b) The individual is given a reasonable opportunity to respond to the allegations brought forward
- c) The individual may be represented by legal counsel at his or her expense
- d) The panel member(s) who make the determination are free of conflicts of interests and render an unbiased decision
- e) There is a right to appeal the panel's decision

Preliminary Determination

On receipt of a disclosure and/or additional information made pursuant to this Policy, if the Incident Review Official is satisfied, in the exercise of his or her discretion, that there is a sufficient reasonable, reliable and persuasive evidence to support the complaint alleging emotional, physical or sexual

misconduct, he or she shall notify the Review Panel.

Notice

The accused individual will be notified of a specific date and time to ensure that he or she is available for the hearing. Unless the Review Panel requires the individual to attend the hearing in person, the individual may appear by telephone conference call. The individual has the right to be represented by legal counsel at the hearing, provided that the counsel's participation may be subject to the reasonable hearing rules related to the conduct of the hearing.

Timing

The Review Panel shall have the authority to set timelines and other rules regarding the proceeding and the conduct of the hearing, as it deems necessary.

On request of the accused individual, and provided that it is necessary to expedite the proceeding to resolve a matter relating to scheduled training or competition, the Review Panel may render an expedited determination.

Evidence

At the hearing, the accused individual will be allowed to present any reasonable evidence or argument that he or she wishes the Panel to consider. The Panel may require or permit documentary evidence, such as the written report of any investigator or other fact-finder, before the hearing and that the names of any witnesses be disclosed before the hearing. The Panel may also consider a local club's employment determination as evidence to be considered.

If the complainant/alleged victim(s) is a minor, the investigator's or other fact-finder's report may substitute for the minor witness's direct testimony, provided that the accused had an opportunity to present and respond to relevant information collected during the investigation and before the report was transmitted to the Review Panel.

The Review Panel may proceed in the accused individual's absence if it cannot locate the individual or if the individual declines to attend the hearing.

Findings and Sanctions

The Panel has the discretion to impose sanctions on the individual if it finds based on a preponderance of the evidence that emotional, physical or sexual misconduct has occurred.

The Panel will communicate its finding to the individual. The Panel may impose sanctions on the individual in its findings.

Any sanctions imposed by the Panel against the individual must be proportionate and reasonable, relative to the content that is found to have occurred. The decision regarding the appropriate sanction shall be up to the panel deciding each complaint. In imposing a sanction, the Review Panel shall consider:

- a) The legitimate interest of the Bergen County Rowing Academy in providing a safe environment for its participants
- b) The seriousness of the offense or act
- c) The age of the accused individual and alleged victim when the offense or act occurred
- d) Any information produced by the accused individual, or produced on behalf of the individual, in regard to the individual's rehabilitation and good conduct
- e) The effect on the Bergen County Rowing Academy's reputation
- f) Whether the individual poses an ongoing concern for the safety of BCRA's athletes and participants
- g) Any other information, which in the determination of the Panel, bears on the appropriate sanction

Sanctions may range from a warning and a reprimand to suspension from sport involvement with the BCRA for a period of time. Suspensions from sport involvement with BCRA may be temporary or permanent. The most severe sanction possible to impose will be permanent suspension from sport involvement and expulsion from the BCRA.

For the purposes of this Policy, a suspension from sport involvement shall mean that the individual may not participate in any capacity or in any role in the business, events or activities of the relevant organization or its affiliated members for the duration of the period of suspension.

Confidentiality

The conduct of the hearing will be private. If the Panel determines that the individual has violated policy, it may publish its decision or a brief summary of its decision, unless the accused is a minor. However, if the individual appeals, the summary of the panel's decision will not be disclosed until an appellate decision has been made.

If the Panel determines the accused individual did not violate the relevant policy, the panel will publish a summary only at the individual's written request.

APPEAL

If the individual disagrees with the finding or sanction of the panel and wishes to appeal, he or she may file an appeal with APPEAL BODY within 10 days of the Bergen County Rowing Academy's finding. On

appeal, the APPEAL BODY will address the merits of the Bergen County Rowing Academy's decision *de novo*, and not the process that was utilized. A decision rendered by the APPEAL BODY shall be final and binding on all parties.

MONITORING THE STRATEGY

By monitoring the interactions among staff, volunteers, athletes, and other, the Bergen County Rowing Academy works to prevent, recognize and respond to inappropriate and harmful behaviors as set forth in our Participant Safety Handbook, while reinforcing appropriate behaviors.

MONITORING COMPLIANCE WITH POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

BCRA monitors for compliance with its policies and procedures, including without limitation its Awareness Training, Travel, Locker Room and Changing Areas, and Physical Contact Policies.

MONITORING METHODS

BCRA utilizes multiple monitoring methods to observe how individuals are interacting, including without limitation (1) formal supervision, including regular evaluations; and (2) informal supervision, including regular and random observation (e.g., roving and checking interactions throughout practices), and (3) maintaining frequent contact with staff members, volunteer and athletes who interact off-site.

RESPONDING TO INTERACTIONS

While BCRA has a formal reporting policy, staff members and volunteers should be prepared to respond immediately to inappropriate or harmful behavior, potential risk situations and potential boundary violations.

Staff members and volunteers will redirect inappropriate behaviors to promote positive behaviors, confront inappropriate or harmful behaviors, and report behaviors if necessary.

REPORTING

Staff members and volunteers are required to report policy violations, misconduct and physical and sexual abuse consistent with BCRA's Reporting Policy. **The Bergen County Rowing Academy does not investigate suspicions or allegations of child physical or sexual abuse or attempt to evaluate the credibility or validity of such allegations as a condition for reporting to appropriate law enforcement authorities.**

APPLICATION FOR EMPLOYMENT

Please answer each question fully and accurately. No action can be taken on this application unless it is complete. Use blank papers if you do not have enough room on this application. **PLEASE PRINT**, except for signature on back of this application. PLEASE USE INK.

Job Applied For: _____ Today's Date: ____/____/_____

Are you seeking (circle): Full-time Part-time Temporary Summer

When are you available to work (circle): Days Evenings Nights Weekends On call

When are you available to start employment? ____/____/_____

Salary requested: \$_____ per _____

PERSONAL INFORMATION:

Name (Last, First, Middle) _____

Current Street Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Telephone (_____) _____ Message Telephone (_____) _____

Social Security Number (Optional) _____

Are you at least 18 years of age (circle)? Yes No

E-mail address: _____

If hired, can you furnish proof you are eligible to work in the United States (circle)? Yes No

How did you learn of the position (circle)? Newspaper ad Walk-in Job Line Referral Other

EMPLOYMENT HISTORY: (Complete even if you have a resume to attach.)

Account for all periods of time including military service and any periods of unemployment. List your most current employment first. If self-employed provide company name and supply business references.

NOTE: Offered employment may be contingent upon acceptable references from current and former employers.

Time in Position	Name and complete address of employer (street, city, state, zip)	Name and Title Of Last Supervisor	Salary or Wage	Reason for Leaving

Your title: _____ Employer telephone () _____

Key Duties: _____

Time in Position	Name and complete address of employer (street, city, state, zip)	Name and Title Of Last Supervisor	Salary or Wage	Reason for Leaving

Your title: _____ Employer telephone () _____

Key Duties: _____

Time in Position	Name and complete address of employer (street, city, state, zip)	Name and Title Of Last Supervisor	Salary or Wage	Reason for Leaving

Your title: _____ Employer telephone () _____

EDUCATION:

School	Name and Complete address of School (Street, City, State, Zip)	Course Of Study	Graduated Yes or No	Grade Completed	Diploma/ Degree
High School					
College					
College					
Other: (BS, Tech, Trade, Military)					

SKILLS:

If you are an experienced operator of any business machines or equipment, please list.

If you are an experienced operator of any heavy-duty machines or equipment, please list.

Do you transcribe dictation from a recording device (circle)? Yes No

Word Processing (specify equipment): _____

Data Entry (specify equipment): _____

What computer software do you know how to use? _____

What skills or additional training do you have that are related to the job for which you are applying?

GENERAL: YOU MUST ANSWER ALL QUESTIONS IN THIS SECTION.

1. Have you ever been convicted under any criminal law; including any plea of "guilty", "no contest" or "deferred adjudication" (excluding minor traffic violations)? Yes No

If yes, when, where, and what was the disposition? _____

2. Do you have charges or prosecutions that are pending? Yes No

3. Have you ever been fired from a job, or asked to resign? Yes No If yes, please explain:

4. Do you have any relatives currently employed by this organization? Yes No

5. May we contact your present employer? Yes No If no, please explain:

6. For driving jobs only: Do you have a valid driver's license? Yes No

License No _____ Class _____ State _____ Expires: _____

7. Professional License: National State Both

License (specify) _____ License No: _____ By _____ Expires _____

REFERENCES:

Give three references, business or faculty, who are familiar with your qualifications

NAME	COMPLETE ADDRESS (Street, City, State, Zip)	PHONE	OCCUPATION

AFFIDAVIT, CONSENT AND RELEASE
PLEASE READ EACH STATEMENT CAREFULLY BEFORE SIGNING

I certify that all information provided in this employment application is true and complete. I understand that any false information or omission may disqualify me from further consideration for employment and may result in my dismissal if discovered at a later date.

I authorize the investigation of any or all statements contained in this application. I also authorize, whether listed or not, any person, school, current employer, past employers and organizations to provide relevant information and opinions that may be useful in making a hiring decision. I release such persons and organizations from any legal liability in making such statements. A copy of this Affidavit signed by me can be used as my authorization for release of information from my former employers, schools or persons named in this application.

I understand I may be required to successfully pass a drug screening examination. I hereby consent to a pre- and/or post-employment drug screen as a condition of employment, if required.

I UNDERSTAND THAT THIS APPLICATION, VERBAL STATEMENTS BY MANAGEMENT, OR SUBSEQUENT EMPLOYMENT DOES NOT CREATE AN EXPRESSED OR IMPLIED CONTRACT OF EMPLOYMENT NOR GUARANTEE EMPLOYMENT FOR ANY DEFINITE PERIOD OF TIME. IF EMPLOYED, I UNDERSTAND THAT I HAVE BEEN HIRED AT THE WILL OF THE EMPLOYER AND MY EMPLOYMENT MAY BE TERMINATED AT ANY TIME, WITH OR WITHOUT REASON AND WITH OR WITHOUT NOTICE.

I have read, understand and, by my signature, consent to these statements.

Signature _____ Date _____

For HR use only:

REFERENCE FORM

Candidate Name:

Position:

Date:

Reference Name:

**Reference
Position/Organization:**

Recommended Questions

Questions to Avoid with References

When did (candidate) work for your company?

Any question that relates to race or ethnicity.

Could you confirm starting and ending employment dates? When did s/he leave the company?

Any question that tends to identify the candidate's age if it is not a job requirement. (ex: do you know when the candidate graduate from high school?)

Were you asked to be a reference by (candidate)?

Any question attempting to identify the candidate's nationality, lineage, ancestry, national origin.

What was her/his position? Can you describe the job responsibilities?

Any question related to the candidate's children, child care, ages of the candidate's children, or other subjects that are likely to be perceived by covered group members, especially women, as discriminatory.

Did (candidate) supervise other employees? How effectively? If I spoke to those employees, how do you think they would describe (candidate's) management style? How would you describe her/his supervisory/management skills?

Are there any health-related reasons why (candidate) may not be able to perform on the job?

How did (candidate) handle conflict? How about pressure? Stress?

Does (candidate) have any physical or mental defects which preclude them from

	performing certain kinds of work?
Did you act as (candidate's) supervisor? If (candidate) did not report to you, what was your working relationship? Did you evaluate (candidate's) performance? What was noted as needing improvement during this performance review? What do you consider (candidate's) key strengths?	Has (candidate) been hospitalized in the last five years?
How would you describe (candidate's) punctuality?	Has (candidate) recently had a major illness?
Could you rate (candidate's) reliability on a scale of 1-10, 10 being the best?	How many days was (candidate) absent from work because of illness last year?
What was his/her biggest accomplishment while working at your company?	Has (candidate) ever filed for workers' compensation insurance?
How would you describe (candidate's) ability to work as part of a team?	Any inquiry that is not job-related or necessary for determining and applicant's potential for employment.
(Candidate) is being considered for the following position; do you think he/she is a good fit? Why?	Is (candidate) a citizen of the U.S.?
What haven't we discussed that you feel is vital for me to know about (candidate)?	Has (candidate) ever worked for your company under a different name?
Would you re-hire this person? Why or why not?	

REFERENCE INFORMATION

Candidate name: _____

Position: _____

Date: _____

Reference Name: _____

Position/Organization: _____

1. In what capacity do you know the candidate?

2. How long have you known him/her? _____
3. What are his/her strengths?

4. In which areas could he/she improve?

5. What would be the ideal role for him/her?

6. Please describe candidate's interaction in a team setting.

7. Would you rehire him/her? _____
8. Is there any other information you feel would be helpful for us to know about him/her?

REPORTING FORM

Source: USA Swimming

ORGANIZATION strongly encourages the reporting of misconduct. ORGANIZATION appreciates your willingness to report inappropriate behavior.

This section is about the individual you are reporting. Please provide as much information as possible.

1. Name of Individual you are reporting (First & Last):

Comments:

2. Age or Approximate Age:

3. Gender

Male Female

4. Address (City, State required):

5. Position(s) this individual holds or held:

- Head Coach
- Assistant Coach
- Club Employee
- Volunteer
- Official
- Other / Not sure

6. Club where individual works and/or volunteers or worked/volunteered previously:

Comments:

Sample Forms and Documents

This section asks questions about the incident or incidents you are reporting. Please provide as much specific information as you are able.

7. Type of Offense (i.e. what happened?)

8. Where did the incident or incidents take place? (City, State and any other available location information)

Comments:



9. Please Describe what happened: (Including... Who, What, When, Where)

Comments:



This section is for information about the victim or victims. If you are the victim and wish to remain anonymous, you may do so. In that case, please enter only your age, city, state, and Club affiliation.

10. Name:

Comments:

11. Age (or approximate age):

Comments:

12. Club affiliation (if any):

Comments:

Sample Forms and Documents

13. Contact phone number (Note, if this person is under 18, please provide contact information for his/her parent or guardian):

14. Contact Email address (if this individual is under 18, please provide contact information for parent or guardian):

15. Gender

- Male
- Female

Your Information: You may remain anonymous if you wish. However, providing your information is vastly helpful to a swift and effective investigation. A person reporting alleged misconduct should not fear any retribution and/or consequence when filing a report he or she believes to be true.

16. Name:

17. Phone Number:

18. Email Address:

19. Club Affiliation (if any):

20. Relationship to victim (if any):

- Self
- Parent/Guardian
- Other family member
- Friend or acquaintance
- Club member, coach or volunteer
- Other or prefer not to say

Sample Forms and Documents

Other Information

21. If you have any other information that you feel would be helpful to an investigation of the alleged offense you have reported, please enter it here:

INCIDENT REPORT FORM

Incident:	
Reported By:	
Date:	
Individuals (s) Involved:	

Investigated By:	
-------------------------	--

Location of Incident:	
------------------------------	--

Summary of Complaint:	
------------------------------	--

INCIDENT REPORT FORM

Statements Provided By:	
------------------------------------	--

Conclusion:	
--------------------	--

Recommendation:	
------------------------	--

ACTION TAKEN:

APPENDIX: ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Prevention

- Centers for Disease Control, www.cdc.gov/ViolencePrevention/childmaltreatment/index.html
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Child Welfare Information Gateway, www.childwelfare.gov

Applicant Screening

- “Staff Screening Toolkit: Building a Strong Foundation Through Careful Staffing,” Patterson, John C. (Nonprofit Risk Management Center), www.nonprofitrisk.org

Creating Policies and Procedures

- Saul J, Audage NC. *Preventing Child Sexual Abuse Within Youth-serving Organizations: Getting Started on Policies and Procedures*. Atlanta (GA): Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control; 2007.

Risk Management

- Public Entity Risk Institute (PERI), www.riskinstitute.gov
- Nonprofit Risk Management Center, www.nonprofitrisk.org
- Nonprofit Risk Management Center, “The Season of Hope: A Risk Management Guide for Youth-serving Nonprofits.”
- National Resource Center for Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention, Evaluation Toolkit, Logic Model Builder: <http://friendsnrc.org/evaluation-toolkit>

Reporting

- Child Information Gateway, www.childwelfare.gov

Effects of Child Abuse and Neglect

- Child Welfare Information Gateway, “Long-Term Consequences of Child Abuse and Neglect,” www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/factsheets/long_term_consequences.pdf

Counseling

- Childhelp, <http://www.childhelp.org>
- Childhelp National Child Abuse Hotline: 1.800.4.A.CHILD (1.800.422.4453) (staffed 24 hours a day, seven days a week, with professional crisis counselors)
- Child Molestation Prevention, <http://childmolestationprevention.org/pages.diagnosis/html>
- Sexual Behaviors Consultation Unit, Johns Hopkins Hospital, http://hopkinsmedicine.org/psychiatry/specialty_areas/sexual_behaviors/