

Code of Conduct for Coaches, Therapists, and Team Leaders 2024

ISU Members and their clubs may use this ISU Template to develop their Code of Conduct. Other examples of Codes of Conduct are available on the ISU website and may also be used.

This template provides a robust framework to safeguard Skaters and promote ethical coaching practices. Adjustments may be made based on specific organizational needs, governing body regulations, and applicable local, regional and national laws.

September, 2024

INTERNATIONAL SKATING UNION (ISU)

CODE OF CONDUCT for COACHES – 2024

ARTICLE 1: Purpose

This Code of Conduct sets clear and ethical guidelines for all Skating Coaches who participate in the competitions, programs and activities of [name of ice skating federation].. Its main goal is to provide ethical standards for Coaches and to protect Skaters from harassment, abuse, discrimination, and any form of misconduct while they are participating in the competitions, programs and activities of [name of ice skating federation]. The Code promotes respect, fairness, and integrity in the sports community, ensuring that all Skaters can train and compete in a safe, supportive, and age-appropriate environment.

ARTICLE 2: Scope of Application

This Code applies to all Coaches, whether full-time, part-time, volunteers, or temporary. It is relevant across all levels of competition and training, from beginners to elite athletes. The Code also covers all interactions of Coaches with Skaters, staff, volunteers, parents, and spectators.

ARTICLE 3: General Standards of Conduct

Coaches are expected to act professionally and to conduct themselves with integrity at all times. The physical and mental health and well-being of Skaters and their safety and development must always come first. Coaches must treat every Skater with respect, regardless of age, gender, race, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, or background.

It is also important that Coaches create a safe and positive training environment at all times for the Skaters they coach. Coaching should be tailored to the age, experience, and skill level of the Skater, ensuring that the training is safe, effective and appropriate.

ARTICLE 4: Discrimination

Coaches must not engage in, ignore, or allow any form of discrimination. This includes discrimination based on race, gender, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, or any other characteristic. Coaches should work to ensure that every Skater feels included and valued.

ARTICLE 5: Creating a Safe and Positive Training Environment

Coaches have a fundamental responsibility to create and maintain a training environment that is both safe and positive for all Skaters. This environment should support the physical, emotional, and psychological well-being of every Skater, fostering their development in a healthy, appropriate and encouraging atmosphere.

5.1 Safety First

Coaches must ensure that the training environment is free from hazards and risks. This includes regularly inspecting facilities and equipment to ensure they meet safety standards, as well as being vigilant about the potential dangers of training practices. Coaches should also be prepared to respond effectively to injuries or emergencies, having the necessary first aid knowledge and emergency and safety protocols in place.

5.2 Tailored Coaching

Coaching should be customized to fit the age, experience, and skill level of each Skater. This means understanding the unique needs and capabilities of the Skaters they work with, and adjusting training methods, intensity, and expectations accordingly. For younger or less experienced Skaters, the focus should be on foundational skills, confidence-building, and enjoying the sport.

As Skaters progress, training can become more advanced, but it should always be appropriate for their physical and emotional development and well-being.

5.3 Encouraging Positive Relationships

Coaches should foster a positive and respectful atmosphere in training sessions. This involves treating all Skaters with kindness, respect, and fairness, and promoting a culture of mutual respect among Skaters. Coaches should encourage teamwork, support, and camaraderie, while also being attentive to any signs of bullying, exclusion, or other negative behavior(s) and timely addressing such behavior(s) as appropriate based on the specific circumstances of the situation.

5.4 Promoting Skaters' Mental and Emotional Well-Being

Coaches should be mindful of the mental and emotional health of their Skaters. This includes recognizing the stress and pressures that can come with competition and training, and providing support to help Skaters manage these challenges. Coaches should encourage open communication, allowing Skaters to express their concerns or struggles, and should provide positive reinforcement to boost their confidence and self-esteem.

5.5 Balance and Rest

It is important for Coaches to promote a healthy balance between training and rest. Overtraining can lead to burnout, injuries, and emotional exhaustion, so Coaches should ensure that their Skaters have adequate time for recovery and balance their sports commitments with other aspects of life, such as school and family.

By prioritizing these aspects, Coaches can create an environment where Skaters feel safe, supported, and motivated to reach their full potential.

ARTICLE 6: Harassment and Abuse

Coaches must not engage in or allow any form of harassment or abuse, whether it is physical, sexual, emotional, or psychological. Coaches must be aware of the power they hold in their relationship with Skaters and avoid any behavior that could be harmful, exploitative, or manipulative. This includes neglect or negligence. For detailed definitions of the types of abuse and other types of prohibited misconduct, please refer to the ISU Code of Ethics.

ARTICLE 6a: Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment of a Skater, like sexual abuse, is prohibited. Coaches must avoid any type of sexual behavior or sexualized communication, including but not limited to:

- Making inappropriate comments about a Skater's body.
- Sending using any means or showing sexually suggestive or explicit messages or images to a Skater.
- Asking too many personal questions about a Skater's private life.
- Offering or giving a Skater gifts, money, or favors with the intention of developing an inappropriate relationship.
- Offering rides home outside of agreed-upon team arrangements without a valid reason.
- Inviting or having a minor Skater to stay at their home or share a hotel room.

Coaches must maintain clear, professional and appropriate boundaries with a Skater and avoid any behavior that could be seen as boundary-violating behavior, grooming or predatory.

ARTICLE 7: Reporting and Procedures for Addressing Incidents of Harassment and Abuse

If a Coach witnesses or suspects harassment or abuse, they must report it immediately to the appropriate authorities, including sports governing bodies and law enforcement if it involves sexual abuse of minors. Coaches are also expected to cooperate fully with any investigations.

Confidentiality is crucial to protect those involved, and any retaliation against individuals who report such incidents is strictly forbidden.

Reports should be made to [names of Federation and person in Federation designated to receive reports].

When a case of misconduct is reported it shall not be the responsibility of the coach (or the individual receiving the report) to investigate the validity of the claim. Their primary duty is to ensure the immediate safety and well-being of the athlete. The appropriate authorities, such as safeguarding officers, governing bodies, or law enforcement, will handle the investigation. Coaches must focus on supporting the athlete and following the reporting procedures outlined by their federation, ensuring that the report reaches the designated officials without delay.

For incidents which occur during an ISU Event or activity involving a Skater, the reports should also be referred to the ISU Safeguarding Officer (safeguarding@isu.ch) or to any of the other individuals listed in the ISU Code of Ethics, Article 7.2. For more details regarding how to report an incident that occurs at an ISU Event or activity, please refer to Article 7.2 of the ISU Code of Ethics.

ARTICLE 8: Doping

Coaches must never encourage, allow, or assist Skaters in using banned substances or methods. It is the Coach's responsibility to educate Skaters and any persons the Coach makes part of the Skater's Athlete Support Personnel about the dangers and illegality of doping and to follow all Anti-Doping rules and regulations.

ARTICLE 9: Retaliation for Reporting

Coaches must not engage in any actions that discourage or retaliate against individuals who report misconduct, such as harassment, abuse, or any violations of this Code of Conduct. Any such behavior will lead to disciplinary action.

ARTICLE 10: Sanctions

If a Coach violates this Code of Conduct, they may face disciplinary actions, such as suspension, termination, or other penalties deemed appropriate by [name of federation]. The seriousness of the sanction will depend on how severe the violation is and how it affects the Skater(s) and the sport.

ARTICLE 11: Conflicts in Rules

If there is a conflict between this Code of Conduct and other rules or regulations, the rule that best protects the Skater's welfare, the integrity of the sport, and legal compliance will take precedence.

Article 12: Enforcement and Arbitration

To ensure that violations of this Code are handled fairly and consistently, an independent ethics panel or a similar body should be established. This panel will be responsible for reviewing reported cases of misconduct, harassment, and abuse, and for determining appropriate sanctions based on the severity of the violations.

The panel will also ensure that all reports and cases are handled impartially, maintaining confidentiality and protecting the well-being of all individuals involved. This system aims to uphold the integrity of the sport and the safety of the athletes.

ARTICLE 12: Next steps

Following the implementation of this Code of Conduct, the [Federation Name] and its members will take the necessary steps to ensure its proper enforcement and integration into coaching practices. These steps include:

1. **Education and Training:** All coaches will be required to undergo mandatory training on the principles outlined in this Code, including safeguarding practices, ethical coaching, and reporting mechanisms for misconduct. This will be done through workshops, seminars, and online modules provided by [Federation Name] or in partnership with other educational bodies.
2. **Regular Review and Updates:** The Code of Conduct will be reviewed periodically to ensure its continued relevance and effectiveness. Updates may be made in response to new legal standards, advancements in safeguarding practices, or feedback from the sports community. Coaches will be notified of any changes and may be required to undergo additional training as needed.
3. **Monitoring and Evaluation:** The [Federation Name] will establish monitoring procedures to evaluate how effectively this Code of Conduct is being followed by coaches. This could include surveys, feedback sessions with skaters and their families, or spot checks at events. This ongoing evaluation will help identify areas for improvement and ensure that the Code is being enforced consistently.

I _____ acknowledge that I have read, understand, and accept this Code of Conduct. I agree to be bound by this Code of Conduct while training Skaters, and while participating in or attending a skating event, program or activity of [name of federation] in any capacity .

Signature: _____

Role (s): _____

Date: _____