CATEGORY: 3.0 Governance and Leadership **SECTION: 3.2 Abuse, Investigations, Screening and Protection**			
POLICY: 3.2.4 Athlete Protection Policy (Rule of Two)	**APPROVED:** **June 2021** **May 13, 2025**	**REVIEW DATE:** **January 2023**	**PAGES: 5**

Definitions

1. The following terms have these meanings in this Policy:

   a) *"Organizational Participant"* – Refers to all categories of individual members and/or registrants defined in the By-laws of the Canadian Cerebral Palsy Sports Association (CCPSA) who are subject to the policies of the CCPSA, as well as all people employed by, contracted by, or engaged in activities with, the CCPSA including, but not limited to, employees, contractors, Athletes, coaches, instructors, Integrated Support Team (IST), performance partners/sport assistants, officials (referees, classifiers, technical delegate), volunteers, managers, administrators, parents or guardians, spectators, committee members, and Directors and Officers

   b) "*Person in Authority*" – An Individual who holds a position of authority within the CCPSA including, but not limited to, employees, coaches, managers, support personnel, officials, integrated support team/medical, performance partners/sport assistants, chaperones, volunteers, Committee Members, staff, and Board of Directors

   c) "*Rule of Two*" - The intention of the 'Rule of Two' is that a coach is never alone or out of sight with an athlete. Two NCCP trained or certified coaches should always be present with an athlete, especially a minor athlete, when in a potentially vulnerable situation such as in a locker room or meeting room. All one-on-one interactions between a coach and an athlete must take place within earshot and in view of the second coach except for medical emergencies. One of the coaches must also be of the same gender as the athlete. Should there be a circumstance where a second screened and NCCP trained or certified coach is not available, a screened volunteer, parent, or adult can be recruited.

Purpose

2. This *Athlete Protection Policy* (Rule of Two) describes how Persons in Authority can maintain a safe sport environment for athletes.

Rule of Two

3. The CCPSA strongly recommend the 'Rule of Two' for all Persons in Authority who interact with athletes.

4. To ensure adherence to the 'Rule of Two', the CCPSA will ensure:

    a) Teams or groups of athletes will always have at least two Persons in Authority with them

    b) For mixed gender teams or groups of athletes, there will be one Person in Authority from each gender

    c) Screened parents or other volunteers will be available in situations when two Persons in Authority, one from each gender, cannot be present

5. The CCPSA recognizes that fully implementing the 'Rule of Two' in all circumstances may not be possible. In these cases, to adhere as much as possible with the spirit of the 'Rule of Two', interactions between coaches and athletes should be:

    a) Transparent

        i. Allow the training environment to be open to observation by parents, guardian or spouses. Ensure an open and observable environment for all interactions between adults and athletes (e.g., leaving the door open when having a meeting).

        ii. Avoid private or one-on-one situations unless they are open and observable by another adult or athlete.

    b) Authorized (applicable to all athletes including minors, vulnerable persons)

        i. Ensure coaches and volunteers do not have an athlete in their home without the permission of the athlete's parent or guardian

        ii. Ensure athletes do not find themselves in a situation where they are alone with a coach without another adult or athlete present (unless prior parental written permission is obtained)

    c) Accountable

        i. If an interaction occurs that breaks the spirit of the 'Rule of Two', coaches should make themselves accountable by reporting it to a staff member or supervisor and may be subject to the CCPSA Discipline and Complaints Policy.

Communications

6. The CCPSA strongly recommends the following communication guidelines for all Persons in Authority who interact with athletes:

a) Group messages, group emails or team pages are to be used as the regular method of communication between Persons in Authority and athletes

b) Persons in Authority may only send personal texts, direct messages on social media or emails to individual athletes when necessary and only for communicating information related to team issues and activities (e.g., non-personal information), with the exception in certain cases for Performance Partners/Sport Assistants

c) Athletes, and parents and guardians for those athletes under 18 years of age, have the right to request that they or their child, not be contacted by Persons in Authority using any form of electronic communication and/or to request that certain information about them or their child may not be distributed in any form of electronic communications

d) The content of all electronic communication between Persons in Authority and athletes must be professional in tone and for communicating information related to team issues or activities

e) All communication between Persons in Authority and athletes must be between the hours of 6:00am and midnight unless extenuating circumstances exist

f) No communication concerning drugs or alcohol use (unless regarding its prohibition) is permitted

g) No sexually explicit language or imagery or sexually oriented conversation is permitted

h) Persons in Authority are not permitted to ask athletes to keep a secret for them

i) A Person in Authority should not become overly-involved in an athlete's personal life, with the exception in certain cases for Performance Partners/Sport Assistants.

Travel

7. The CCPSA strongly recommends the following travel guidelines for all Persons in Authority who travel with athletes:

   a) No Person in Authority shall drive an athlete alone unless the Person in Authority is the athlete's parent, guardian or performance partner/sport assistant

   b) A Person in Authority may not share a room or be alone in a hotel room with an athlete unless the Person in Authority is the athlete's parent, guardian or performance partner/sport assistant

   c) For overnight travel when athletes share a hotel room, roommates will be age-appropriate when possible (e.g., within 2 years of age) and of the same gender identity with the exception where the Person(s) in Authority sharing the room are the athlete's parent, guardian, spouse or performance partner/sport assistant.

Locker Room / Changing Areas

8. The CCPSA strongly recommends the following locker room / changing area guidelines:

a) Interactions (i.e., conversation) between Persons in Authority and athletes should not occur in any room where there is a reasonable expectation of privacy such as the locker room, restroom or changing area, with the exception in certain cases for Performance Partners/Sport Assistants.

b) A second adult must be present (open and observable) for any necessary interaction between an adult and an athlete in any such room (adhering to the Rule of Two).

c) The use of recording devices of any kind in rooms where there is a reasonable expectation of privacy is prohibited.

d) If Persons in Authority are not present in the locker room / changing area, or are not permitted to be present, they must still be available outside the locker room / changing area if required.

Photography / Video

9. The CCPSA strongly recommends the following photography / video guidelines:

   a) Included in the NSO – Athlete Agreement, is a photo release clause that describes how their image may be used by the CCPSA.

   b) Photographs and video may only be taken in public view, must observe generally accepted standards of decency, and must be both appropriate for and in the best interest of the athlete.

   c) Examples of photos that should be edited or deleted include:

      i. Images with misplaced apparel or where undergarments are showing

      ii. Suggestive or provocative poses

      iii. Embarrassing images

Physical Contact

10. The CCPSA understand that some physical contact between Persons in Authority and athletes may be necessary for various reasons including, but not limited to, teaching a skill or tending to an injury. The CCPSA will strongly recommend the following touch guidelines:

    a) Unless it is not possible because of serious injury or other circumstance, a Person in Authority should always clarify with an athlete where and why any touch will occur i.e. teaching a skill. The Person in Authority must make clear that they are *requesting* to touch the athlete and not *requiring* the physical contact with the exception in certain cases for Performance Partners/Sport Assistants.

    b) Infrequent, non-intentional physical contact, particularly contact that arises out of an error or a misjudgment on the part of the athlete during a training session, is permitted

    c) Making amends, such as an apology or explanation, is encouraged to further help educate athletes on the difference between appropriate and inappropriate contact

d) Hugging, cuddling, and physical horseplay initiated by a Person in Authority is not permitted with the exception in certain cases for Performance Partners/Sport Assistants.

Sport-Specific Guidelines

11. The CCPSA strongly recommends the following sport-specific guidelines:

    a) A Person in Authority should never be alone with any athlete, regardless of age, prior to or following a competition or practice, unless the Person in Authority is the athlete's parent, guardian, or performance partner/sport assistant. If the athlete is the first athlete to arrive, the athlete's parent should remain until another athlete or Person in Authority arrives. Similarly, if an athlete would potentially be alone with a Person in Authority following a competition or practice, the Person in Authority should ask another Person in Authority (or a parent or guardian of another athlete) to stay until all the athletes have been picked up. If an adult is not available then another athlete should be present in order to avoid the Person in Authority being alone with a single athlete

    b) Persons in Authority giving instructions, demonstrating skills, or facilitating drills or lessons to an individual athlete should always be doing so within earshot and eyesight of another Person in Authority

    c) Occasionally, a Person in Authority other than the athlete's parent, guardian, or performance partner/sport assistant, maybe required to assist the athlete with personal care, lifts, and emergency situations. Such acts should always strive to take place in the presence of another Person in Authority.

12. Any violation of these guidelines governing CCPSA that may be considered "Prohibited Behaviour" or "Maltreatment" (as defined in the Universal Code of Conduct to Prevent and Address Maltreatment in Sport/UCCMS) when the respondent is an Organizational Participant who has been designated by the CCPSA as a Canadian Safe Sport Program Participant (as defined in the *Discipline and Complaints Policy*), may be handled pursuant to the policies and procedures of the Canadian Centre for Ethics in Sport (CCES), subject to the rights of the CCPSA as set out in the *Discipline and Complaints Policy* and any applicable workplace policies.

13. Any violation of these guidelines governing CCPSA that may be considered "Prohibited Behaviour" or "Maltreatment" (as defined in the Universal Code of Conduct to Prevent and Address Maltreatment in Sport/UCCMS) when the respondent is an Organizational Participant who has not been designated by the CCPSA as a Canadian Safe Sport Program Participant, may be handled pursuant to the *Discipline and Complaints Policy*.