



## **NATIONAL TEAM AGREEMENT - APPENDIX 1 CODE OF ETHICS AND CONDUCT**

*This document has been extracted and adapted for GCG National Team (NT) members from the GCG Policies and Procedures Manual, Section 29, Code of Ethics and Conduct and Section 36, Harassment (2011).*

*The term “NT Member” refers to the athletes and coaches who are named to the NT as well as all support team members (including judges), whether in a volunteer or a staff capacity, when they have been assigned to a GCG domestic or international activity. Parents/guardians of underage NT athletes are also considered within this context as they are signatories to the NT Athlete Agreement. .*

*In cases of dispute, the complete version of the Code, which is contained within the GCG Policies and Procedures Manual, and which applies to all GCG members, will take precedence.*

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

GCG NT members are expected to conduct themselves at all times in the spirit of fair play and in a responsible manner. It is expected that all team members (athletes, coaches, managers, and staff) will fulfill their roles and responsibilities as outlined in their respective team agreements and in the GCG Code of Ethics and Conduct. Individuals who fail to do so will be subject to disciplinary measures as outlined in the GCG Policies and Procedures.

The Code of Ethics and Conduct is intended to assist in furthering the ethical conduct in the sport of gymnastics but ethical conduct can only come from the personal commitment of all NT Members to behave ethically.

The Code is not intended to establish a set of rules that will, by inclusion or exclusion, prescribe the appropriate behavior for NT members in every aspect of their participation in NT activities. The Code is offered instead to guide and to affirm the will of all NT members to safeguard the best interest of the sport by acting ethically at all times.

NT members are responsible for reporting any perceived or witnessed inappropriate behaviour and/or incidents to a GCG Staff Member (if possible) or a Coach, Team Manager, Support Staff Member, Chef de Mission, or other National Team Member if possible. This includes anything related to emotional, verbal, sexual, and neglect abuse, or anything else that is of concern.

## 2. ELEMENTS OF THE CODE

### A. Participant Relationships

NT members are charged with the responsibility of contributing to an environment which makes participation in the sport a safe, positive, and rewarding experience. In order to achieve that result, each NT member has a special obligation to make decisions based on the best interest of the athlete.

It is inconsistent with this obligation for any NT member to:

- a. Fail to follow the safety guidelines established by GCG, or otherwise knowingly subject a participant to unreasonable physical, emotional, or psychological risk;
- b. Engage in unsportsmanlike conduct including, in particular, attempting to injure, disable, or intentionally interfere with the preparation of a competitor;
- c. Engage in conduct toward another participant in the sport which is abusive or harassing. Abuse is any action, physical or verbal, which exploits or potentially harms or damages a person's physical, emotional, or psychological health. Abuse can take many forms such as:
  - i. Physical – Where a person is intentionally injured, impaired, or made to do excessive exercises as a disciplinary measure;
  - ii. Sexual – Where a person is exposed or invited to participate in sexual contact, activity, or behavior;
  - iii. Emotional – Where a person is subjected to ridicule, constant criticism, racial or gender discrimination, or unrealistic pressure to perform;
  - iv. Neglect – Where a person has not been provided an appropriate level of care and supervision.
- d. Inappropriately discriminate in the provision of resources or opportunities to any Member or prospective Member on the basis of race, sex, creed, sexual orientation, age, national origin, or mental or physical disability;
- e. Attempt to intimidate, embarrass, or improperly influence any individual responsible for judging or administering a competition;
- f. Engage in business practices directed toward another Member that are unethical, illegal, or a breach of contract.

GCG recognizes that the process for training and motivating athletes will vary with each coach and each athlete, but it is nevertheless incumbent on everyone involved in the sport to support the development and use of motivational and training methods, which avoid conduct, which is, or is likely to be perceived as being abusive, or contrary to the Code of Ethics and Conduct.

### B. Participation

NT members are charged with the responsibility for contributing to an environment which makes participation in the sport a safe, positive, and rewarding experience. In order to achieve

that result, each NT member has an obligation to make decisions based on the best interest of the athlete.

It is inconsistent with this obligation for any member to:

1. Restrict the ability of an individual to qualify for, or participate in competition, because of the individual's association with a particular organization, or person, or because of that individual's race, sex, religious belief or creed, sexual orientation, age, national origin, or mental or physical disability;
2. Participate as an athlete, coach, judge, or support team member in any activity where that athlete, coach, judge, or support team member is inadequately prepared, unable to participate, or fails to participate to the best of his or her ability;
3. Engage in behaviour that is so disorderly or inappropriate as to interfere with the orderly conduct of the activity or others' participation in, or enjoyment of, the activity;
4. Engage in behaviour which is unbecoming of a NT member or which reflects negatively on GCG or on Canada. All NT members will represent their country with dignity, personal integrity, and within the spirit of fair play at all times;
5. Not show respect for the social and cultural values of their own team members, other athletes and team personnel, officials, and host personnel (staff, volunteers, spectators, and service personnel).

#### **C. Integrity**

NT members have a duty to uphold the integrity of the sport of gymnastics and the rules and regulations that govern it, and to act honestly, openly, fairly, and competently.

It is inconsistent with this obligation for any member to:

1. Knowingly misrepresent the policies or actions of GCG or its authorized representatives;
2. Act on behalf of GCG or a NT member without appropriate authorization;
3. Alter, falsify, or omit any information, record, or document to intentionally make a false or exaggerated claim or statement or to mislead;
4. Fail to resort in the first instance to the established procedures for inquiries, grievances, and appeals such as: challenging a competitive result, contesting a team selection decision, or complaining about the conduct of another Member; or attempting to reverse a policy adopted by GCG;
5. Breach the duty to maintain appropriately established confidences of GCG or its Members.

#### **D. Communication**

Members of GCG have a duty to communicate honestly and openly with the organization and its members.

It is inconsistent with this obligation for any member to:

1. Misrepresent the Member's competitive achievements, professional qualifications, education, experience, eligibility, criminal record, or affiliations;
2. Knowingly disseminate false or misleading information about another Member;
3. Withhold from an athlete, information or resources likely to enhance the athletes' enjoyment of the sport or reduce their risk of injury or illness;
4. Fail to consult with, or inform fully, the athlete or the athlete's parents about NT or GCG activity opportunities;
5. Misrepresent the nature or extent of an injury in order to decline an invitation to participate in or withdraw from a competition assignment, training camp, or other similar activity;
6. Misrepresent the nature or extent of an injury in order to participate in (or cause an athlete to participate in) a competition, training camp, or other similar activity when such participation is inconsistent with the appropriate medical response to the injury.

#### **E. Drug Use**

All NT members will be "drug-free" except for medication prescribed by a physician, which has been declared to the team manager and coaching staff. There will be zero tolerance for the use of illegal drug substances by any member of the NT.

NT members must ensure that the sport is conducted in an environment free of drug or alcohol abuse.

It is inconsistent with this obligation for any NT member to:

1. Use or provide to a third party any drug prescribed by applicable federal, provincial, or municipal law;
2. Assist or condone any competing athlete's use of a drug banned by the International Olympic Committee, International Gymnastics Federation (FIG), World Anti-Doping Agency, Canadian Centre for Ethics in Sport, Canadian Olympic Committee, GCG, or, in case of athlete members, to use such drugs or refuse to submit to properly conducted drug tests administered by one of those organizations;

#### **F. Alcohol and Tobacco Use**

All NT members will abide by the tobacco and liquor laws applicable to their home province or territory in addition to those of the country in which the competition and/or training camp is being held.

It is inconsistent with this obligation for any member to:

1. Provide alcohol to, or condone the use of alcohol or tobacco by minors, be under the influence of alcohol while competing or performing official duties, abuse alcohol in the

presence of athlete members or at GCG activities or, in the case of athlete members, consume alcoholic beverages while a minor;

2. Perform official duties as a member of the NT under the influence at any time. It is expected that all members of a delegation will behave at all times with dignity and not consume alcohol to the extent that they will become abusive or incapacitated in any way.

For international events, even if the legal drinking age is younger than eighteen (18) (the youngest legal drinking age of Canada), no one under the age of 18 will be permitted to consume alcohol.

#### **G. Criminal Conduct**

NT Members are expected to comply with all applicable criminal laws.

This obligation is violated by any Member who has been convicted of, or has entered a plea of guilty, or no contest to a criminal charge involving sexual misconduct, child abuse, or conduct that is a violation of a law specifically designed to protect minors, and, depending on the nature of the crime, may be violated by any Member who has been convicted of or has entered a plea of guilty or no contest to any criminal charge involving conduct other than that specifically described above.

#### **H. Sexual Misconduct**

Coaches and other individuals who provide support team services to athletes must protect the integrity of the sport and the interests of the athletes they serve by avoiding sexual relationships with athletes.

In addition to being an indictable offence under the Criminal Code of Canada, it is inconsistent with this obligation for any NT member to:

1. Solicit or engage in sexual relations with any minor;
2. Engage in any behaviour that utilizes the influence of a member's position as coach, judge, or support team member to encourage sexual relations with an athlete;
3. Engage in sexual relations with a person under the age of eighteen (18) years when in a position of trust or authority towards this young person.

It is also inconsistent with the obligation for any member to engage in sexual harassment by making unwelcome advances, requests for sexual favours, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature.

#### **I. Professional and Athletic Development**

Members of the NT should strive to increase their level of proficiency and skill.

To fulfill this obligation, professional Members should:

1. Participate in continuing education programs made available by GCG;

2. Remain current on safety, health, and training developments relevant to the sport and seek advice and counsel of colleagues and experts whenever such consultation is in the best interests of the athlete.

#### **J. Conflict of Interest**

NT members are responsible for avoiding both actual and perceived conflicts of interest in the conduct of business on behalf of the organization.

It is inconsistent with this obligation for any member to:

1. Use, or be perceived as using, GCG properties, services, opportunities, authority, or influence to gain private benefit;
2. Incur expenses in furtherance of GCG business, which are unreasonable, unnecessary, or unsubstantiated;
3. Participate in the deliberation or decision-making process about any issue for which the member has a direct financial interest or opportunity for personal benefit or gain.

#### **K. Harassment**

*Portions of the following information is excerpted from the GCG Policies and Procedures Manual, Section 36, Harassment*

Harassment is behaviour that may be verbal, physical, deliberate, unsolicited, or unwelcome. It may be one incident or a series of incidents. It may include:

- a. Behaviour which is intimidating, bullying, hostile, abusive, and/or an abuse of power and authority;
- b. Verbal abuse or threats;
- c. Unwelcome remarks, jokes, innuendoes, or taunting about an affected person's body, attire, age, marital status, ethnic or national origin, or religion;
- d. The display of pornographic, racist, or other offensive or derogatory pictures;
- e. Practical jokes which cause awkwardness or embarrassment;
- f. Unwelcome invitations or requests, whether indirect or explicit or intimidating;
- g. Leering or other gestures;
- h. Condescension or patronization which undermines self-respect;
- i. Unnecessary physical contact such as touching, patting, pinching, or punching;
- j. Physical assault.

#### **Recognizing abusive situations:**

There are many indicators, both physical and behavioural, to suggest possible abusive situations. Unexplained injuries, sexually explicit actions or language, or sudden changes in behaviour are just a few examples.

Athletes, coaches, and support team members should all be aware of the environment in which they participate and follow these guidelines:

- Be familiar with GCG's harassment policy and the screening process in place for staff and volunteers;
- Know how to voice concerns;

- Act on suspicions by obtaining facts;
- Try to resolve problems within the team before approaching other services;
- Have the situation corrected, and, if necessary, remove the victim from the environment.

Creating a safe sport and recreation environment is a collective effort that requires the awareness and actions of all members of the gymnastics and sport community.

At any time you are traveling with the NT, if you or someone else finds themselves in an uncomfortable situation and is unsure about what to do, please contact a coach, manager, or support team member.

### 3. ENFORCEMENT OF CODE

Compliance with this Code depends primarily upon understanding and voluntary compliance, secondarily upon reinforcement by peers, and, when necessary, upon enforcement through disciplinary action.

Any individual who believes that a NT Member has failed to meet his or her obligations under this Code is, under all but the most obvious circumstances, encouraged to first address that concern directly to that Member.

If that action does not result in a satisfactory resolution, the individual may file a signed, written complaint stating specifically the nature of the alleged misconduct with GCG, as per GCG Policy and Procedures. In circumstances where the President/CEO becomes involved, and after additional discussions with the complainant and the individual who is subject of the complaint, the President/CEO may:

1. Determine that the complaint does not merit further action;
2. Counsel the Member who is the subject of the complaint and record both the complaint and the nature of the counseling in the Member's permanent record;
3. Refer the complaint, as appropriate, to the provincial or regional chairs, committees, or affiliated organization;
4. Process the complaint under the Member misconduct procedures of GCG as set out in the GCG Policy and Procedures Manual.