



Newfoundland & Labrador  
Equestrian Association

## **Athlete Protection Policy for Newfoundland & Labrador Equestrian Association**

### **Definitions**

1. The following terms have this meaning in this policy:

“*Athlete*” – Includes any individual who is a registered to compete for the Organization or a Member

“*Coach*” – refers to individuals who provide riding instruction and/or training guidance to equestrians. For the purpose of this policy, the term Coach also encompasses instructors

“*Committee Member*” – an individual elected or appointed to a committee as a member of a committee of the Organization or a Member (as applicable)

“*Director*” – An individual elected or appointed to act as a Director of the Organization or a Member (as applicable)

“*Individuals*” – Refers to all categories of members and/or registrants defined in the Bylaws of the Organization and in the Bylaws of a Member, as well as all people employed by, contracted by, or engaged in activities with the Organization or a Member including, but not limited to, employees, contractors, Athletes, coaches, instructors, officials, volunteers, managers, administrators, committee members, parents or guardians, spectators, committee members, and Directors and Officers

“*Members*” – Leagues, clubs and other groups and individuals that are members of the NLEA

“*Minor*” – an individual who is under the age of majority at the time and in the jurisdiction where the alleged Maltreatment has occurred. Adults are responsible for knowing the age of majority. For the purpose of protection in Newfoundland and Labrador, the age of majority is defined as 19 years old

“*NLEA*” – the Newfoundland and Labrador Equestrian Association

“*Person in Authority*” – an Individual who holds a position of authority within the NLEA including, but not limited to, licensed coaches, instructors, officials, managers, trainers, support personnel, chaperones, committee members, and Directors and Officers.

“*Social media*” – The catch-all term that is applied broadly to new computer-mediated communication media such as blogs, YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, Tumblr, TikTok, Snapchat, and Twitter

“*Vulnerable Individuals*” – Includes Minors and vulnerable adults (people who,

because of age, disability or other circumstance, are in a position of dependence on others or are otherwise at a greater risk than the general population of being harmed by people in positions of trust or authority)

## **Purpose**

2. This *Athlete Protection Policy* describes how Persons in Authority shall maintain a safe sport environment for all Athletes.

## **Interactions between Persons in Authority and Athletes – the ‘Rule of Two’**

3. The NLEA and its Members strongly recommend the ‘Rule of Two’ for all Persons in Authority who interact with Athletes. The Coaching Association of Canada describes the intention of the ‘Rule of Two’ as follows:

A coach must never be alone or out of sight with a minor 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 a 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.

4. The NLEA and its Members recognize that fully implementing the ‘Rule of Two’, as described above (and modified accordingly for Persons in Authority), in all circumstances, may not always be possible. Consequently, at a minimum, interactions between Persons in Authority and Athletes must respect the following:
  - a) The training environment should be open and transparent so that all interactions between Persons in Authority and Athletes are observable
  - b) Private or one-on-one situations must be avoided unless they are open and observable by another adult or Athlete
  - c) Persons in Authority shall not invite or have a Vulnerable Individual (or Vulnerable Individuals) in their home without the written permission and knowledge of the Vulnerable Individual's parent or guardian
  - d) Vulnerable Individuals must not be in any situation where they are alone with a Person in Authority without another screened adult or Athlete present unless prior written permission is obtained from the Athlete's parent or guardian. A second Licensed Coach or Person in Authority should be with them or within eyesight or earshot. With adult athletes, it is good practice to also apply the Rule of Two.
  - e) Screened parents or other volunteers will be available in situations when two Persons in Authority cannot be present;
  - f) For groups of athletes consisting of just one gender identity, a Person in Authority of the same gender identity should be available to participate in or attend every

- interaction. For groups consisting of athletes consisting of athletes of more than one gender identity (e.g. co-ed teams), a Person in Authority of each gender identity should be available to participate or attend every interaction; and,
- g) These guidelines will be reviewed with parents and guardians to help identify situations and acknowledge instances when the group was not following the Rule of Two;

## **Practices and Competitions**

- 5. As it relates to practices and/or competitions, the following shall be respected:
  - a) A Person in Authority should never be alone with a Vulnerable Individual prior to or following a competition or practice unless the Person in Authority is the Athlete's parent or guardian
  - b) If the Vulnerable Individual is the first Athlete to arrive, the Athlete's parent should remain until another Athlete or Person in Authority arrives
  - c) If a Vulnerable Individual 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 of the Athletes have been picked up. If an adult is unavailable, another Athlete, who is preferably not a Vulnerable Individual, should be present in order to avoid the Person in Authority being alone with a Vulnerable Individual
  - d) Persons in Authority giving instructions, demonstrating skills, or facilitating drills or lessons to an individual Athlete should always do so within earshot and eyesight of another Person in Authority
  - e) When observing the Rule of Two is not possible due to training or competition circumstances, Persons in Authority and Athletes should take additional steps to achieve transparency and accountability in their interactions. For example, a Person in Authority and an Athlete who know they will be away from other Individuals for a lengthy period of time must inform another Person in Authority where they are going and when they are expected to return. Persons in Authority should always be reachable by phone or text message

## **Communications**

- 6. Communications between Persons in Authority and Athletes should respect the following:
  - 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 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). The content of all electronic communications between Persons in Authority and athletes must be professional in tone and for the purpose of communicating information related to group issues or activities;
  - c) Electronic communication between Persons in Authority and Athletes that is personal in nature should be avoided. If such communication occurs, it must be recorded and available for review by another Person in Authority and/or by the Athlete's

- parent/guardian
- d) Parents and guardians may request that their child not be contacted by a Person in Authority using any form of electronic communication and/or to request that certain information about their child may not be distributed in any form of electronic communications
  - e) All communication between a Person in Authority and Athletes must be between the hours of 6:00a.m. and midnight unless extenuating circumstances justify otherwise
  - f) Communications concerning drugs or alcohol use (unless regarding its prohibition) is not permitted
  - g) No sexually explicit language or imagery or sexually oriented conversation may be communicated in any medium
  - 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.

## **Travel**

7. Any travel involving Persons in Authority and Athletes shall respect the following:
- a) Teams or groups of Athletes shall always have at least two Persons in Authority with them
  - b) For mixed gender teams or groups of Athletes, there should be one Person in Authority from each gender
  - c) Screened parents or other volunteers will be available in situations when two Persons in Authority cannot be present
  - d) No Person in Authority may be in a vehicle alone with an Athlete unless the Person in Authority is the Athlete's parent or guardian
  - e) 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 or guardian
  - f) Room or bed checks during overnight stays must be done by two Persons in Authority
  - g) For overnight travel when Athletes must share a hotel room, roommates will be age-appropriate (e.g., within two years of age of one another) and of the same gender identity

## **Locker Room/Changing Areas**

8. The following shall apply to locker rooms, changing areas, and meeting rooms:
- a) Interactions (i.e., conversations) between Persons in Authority and Athletes should not occur in any room where there is a reasonable expectation of privacy such as a locker room, restroom or changing area. A second adult should be present for any necessary interaction between an adult and an Athlete in any such room (i.e. the Rule of Two must be respected)
  - b) If Persons in Authority are not present in the locker room or changing area, or if they are not permitted to be present, they should still be available outside the locker room or changing area and be able to enter the room or area if required, for reasons including, but not limited to, team communications and/or emergencies

## **Photography/Video**

9. Any photograph or video involving an Athlete shall respect the following:
  - a) Photographs and video may only be taken in public view, must observe generally accepted standards of decency, and be both appropriate for and in the best interest of the Athlete
  - b) The use of recording devices of any kind in rooms where there is a reasonable expectation of privacy is strictly prohibited
  - c) Examples of photos that shall be edited or deleted include:
    - i. Images with nudity or where undergarments are showing
    - ii. Suggestive or provocative poses; and,
    - iii. Embarrassing images
  - d) If any photographs or videos will be used on any form of public media, a member OR parents/guardians should sign a photo release form (as part of the registration process) that describes how an athlete's image may be used by the NLEA

## **Physical Contact**

10. It is recognized 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. Any physical contact shall respect the following:
  - a) Unless it is otherwise impossible because of serious injury or other justifiable circumstance, a Person in Authority should always ask the athlete's permission to make physical contact must always clarify with an Athlete, specifically indicating where and why any physical contact will occur prior to the contact occurring. The Person in Authority must make clear that he or she is requesting to touch the Athlete and not requiring physical contact
  - b) Infrequent, non-intentional physical contact, particularly contact that arises out of an error or 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; and,
  - d) Hugging, cuddling, physical horseplay, and physical contact initiated by the Person in Authority is not permitted. It is recognized that some Athletes may initiate hugging or other physical contact with a Person in Authority for various reasons (e.g., such as celebrating or crying after a poor performance), but this physical contact should always be limited to circumstances where the Person in Authority believes it is in the best interest of the Athlete and when it occurs in an open and observable environment.

## **Enforcement**

11. Any alleged violations of this *Athlete Protection Policy* shall be addressed pursuant to the *Discipline and Complaints Policy*.

This policy has taken effect as of June , 2023 and applies to **all events** under the responsibility and operation of the NLEA, unless otherwise stated.

<b>Approval/Review Date</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Description</b>
June 2023	Board of Directors, NLEA	Adopted