

Model/Best Practice for Managing Team Organizational Code of Conduct

(Adopted from the Plattsburgh North Stars of the Empire Football League)

Being a member of the TEAM organization is considered a privilege. As members of the organization we represent ourselves, our team, the organization, the community in which we live and the league in which we play. In order to maintain that membership, members are expected to demonstrate good sportsmanship, honesty, integrity, and respect for others as well as abide by all team rules, organization policies as well as city/county/state/federal laws, and standards of appropriate social behavior.

The organizational Code of Conduct (“the Code”) is a policy which applies to all members of the TEAM organization, including those who are not actively competing. The Code should reinforce and help to develop members who are responsible citizens, who achieve personally and perform athletically at the highest level both personally and professionally. These standards and expectations apply at all times – both on *AND* off the playing field.

Members have an obligation to report *ANY* potential violations of the Code to their Head Coach or a member of the Conduct Review Committee (described below) as soon as possible. Sanctions will be greater for misconduct that was not reported as soon as possible and for other misconduct that involves multiple or repeat violations. It is expected that members will not put themselves in situations in *which guilt or misconduct may be implied*.

Conduct Review Committee: The committee (“The Committee”) is composed of two coaches (selected by the Head Coach) and 2 player representatives plus 2 alternates (duly selected by a simple majority team vote at a predetermined time by the Head Coach) with a tie breaking vote by the Head Coach, in the event of an impasse. Coaches and athletes on the committee are excused from deliberating on cases involving themselves. In the event that a player representative cannot serve, one of the alternates shall be selected to facilitate the review process. If a player representative is subject to review by the Committee, that player representative will be removed from the Committee to be replaced by one of the alternates and a new alternate will be elected with a simple majority vote at a predetermined time by the Head Coach.

At the direction of the Head Coach, the Committee reviews and hears all cases involving potential Code violations. The committee strives to be fair and consistent in interpreting and applying the Code. All Committee actions are reviewed and approved by the Head Coach. In addition, the Head Coach acts as the sole appeal body for assigned sanctions.

SOCIAL AND LEGAL

As role models for the community, members are expected to adhere to all standards for appropriate organizational policies, social behavior and legal responsibilities, including, but not limited to:

Alcohol: The organizations definition of inappropriate use of alcohol by members includes, but is not limited to: underage drinking, unauthorized or illegal drinking at any activity sponsored by the organization where they represent the organization, consumption of alcohol prior to or during practice or competition, public drunkenness and driving under the influence (DUI). Any violations of organizational, city, county, state and Federal laws also constitute violations of the Code.

Hazing: Members are expected to refrain from any acts which could be considered hazing. Members are also responsible to adhering to the definition of hazing as defined by this document as “any activity reasonably expected of someone joining a group that humiliates, degrades, abuses or endangers, regardless of the persons’ willingness to participate.”

Harassment: Members are prohibited from harassing or bullying others, including harassment due to race, ethnicity, religion, gender, and sexual orientation. Sexual harassment refers to any unwanted, unwelcome attention directed towards a person’s sexuality or sexual identity. It can include unwelcome touching, comments about body or clothing, inappropriate sexual jokes or humor, and offensive visual displays. It also includes actions that create an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment.

Physical assault: All members must adhere to the basic standard that all “conduct that threatens or endangers the health or safety of any person within the organization or the community including physical abuse, threats, intimidation, harassment or sexual misconduct” is strictly prohibited.

Legal: ANY violation of city, county, state or Federal laws is also considered misconduct under the Code regardless of whether the violation occurred on personal or organization sponsored time.

CLASSIFICATIONS OF MISCONDUCT

Violations of this code are specified as either Category I or Category II misconduct.

Category I Misconduct: This type of misconduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Violation of any law that is not classified as a felony (e.g. underage drinking, providing alcohol to a minor).
- Violation of an organizational policy that is considered minor or violation of a condition of probation imposed by the organization.
- Violation of organizational policies and regulations, including the Code.

Category I Sanctions: When there is reasonable and credible evidence suggesting that a member has committed a Category I violation, the Head Coach will immediately suspend a

member for 1 game and the Committee will determine whether any additional sanction is warranted.

Sanctions for Category I Misconduct may include, but are not limited to: written warnings, reprimands, and suspension from competition.

Note: Penalties will be greater if any of the following are involved in the violation:

- Failure to disclose the alleged violation in accordance with the Code.
- Alcohol and/or drugs.
- Repeated misconduct.
- Multiple violations within a single act of misconduct.
- Repeated association with acts of misconduct in which guilt may be implied.

All sanctions will be commensurate with the severity of the violation as determined by the Committee and these listed sanctions constitute a framework that should not be construed as the only sanction(s) available to the Committee.

Category II Misconduct: This type of misconduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Violation of any law that is classified as a felony.
- Violation of a condition of probation or other condition imposed by a Court in a criminal proceeding.
- Any violation that is considered major or a condition of probation or other imposed by Committee.

Category II Sanctions: When there is reasonable and credible evidence suggesting that a member has committed a Category II violation, the Head Coach will immediately suspend a member for 2 games and the Committee will determine whether any additional sanction is warranted.

Sanctions for Category II Misconduct may include, but are not limited to: suspension from practice, suspension from competition and/or permanent dismissal from the organization.

Charge of Felony: If charged with a felony a member *will* automatically be suspended 2 games by the Head Coach. The Committee will then conduct an inquiry to determine if additional disciplinary action is warranted, which may include additional suspension from practice, suspension from competition and/or dismissal from the organization for the remainder of the season.

Charge of Domestic Violence: The organization adheres to a zero tolerance policy in relation to domestic violence, if a member is charged with domestic violence the member will be automatically suspended indefinitely from all organizational functions pending satisfactory adjudication and review by the Committee to determine if additional sanction(s) is warranted.

Conviction of Felony: If convicted of a felony, the member will be immediately removed as a member of the organization.

Note: Penalties will be greater if any of the following are involved in the violation:

- Failure to disclose the alleged violation in accordance with the Code.
- Alcohol and/or drugs.
- Repeated misconduct.
- Multiple violations within a single act of misconduct.
- Repeated association with acts of misconduct in which guilt may be implied.

All sanctions will be commensurate with the severity of the violation as determined by the Committee and these listed sanctions constitute a framework that should not be construed as the only sanction(s) available to the Committee.

PROCEDURES FOR HANDLING VIOLATIONS OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT

The Committee, at the direction and approval of the Head Coach, has primary responsibility for handling Code violations – both those that are alleged and proven. The steps involved are:

1. A member or external third party reports the alleged violation to the Head Coach or a member of the Committee.
2. The need for a temporary suspension is addressed based on the alleged violation pending review by the Committee.
3. A review of the circumstances of the violation is conducted by the Committee.
4. The Committee determines whether there is reasonable and credible evidence to support the alleged violation after conducting the review and meeting with the member accused of the violation. The committee may also consult with outside third parties familiar with the situation during the review process.
5. If reasonable grounds and credible evidence is found, the Committee determines an appropriate sanction(s) and that sanction(s) is (are) approved by the Head Coach.
6. A meeting is held with the member accused of the violation and at least two members of the Committee to impose the sanction(s) through verbal and written notification (if deemed necessary by the Committee).

CODE OF CONDUCT APPEALS

All appeals must be submitted in writing to the Head Coach within two business days after receiving the Committee's sanctions. Any appeal *must* include the reason for the appeal. Appeals *must* include substantial mitigating evidence for the appeal to hold the possibility of modification. The Head Coach will determine whether an in-person meeting with the appealing member is warranted. The Head Coach has sole authority on determining the outcome of appeals.

CLOSING NOTE: This policy is *NOT* intended to assess guilt or innocence but rather the degree to which the conduct in question is detrimental to the organization, as such, while legal sources may be cited in this document or in reviewing violations citation is only utilized as an objective guideline on which to base Committee decisions, consequently, evidentiary

conclusions by the Committee are not intended to rise to the standard of proof of a legal proceeding but rather to the satisfaction of the Committee.

It should be noted that the Board of Directors of the TEAM owns and operates the organization. The Board of Directors maintains the ability to precede or supersede decisions made by the Head Coach or the Committee in the event it is deemed necessary by the Board of Directors.

Member

Date

Witness

Date