# EVP VOLLEYBALL

## DISCIPLINE & COMPLAINTS POLICY – COACHES, STAFF & VOLUNTEERS

### 1. Purpose

EVP Volleyball ("EVP") is committed to providing a safe, respectful, professional and positive volleyball environment for athletes, families, coaches, staff and volunteers.

EVP expects its coaches and staff to maintain a high standard of conduct and recognizes the importance of having a clear, fair and consistent process for receiving and addressing concerns.

This policy establishes the process through which complaints regarding EVP coaches, staff members, managers, volunteers and other Club representatives may be reported, reviewed and, where appropriate, disciplined.

### 2. Application

This policy applies to complaints involving:

- Full-time and part-time EVP employees;
- Head coaches;
- Assistant coaches;
- Team managers;
- Contractors;
- Volunteers;
- Club administrators; and
- Other individuals acting in an official capacity on behalf of EVP.

This policy may apply to conduct occurring during or connected to:

- Practices;
- Games and tournaments;
- Tryouts;
- Camps and clinics;
- Team travel;
- Hotels and team functions;
- Club events;
- Electronic communication and social media;
- Interactions with athletes or parents; and

- Other circumstances where an individual's conduct may reasonably affect EVP, its athletes or the Club environment.

## 3. Expected Standard of Conduct

All coaches and staff are expected to:

- Treat athletes, parents, officials, coaches, staff and opponents with respect;
- Maintain appropriate professional boundaries with athletes;
- Follow EVP and OVA policies and Codes of Conduct;
- Provide an environment free from harassment, discrimination, bullying, abuse and retaliation;
- Communicate professionally;
- Follow applicable Safe Sport requirements;
- Act in the best interests of athletes;
- Follow Club rules regarding athlete communication and supervision;
- Respect confidentiality;
- Avoid or disclose conflicts of interest;
- Follow directions and policies established by EVP administration; and
- Conduct themselves in a manner that reflects positively on EVP Volleyball.

## 4. Types of Complaints

Complaints may include, but are not limited to:

- Inappropriate or disrespectful communication;
- Repeated unprofessional behaviour;
- Bullying or harassment;
- Discrimination;
- Inappropriate treatment of an athlete;
- Breach of professional boundaries;
- Retaliation;
- Breach of EVP policies;
- Breach of an applicable OVA Code of Conduct or policy;
- Inappropriate electronic or social media communication;
- Failure to follow Club procedures;
- Conflict of interest concerns;
- Misuse of confidential information;
- Conduct detrimental to the team or Club;
- Serious misconduct; or
- Any behaviour that may threaten the safety or well-being of an athlete or other participant.

## 5. Informal Resolution

EVP encourages reasonable concerns to be addressed at the lowest appropriate level where doing so is safe and appropriate.

Minor concerns involving communication, scheduling, coaching decisions or misunderstandings may sometimes be resolved through a respectful conversation with the coach, staff member or appropriate program director.

However, individuals are **not required to confront a coach or staff member directly** before making a complaint.

Complaints involving safety, abuse, harassment, discrimination, threats, retaliation, significant boundary concerns or other serious misconduct should be reported directly to EVP administration and/or the appropriate external authority.

## 6. Submitting a Formal Complaint

A formal complaint should be submitted in writing to the designated EVP administrator.

The complaint should include, where reasonably possible:

- The name of the person making the complaint;
- The name of the individual whose conduct is being reported;
- A description of what occurred;
- Relevant dates, locations and circumstances;
- Names of witnesses, if applicable;
- Relevant emails, messages, photographs or other documentation; and
- Any immediate safety concern.

Anonymous information may be reviewed by EVP; however, anonymity may limit the Club's ability to investigate or take disciplinary action.

## 7. Initial Review

Upon receiving a complaint, EVP will conduct an initial review to determine:

- The nature and seriousness of the allegation;
- Whether immediate action is necessary;
- Whether the complaint falls within EVP's authority;
- Whether an informal resolution may be appropriate;
- Whether a formal investigation is required; and
- Whether the matter must or should be referred to the OVA, police, child protection authorities or another appropriate organization.

EVP may request additional information from the complainant before determining how the matter will proceed.

## 8. Immediate and Interim Measures

Where EVP reasonably believes that action is necessary to protect an athlete, participant, employee or the integrity of an investigation, the Club may implement interim measures before a final decision has been made.

Interim measures may include:

- Temporarily removing an individual from practices or tournaments;
- Suspending coaching or staff responsibilities;
- Restricting communication with particular individuals;
- Requiring additional supervision;
- Changing team or staff assignments;
- Restricting access to facilities or Club activities; or
- Any other reasonable protective measure.

An interim measure is not, by itself, a finding of wrongdoing.

## 9. Investigation

Where an investigation is required, EVP will appoint an appropriate individual to review the matter.

Depending on the seriousness and circumstances of the complaint, EVP may use a senior administrator or an independent third party.

The investigation may include:

- Reviewing the written complaint;
- Interviewing the complainant;
- Providing the respondent with notice of the allegations and an opportunity to respond;
- Interviewing witnesses;
- Reviewing messages, emails, photographs, video or other relevant evidence; and
- Gathering other information reasonably necessary to reach a decision.

EVP will attempt to conduct investigations fairly, objectively and within a reasonable period of time.

## 10. Procedural Fairness

Except where immediate protective action is necessary, an individual accused of misconduct will be informed of the substance of the allegations against them and provided a reasonable opportunity to respond before a final disciplinary decision is made.

Decisions will be based on the information reasonably available to EVP.

## 11. Possible Outcomes

Following its review, EVP may determine that:

- No violation occurred;
- There is insufficient information to make a finding;
- The matter should be resolved informally;
- Corrective action or education is appropriate;
- A policy violation occurred and discipline is appropriate; or
- The matter should be referred to the OVA or another appropriate authority.

## 12. Discipline

Discipline will depend on the seriousness of the conduct, the individual's history, the impact of the conduct, whether the conduct was intentional or repeated and any other relevant circumstances.

Disciplinary or corrective measures may include:

- Verbal warning;
- Written warning;
- Education or additional training;
- Required apology;
- Behavioural expectations or performance improvement plan;
- Increased supervision;
- Removal from certain responsibilities;
- Removal from a team;
- Suspension;
- Termination of coaching contract;
- Termination of employment;
- Removal from EVP programs or facilities;
- Referral to the Ontario Volleyball Association; and/or
- Referral to another appropriate authority.

EVP is not required to apply discipline progressively where the seriousness of the conduct warrants a stronger or immediate response.

## 13. Serious Misconduct and Safe Sport Matters

EVP's internal complaint process is not intended to replace mandatory reporting obligations, law enforcement, child protection procedures, OVA Safe Sport processes or other applicable external processes.

Allegations involving abuse, suspected child abuse, sexual misconduct, serious harassment, discrimination, violence, threats, significant boundary violations or other serious Safe Sport concerns may be referred directly to the appropriate external authority.

Where there is an immediate risk of harm, emergency services should be contacted.

Nothing in this policy prevents an individual from reporting a matter directly to the Ontario Volleyball Association or another authority where permitted or required.

## 14. Confidentiality

EVP will make reasonable efforts to protect the privacy of individuals involved in a complaint.

Information will be shared only as reasonably necessary to:

- Investigate the complaint;
- Provide procedural fairness;
- Protect individuals;
- Obtain professional advice;
- Comply with OVA requirements;
- Comply with legal obligations; or
- Implement a decision.

Absolute confidentiality cannot be guaranteed.

## 15. No Retaliation

EVP prohibits retaliation against anyone who, in good faith:

- Makes a complaint;
- Reports a concern;
- Participates in an investigation;
- Provides evidence; or
- Supports another person participating in the complaint process.

Retaliation may constitute a separate disciplinary offence.

## 16. False or Malicious Complaints

A complaint that is not proven will **not**, by itself, be considered a false complaint.

However, knowingly providing false information, deliberately fabricating allegations or submitting a complaint primarily to harm another person may result in disciplinary action.

## 17. Records

EVP may maintain appropriate records of formal complaints, investigations, findings and disciplinary decisions.

Records will be maintained with reasonable regard for confidentiality, applicable legal requirements and any OVA requirements.

## 18. Appeals and Review

Where appropriate, an individual who has been subject to significant discipline may submit a written request for review to the President of EVP or another person designated by the Club who was not responsible for the original decision.

A request for review must identify a reasonable basis for reconsideration, such as:

- A significant procedural error;
- Important new evidence that was not reasonably available during the original process; or
- A disciplinary outcome that is clearly disproportionate to the conduct found.

A request for review does not automatically suspend disciplinary measures or interim safety measures.

## 19. Relationship to OVA Policies

EVP Volleyball is a member club of the Ontario Volleyball Association.

This policy is intended to operate alongside applicable OVA policies, including OVA Safe Sport policies, Codes of Conduct, Person in Authority requirements, Discipline and Complaints procedures and screening requirements.

Where a complaint falls within the jurisdiction of the OVA or another governing authority, EVP may refer the matter to that organization and may suspend or modify its internal process accordingly.

Nothing in this policy limits the authority of the Ontario Volleyball Association to investigate or discipline an individual under its own policies.

## 20. Club Authority

EVP retains the authority and responsibility to make employment, contracting, coaching assignment and operational decisions necessary for the proper management of the Club, subject to applicable law and governing sport policies.

Nothing in this policy creates a contractual entitlement to progressive discipline or limits EVP's ability to terminate an employment, coaching, volunteer or contractual relationship where legally permitted.

## 21. Policy Administration

EVP will periodically review this policy and may update it to reflect changes in Ontario Volleyball Association requirements, Volleyball Canada requirements, Safe Sport standards, applicable law or Club operations.

**Approved by:** EVP Volleyball
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