



NORTH AMERICAN, CENTRAL AMERICAN AND CARIBBEAN ATHLETICS ASSOCIATION

# ATHLETICS

## **SAFEGUARDING POLICY, CODE of CONDUCT AND RULES**

2025

## **Safeguarding Policy for NACAC Athletics**

### Contents

1. Introduction
  2. Scope of this Policy
  3. Policy Statement of Commitment and Principles
  4. Reporting of Concerns
  5. Codes of Conduct
  6. Review
  7. Monitoring
- Appendix 1 - Definitions  
Appendix 2 –List of Member Federations in the NACAC Area Association

### **1. Introduction**

The North America Central America and Caribbean Area Association hereinafter referred to as NACAC Athletics is responsible for promoting, developing and protecting athletics within the relevant area for the NACAC Area Association. This responsibility exists in accordance with its constitution and for ensuring that it is a safe environment for persons in and related to athletics in order to develop their talents and achieve their goals be it as an athlete, instructor, coach, official, volunteer, manager, administrator or other sport personnel.

(The member Federations that comprise the NACAC Athletics are as follows

Anguilla Amateur Athletics Association, The Athletic Association of Antigua and Barbuda, Aruba Athletic Federation Bahamas Association of Athletic Association, Athletic Association of

Barbados, Belize Amateur Athletic Association, Bermuda National Athletics Association, British Virgin Islands Athletics Association, Athletics Canada, Cayman Islands Athletic Association, Dominica Amateur Athletics Association, Federacion Costarricense Atletismo, Federacion Cubana de Atletismo, Federacion Dominicana de Asociaciones de Atletismo, Federacion Salvadorena de Atletismo, Grenada Athletic Association, Federacion Nacional de Atletismo de Guatemala, Fedracion Haitienne d’Athletisme Amateur, Fenhatle (Honduras), Jamaica Athletics Administrative Association, Federacion Mexicana de Asociaciones de Atletismo, Montrserrat Amateur Athletics Association, Federacion Nicaraguense de Atletismo, Federation de Atletismo de Puerto Rico, Saint Kitts and Nevis Amateur Athletics Association, Saint Lucia Athletics Association, Team Athletics Saint Vincent and The Grenadines, National Association of Athletics Administration of Trinidad and Tobago, Turks and Caicos Islands Amateur Athletics Association, USA Track and Field, Virgin Islands Track and Field Federation, Curacaose Atletiek Bond, Ligue Guadelouenne D’Athletisme, Ligue De MartiniqueD’Athletisme, Koninklijke Nederlandse Atletiek Unie, comprise the Associate members.

This Safeguarding Policy (“this Policy”) establishes the responsibilities of NACAC Athletics and its affiliated Member Federations to ensure that everyone is able to participate in or contribute to athletics safely and to have a fun, enjoyable and positive experience within the sport.

NACAC Athletics recognises that abusive behaviour may be inflicted on men or women, or children and that it happens in every area of the world, in every sector of society, sport and organisation. NACAC does not consider itself to be immune from safeguarding incidents nor exempt from the responsibility to protect participants involved in athletics at every level and form of participation.

## **2. Scope of this Policy**

This Policy applies to NACAC Athletics' athletes, officials, staff, volunteers, affiliates and any other person acting in a similar capacity at NACAC Athletics. All those to whom this Policy applies must comply with this Policy as well as the World Athletics' Safeguarding Policy. Any breaches of this Policy by these individuals may be subject to sanctions by NACAC.

NACAC Athletics has jurisdiction for safeguarding concerns and incidents which:

- Involve members of NACAC Athletics' staff, affiliates, athletes, or volunteer officials in any capacity participating in events convened under NACAC Athletics' jurisdiction;
- Take place at any meeting, conference, gathering, training/education seminars or events arranged by NACAC Athletics, an Area Development Centre, or under the auspices of the NACAC Athletics; or
- Take place at or during events or competitions organised by NACAC Athletics or organized by a MF and/or LOC on behalf of NACAC Athletics.

NACAC Athletics is responsible for dealing with concerns as outlined above. If a concern is reported to NACAC Athletics but does not fall within its jurisdiction, NACAC Athletics will refer it to the appropriate Member Federation for the relevant action. NACAC Athletics will require that any MF to which a safeguarding matter is referred must report back to NACAC Athletics on the MF's action taken on the referral on a regular basis and until such time as the situation is resolved. If a MF fails to follow up on a safeguarding matter referred to it, the MF may be the subject of disciplinary action by NACAC Athletics.

Member Federations are responsible for handling concerns which arise within their own territory and jurisdiction and must deal with them under the terms of their own safeguarding policy and in accordance with the World Athletics' Safeguarding Policy. The World Athletics Safeguarding Policy requires concerns to be investigated and administered using a fair and clear process imposing consistent and proportionate sanctions, measures or actions taken where appropriate.

*Safeguarding concerns should be reported to Ms. Catherine Jordan, the current Chair of the NACAC Athletics Safeguarding Task Force responsible for dealing with such matters.*

### **3. Policy Statement of Commitment and Principles**

This Policy is based on NACAC Athletics' commitment to upholding and advancing the principles set out below.

Everyone has the right to be treated with dignity and respect, and to be free from discrimination whether it is based on sex, race, age, ethnicity, ability, sexual orientation,

- gender identity, socio-economic status, beliefs, religious or political affiliation.

Everyone has the right to participate, enjoy and develop personally through athletics in a safe, inclusive environment free from all forms of abuse, harassment or exploitation.

- Everyone has the right to have their voices heard particularly if raising a concern about their own or another person's welfare. Everyone should know who to ask for help when
- they have a concern about an individual's behaviour.

Everyone, particularly those involved in planning or delivering programmes for athletes under the age of 18, is responsible for the care and protection of those athletes, making

- decisions in their best interests as their welfare is paramount.

To achieve this, NACAC Athletics will:

- facilitate the provision of support, guidance and advice to its Member Federations initially by disseminating World Athletics' safeguarding materials and guidance;
- assist World Athletics by co-operating with World Athletics to train and educate Member Federations to help them to create fulfilling and safe environments for all those participating in athletics within their territory;
- educate and train all relevant members of NACAC staff and volunteers about how to recognise and deal with safeguarding concerns and complaints;
- have a named member of staff or a volunteer who is responsible for leading on safeguarding within the territory of NACAC Athletics ("the Safeguarding Officer");
- ensure that any competitions or events organised by NACAC or organised on behalf of NACAC Athletics by a MF and/or a local organizing committee (LOC) adhere to the World Athletics' Safeguarding Policy and any additional guidance produced by World Athletics specifically for safeguarding at events and competitions;
- deal with any concerns, allegations and complaints involving individuals and/or events over which NACAC Athletics has jurisdiction (as outlined in Section 2 above) in a fair and transparent manner, confidentially and securely (to the extent permitted and required by law); and
- carry out background checks, follow up on references and train staff and volunteers recruited and appointed to specified roles (professional or volunteer) in or on behalf of the Area Association.

#### **4. Reporting of Concerns**

Everyone is responsible for ensuring that no one suffers abuse, harassment or exploitation. Where NACAC Athletics has jurisdiction, as outlined above, the matter will be referred to NACAC's Safeguarding Officer. If NACAC Athletics does not have jurisdiction, any concerns or suspicions that someone may have been subject to abuse, harassment or exploitation or about the behaviour of another person will be reported to the appropriate Member Federation and its safeguarding officer for them to deal with appropriately.

NACAC Athletics must also provide any information relating to any safeguarding issues, concerns or suspicions to World Athletics where the nature of the issue, concern or suspicion relates to something that may be under the jurisdiction of World Athletics.

If an individual is at immediate risk of serious harm, NACAC Athletics will report the matter to local emergency services. Local laws may influence whether NACAC Athletics requires the consent of the individual who has been harmed to report a matter to the police and other agencies, and whether a report to police is required even if an individual refuses to give consent. If NACAC has reason to believe that an alleged perpetrator might put others at immediate risk a report will be made by NACAC Athletics to the relevant Member Federation and the local authorities of the country where the alleged perpetrator is resident or is affiliated/engaged with athletics. This will enable the Member Federation and/or the local authorities to take any appropriate action necessary to protect others in the territory.

## **5. Codes of Conduct**

NACAC may develop Codes of Conduct for use at NACAC Athletics' events, competitions and for their own staff and volunteers including leaders, administrators, coaches, technical officials and athletes. Codes of Conduct are designed to provide everyone within athletics with a guide to expected standards of behaviour.

If an individual is aware of any other person breaching the relevant Code of Conduct, then this should be referred to the Safeguarding Officer as a concern for investigation and potential disciplinary action.

## **6. Review of this Policy**

This Policy will be reviewed on a regular basis (at least every other year).

## **7. Monitoring**

The monitoring of this Policy and its implementation will be conducted regularly as appropriate by NACAC Athletics or an independent safeguarding authority with the necessary expertise to perform this task.

## **Appendix 1**

### Definitions

#### **Abuse, harassment and exploitation**

Abuse, harassment and exploitation are described below. They can be perpetrated by both males and females and is often where one party is in a position of power over the other.

**Psychological abuse** is an unwelcome act and includes vilification, belittling, rejection, confinement, isolation, verbal assault, humiliation, intimidation, infantilisation or any other behaviour which may diminish an individual's sense of identity, dignity or self-worth. This is at the centre of most types of abuse as when these occur so does psychological abuse. This can often be seen as bullying or cyber-bullying.

**Physical abuse** is any intentional or unwanted act of, for example, kicking, beating, biting or burning which causes injury or physical harm. It can include the forced consumption of alcohol or systematic doping practices. It can also be any forced or inappropriate physical activity such as training which is unsuitable for the age or physique of the athlete. Forced or excessive training may escape notice in a sporting environment as the ambitions of both athletes and coaches, as well as peer pressure, may induce one or both to impose or take on excessive training loads and/or competition commitments. Dialogue among athletes and coaches aimed at setting mutually agreed and achievable performance goals can help define tolerable and acceptable training demands. It is up to coaches to temper ambitions that may run counter to an athlete's health and wellbeing.

**Sexual abuse** is any conduct of a sexual nature, either contact (penetrative or non-penetrative) or non-contact, where consent is not given, cannot be given, is coerced or manipulated. This can involve individuals looking at or making sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging others to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a person in preparation for abuse.

**Grooming** is the process whereby an individual builds a relationship with a child encouraging them to trust them so that the groomer can manipulate and exploit them for their own advantage. Grooming an athlete's family, entourage and friends often leads those individuals to believe that the groomer is dependable and trustworthy enabling the groomer to have access to the athlete. By manipulating the person and exploiting the relationship they will make the person believe they have to comply with the groomer's demands. The power a groomer has over the child is frequently used to isolate them from friends and family who might otherwise warn or caution them from complying with the groomer's demands.

Grooming can take place online as well as in person; online grooming is often much quicker often due to the groomer pretending to be younger and sometimes a different gender than they are in reality. Groomers may provide advice to a child as well as offering gifts or attention.

**Harassment** is unwanted or unwelcome behaviour which offends or can make the person feel humiliated or intimidated. Power harassment is where someone in a position of power over another individual, usually in a working relationship, uses that power to physically or psychologically harass another person in a lower position. Power harassment can include exclusion, inappropriate assignments (too little, too much or of a lower level that acceptable) as well as intrusive behaviour.

**Sexual harassment** is any unwanted or unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature, whether verbal, non-verbal or physical. Examples of verbal sexual harassment include unwanted or intimate questions, which may be degrading, relating to body, clothes or one's private life, jokes with a sexual innuendo and proposals or demands for non-consensual sexual acts. These may be unwanted text messages, telephone calls, letters or other forms of communication with sexual content. Non-verbal examples may include staring, gesticulation, or sharing photographs or pictures with sexual allusions. Examples of physical sexual harassment are unnecessary physical contact with a sexual nature such as pinching, attempting to kiss, caress or touch.

**Exploitation** is when someone exercises control over another person and/or their assets for their own "personal gain", sometimes without the fully informed consent of the person. Personal gain may be psychological, reputational or commercial and constitutes exploitation when the rights of a person are sold or negotiated without express and fully informed consent of the other person. Examples in athletics may be fraudulent misrepresentation of an athlete's age or nationality, acting on behalf of an athlete fraudulently or taking an unreasonable share of the proceeds of sponsorship or funding arrangements. Exploitation comes in many different guises. Examples include sexual exploitation, financial exploitation and signing athletes on to long-term contracts while they are still children.

**Neglect** is the failure to provide a minimum level of care, either physical or emotional, which causes harm, allowing harm to be caused or creating an imminent danger of harm. This usually relates to the care given by parents or caregivers to children but is also relevant to other people who have a duty of care towards another person such as a coach or team leader towards an athlete. This can include the failure to provide adequate water in high temperatures, adequate

clothing in cold temperatures, suitable food, accommodation or safe travel arrangements, or even to provide the services of a chaperone to minor athletes at a competition.

Abuse, harassment and exploitation may be based on race, religion, colour, beliefs, ethnic origin, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, disability, socio-economic status and athletic ability or a combination of any of these characteristics. It can range from a single isolated incident to a series of events, be in-person or online, or deliberate, unsolicited or coercive. Bullying, hazing and negligence are all aspects of abuse, harassment or exploitation and should be treated in the same way under the terms of this Policy.

Any of these forms of abuse, harassment or exploitation may include an aspect of financial abuse. It may be that an individual may be coerced into signing contracts or agreements which benefit others financially but are of limited financial benefit to themselves. Any element of coercion may be abuse, harassment or exploitation if the individual is a child, if the individual has not authorised someone to act on their behalf or if the individual has not been adequately advised by an independent professional such as an accountant or lawyer of the impact of the terms of the agreement.

There may be times when actions which might not be abusive to one person may be abusive or harmful due to the vulnerability of the individual who is being abused. This may be due to the persons age, ability or other form of vulnerability.

Abuse, harassment and exploitation often result from an abuse of authority by someone in a position of trust, meaning the improper use of power by someone in a position of influence, power or authority by an individual against another.

**Child** – a “child” or “children” refers to an individual or group of individuals who have not yet reached the age of 18.

**Safeguarding** – is the process of protecting, children and adults involved in athletics from abuse, harassment, and exploitation. Creating a safe and welcoming environment where everyone is respected and valued is at the heart of safeguarding. Everyone involved with athletics has a role to play in making sure they actively prevent abuse, harassment and exploitation, listen to accounts from children and adults of their experiences and respond safely and fully if there is a problem.

## Appendix 2 : List of Member Federations and Associate Members



### 1. ANGUILLA (AIA)

Anguilla Amateur Athletic Federation



### 2. ANTIGUA & BARBUDA (ANT)

Athletic Association of Antigua & Barbuda



**3. ARUBA (ARU)**

Aruba Athletic Federation



**4. BAHAMAS (BAH)**

Bahamas Association of Athletic Associations



**5. BARBADOS (BAR)**

Athletic Association of Barbados



**6. BELIZE (BIZ)**

Belize Amateur Athletic Association



**7. BERMUDA (BER)**

Bermuda National Athletics Association



**8. BRITISH VIRGIN ISLANDS (IVB)**

British Virgin Islands Athletics Association

**9. CANADA (CAN)**



Athletics Canada

**10. CAYMAN ISLANDS (CAY)**



Cayman Islands Athletic Association

**11. Commonwealth of DOMINICA (DMA)**



Dominica Amateur Athletics Association

**12. COSTA RICA (CRC)**



**Federacion Costarricense de Atletismo**

**13. CUBA (CUB)**



Federacion Cubana de Atletismo

**14. DOMINICAN REPUBLIC (DOM)**



Federacion Dominicana de Asociaciones de Atletismo



**15. EL SALVADOR (ESA)**

Federacion Salvadoreña de Atletismo



**16. GRENADA (GRN)**

Grenada Athletic Association



**17. GUATEMALA (GUA)**

Federacion Nacional de Atletismo de Guatemala

**18. HAITI (HAI)**

Fédération Haitienne d'Athlétisme Amateur



**19. HONDURAS (HON)**

FENHATLE



**20. JAMAICA (JAM)**

**Jamaica Athletics Administrative Association**

## 21. MEXICO (MEX)



Federación Mexicana de Asociaciones de Atletismo, A.C

## 22. MONTSERRAT (MNT)



Montserrat Amateur Athletic Association

## 23. NICARAGUA (NCA)



Federacion Nicaragüense de Atletismo

## 24. PUERTO RICO (PUR)



Federacion de Atletismo de Puerto Rico

## 25. SAINT KITTS AND NEVIS (SKN)



Saint Kitts & Nevis Amateur Athletic Association

## 26. SAINT LUCIA (LCA)



Saint Lucia Athletics Association

**27. SAINT VINCENT AND GRENADINES (VIN)**



Team Athletics Saint Vincent & The Grenadines

**28. TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO (TTO)**



Nat'l Association of Athletic Adm. of Trinidad & Tobago

**29. TURKS AND CAICOS ISLANDS (TKS)**



Turks & Caicos Islands Amateur Athletic Association

**30. UNITED STATES OF AMERICAS (USA)**



USA Track & Field

**31. US VIRGIN ISLANDS (ISV)**



Virgin Islands Track & Field Federation

**ASSOCIATE MEMBERS**

**1. CURACAO (CUW)**



Curacaose Atletiek Bond,

Member Federation: KONINKLIJKE NEDERLANDSE ATLETIEK UNIE  
EUROPEAN ATHLETICS

**2. GUADELOUPE (GLP)**



LIGUE GUADELOUPENNE D'ATHLETISME (LGA)

Member Federation : Fédération Française d'Athlétisme

EUROPEAN ATHLETICS

**3. MARTINIQUE (MTQ)**



LIGUE DE MARTINIQUE D'ATHLETISME (LMA)

Member Federation : Fédération Française d'Athlétisme

EUROPEAN ATHLETICS

**4. SAINT MARTIN (SXM)**



Member Federation: KONINKLIJKE NEDERLANDSE ATLETIEK UNIE  
EUROPEAN ATHLETICS

## General Principles

This Code of Conduct is a clear statement of the commitment of the North America, Central America and Caribbean Area Association (hereinafter called NACAC) to everyone involved in athletics in this area, of NACAC's values and beliefs, expected standards of behaviour and integrity. Behaviour consistent with these standards, values and beliefs is expected of the staff, coaches, athletes and support personnel, officials, volunteers and all other persons associated with athletics including NACAC's Council and other management personnel.

The following principles apply to everyone associated with athletics:

- Respect for everyone, value everyone's worth and treat everyone with dignity. Celebrate difference and promote inclusion. Treat everyone equally and avoid having "favourites".
- Non-discrimination against anyone on the basis of race, colour, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, ethnicity, marital status, beliefs or socioeconomic status. Discrimination on any of these grounds is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.
- Co-operation with everyone involved in athletics and promotion of an environment free from abuse, harassment, and exploitation.
- Zero tolerance of the use of any prohibited substance to enhance performance or any attempt to undermine the competition rules or the fairness of competition. Promotion of clean competition. Everyone involved in athletics must promptly report any suspected use of prohibited drug use or any other form of cheating to the relevant authority. Pay attention to any reported concerns, misconduct or injuries.
- Compliance with NACAC's safeguarding policy and other rules and policies of NACAC.
- Leading by example, demonstrating appropriate behaviour and serving as positive role models.
- Engagement with those who do not comply with these principles or behave inappropriately.
- Compliance with the laws of the country under whose jurisdiction NACAC and its MFs and associates host or sponsor events and competitions.

NACAC mandates all MFs and Associate members to develop individual Codes of conduct and Ethics and encourages inclusion of the following practices.

- Listen courteously to those who are teaching, coaching or providing advice, support or guidance.
- Smoking and consuming alcohol should be avoided when attending athletics events, particularly when responsible for U18s or supporting athletes professionally. Alcohol consumption should be consumed in a responsible manner and in accordance with the relevant laws of the country in which the event is being hosted.
- Be responsible for one's own behaviour, conduct and actions. Be punctual, well prepared and correctly equipped.
- Follow the instructions of all staff: athlete support staff, officials, managers and other volunteers.
- Be appreciative of everyone's time, effort and skills. Encourage and support everyone's athletic endeavours.

### **Duty to report**

Every one involved in the sport of Athletics has a duty to report concerns of misconduct, harassment, abuse, discrimination or exploitation to a responsible person in a member federation, public authority, club, school or facility, or to a parent or care-giver. Anyone receiving such a report should ensure that appropriate follow-up occurs. Individuals making reports in good faith will be protected from retaliation.

### **Digital and social media Conduct**

Coaches, athletes, volunteers and other support staff should ensure appropriate use of social media including (a) avoiding private messaging with athletes who are less than 18 years old; (b) prohibiting inappropriate or offensive posts related to NACAC's administrators, officials, its Member Federations or its competing athletes; and, (c) All persons involved in the sport of Athletics in the NACAC Area should ensure that their digital conduct aligns with NACAC's values and norms.

### **Mental Health and Well-being**

Coaches and support staff should foster and promote a healthy training and competitive environment and should recognize signs of emotional distress, overtraining or eating disorders. Care should be taken to refer victims of the same for appropriate counselling or care.

### **Conflict of Interest**

All persons involved in Athletics in the NACAC Area should avoid situations of conflict and should not use their position for personal and/or financial gain, or favouritism, during or outside of NACAC-sponsored events.

## Coaches and other athlete support staff

- Ensure that individuals are appropriately qualified and that any necessary background checks have been completed, including criminal or police checks and other recruitment requirements..
- Coaching should always be age appropriate and meet the needs of the athlete in terms of experience and ability.
- There must always be a suitable number of coaches, appropriate to the number and age of athletes involved in a training session or event.
- Communication and feedback should be respectful and constructive, not punitive.
- Expectations of and direction to athletes should be aligned with the athlete's level of ambition and motivation.
- An intimate relationship between a coach (or any other athlete support staff or adult) and an athlete under the age of 18 may be illegal [this will depend on the law in the relevant country] and should never be allowed to develop.
- It is strongly recommended that coaches and officials not be allowed to develop intimate relationships between themselves and/or athletes over 18 years of age. Strict boundaries between a coach and an athlete should be maintained; if this boundary is allowed to blur it causes difficulties for both individuals as well as teammates and others in the community.
- Avoid being alone with an athlete under the age of 18; do not take them in a car on their own; do not take them to a coach's home; do not share a bedroom with anyone under the age of 18.
- Medical personnel, for example, massage therapists, should maintain the integrity and dignity of athletes at all times,' It is recommended that they be exposed to safeguarding programmes relative to the requirements of athletics.

The following are examples of behaviours that are included in the coaches', athletes' and support staff's Code of Conduct adopted by NACAC.

- Ensure equipment is properly maintained and that athletes are aware of their responsibility for ensuring their own safety. Make sure athletes are taught how to manage dangerous athletics equipment and always follow equipment safety rules.
- Make sure athletes understand the expectations coaches have of them as well as what they, as athletes, can expect to receive from coaches.
- If a coach is asked by an athlete, who is already being coached by someone else, to provide further coaching, it is correct to contact the former coach to discuss the matter.
- Encourage good working relationships based on mutual respect and trust with all athletes.
- Avoid being critical, demeaning or sarcastic or acting in a way which might humiliate an athlete or affect an athlete's self-esteem.
- Avoid gifting or favors as this may set the stage for grooming.
- NACAC advises Member Federations to clarify expectations for parents who visit as spectators, volunteers in areas such as transport etc., regarding respectful non-violent behaviour, free from interference and abusive language towards officials, coaches or athletes. This will help create an environment for safe athletics.
- Communication and feedback should be respectful and constructive, not punitive.
- Expectations of and direction to athletes should be aligned with the individual athlete's level of ambition and motivation.

### **Athletes**

- Maintain strict relationship boundaries with a coach or any other adult associated with athletics. It is not appropriate to allow a relationship to develop between a coach or an official (or indeed any other athlete support staff) and an athlete.
- Always report any concerns, injuries, misconduct or distress to the appropriate person in the Member Federation or club, or to a parent or caregiver.
- Be aware of how to handle dangerous athletics equipment.
- Keep coaches informed if it is necessary to leave an athletics training session or event before it is completed.
- Know and follow the rules of competition, play fairly and pursue athletic excellence.
- Uphold the values of sportsmanship - fairness, respect and generosity towards others - on and off the field of play.
- Athletes are encouraged to use the tools available on social media platforms to protect themselves from repeated abuse, harassment and exploitation.

## 1. General

NACAC Athletics is committed to protecting all those to whom the World Athletics' and NACAC Safeguarding Policies apply from abuse, harassment and exploitation, ensuring that everyone is treated with dignity and respect. In an effort to ensure that its policy is carried out, NACAC Athletics will ensure that each affiliated Member Federation (MF) formulates its own policy and procedures. NACAC AA will also ensure that any events, activities and hosted competitions - Carifta, NACAC Age-group Championships, the NACAC Senior Championships and any other competition convened or co-convened by NACAC - adhere to its safeguarding policy and procedures.

The safeguarding rules which follow are based on World Athletics Safeguarding rules and are aimed at protecting the welfare of those to whom the NACAC AA safeguarding policy applies, from abuse, harassment and exploitation and to establish procedures for concerns, suspicions or allegations to be dealt with.

It should be noted that from time to time World Athletics may request information from NACAC Athletics in relation to a particular matter which falls under the scope of these Rules. If so, NACAC Athletics will need to provide such information accordingly. It might also be necessary for NACAC to provide information to Member Federations on a need to know basis from time to time.

## 2. Scope and Jurisdiction

These Safeguarding Rules ("these Rules") apply to the following:

- members of staff (volunteer or paid) of NACAC Athletics
- elected and ex officio members of the Council of NACAC Athletics, including World Athletics Council members who are routinely invited to attend NACAC AA Council meetings;
- anyone who volunteers for or participates in a NACAC Athletics or its affiliates' event, activity or competition
- other individuals who are part of a NACAC subcommittee, Taskforce, appointed medical personnel or technical officials.

- member federations athletes and officials who participate in NACAC Athletics competitions, events and activities
- any person who is accredited to attend or participate in a NACAC competition, event or activity
- anyone else who agrees in writing to be bound by NACAC AA Safeguarding Disciplinary Procedures.

These individuals are referred to in these Rules as “Participants”. Member Federations and Associate members and of NACAC Athletics who participate in NACAC events and competitions are within the jurisdiction of NACAC Athletics on those occasions.

All Participants are bound by these Rules and agree:

- not to engage in prohibited conduct
- to cooperate in any screening or background checks which are requested
- to comply with the relevant NACAC Athletics Code(s) of Conduct;
- to comply with World Athletics’ safeguarding policy
- to comply with the NACAC Athletics safeguarding policy
- **to complete the Safeguarding Essentials Training Course available on the WA website; (NACAC will identify who, by category, is required to take the Safeguarding Essentials (or equivalent) training as a condition of participation in NACAC events or competitions)**
- to be bound by the terms of these Rules even after they are no longer a Participant in so far as any obligations may continue to exist or for any matters that may arise after they are no longer a Participant but occurred during a period before that date.

It is every Participant’s responsibility to understand and comply with the requirements of these Rules. Ignorance of these Rules is no defence to proceedings for violation of them.

NACAC Athletics Member Federations are responsible for the development and implementation of Safeguarding Policies and Procedures which apply to participants in competitions, events and activities convened by or held under the authority of the Member Federation and to their affiliated clubs, schools and other institutions.

If a safeguarding concern or complaint arises at a NACAC event, activity or competition, or if a question about the eligibility of an individual to participate in a NACAC event, activity or competition in view of a safeguarding concern arises, NACAC Athletics may delegate follow up on the matter to the MF to whom the individual is affiliated, or to the local organizing committee (LOC) or the LOC hosting a NACAC event, activity or competition.

### **3. Prohibited Conduct**

The types of conduct set out below are prohibited:

- any criminal offence e.g child abuse, inappropriate sexual conduct or violent offences or breach of any other applicable laws or regulations;
- any conduct that harms, or attempts or threatens to harm the physical or mental welfare or safety of any other person; These include bullying, harassment, emotional or physical misconduct, threats etc.
- anything which constitutes a breach of World Athletics' or NACAC's safeguarding policies.
- failure to take action where any misconduct or suspected misconduct is known about;
- failure to report any concern, suspicion or allegation in accordance with the NACAC or its associated members safeguarding policy; and/or
- assisting, aiding, abetting, conspiring, covering up or engaging in any behaviour which might involve a breach or attempted breach of these Rules.
- Retaliation
- Abuse of process
- Intimate relationship where a power imbalance exists.

Prohibited conduct may be a criminal offence and/or a breach of other applicable laws. These Rules are intended to supplement such legislation with further rules of conduct for those involved in the sport of athletics. An individual convicted of a criminal offence that falls within the prohibited behaviours of the NACAC Safeguarding Policy will be considered to have contravened the NACAC Safeguarding Policy and may be subject to a sanction under NACAC's Safeguarding Policy.

NACAC Athletics must consider whether any prohibited conduct or allegation of such conduct should be referred to the local/ host country's law enforcement authorities. Such a referral should be considered when the report is first received by NACAC Athletics or its Safeguarding Officer and while the matter is investigated.



## ATHLETICS Safeguarding Rules

---

### **Reporting:**

#### **How to File a Report -**

Reports of abuse, harassment, or other violations of the NACAC Safeguarding Rules may be submitted in any of the following ways:

- Online: Submit a report through the designated NACAC reporting portal (if applicable)
- Email: Send reports to the NACAC Safeguarding Officer at [safeguarding@athleticsnacac.org](mailto:safeguarding@athleticsnacac.org)
- Phone: Contact the NACAC Safeguarding Officer directly at [insert phone number]

Reports can be made anonymously. There are no fees associated with submitting a report.

#### **Mandatory Reporters**

All participants, as defined in these rules, are considered mandatory reporters.

This includes, but is not limited to, athletes, coaches, team staff, medical personnel, volunteers, officials, and administrators.

Mandatory reporters have an obligation to report:

- Any suspected or known abuse or misconduct involving minors to local law enforcement or child protection authorities, in accordance with national laws
- Breaches of safeguarding policies to the NACAC Safeguarding Office

#### **False Reporting -**

Knowingly making a false report of possible prohibited conduct is a serious matter and constitutes a violation of these Rules. Such actions may result in disciplinary action.

#### **Protection Against Retaliation -**

NACAC prohibits any form of retaliation against individuals who make reports in good faith. Retaliation will be viewed as a violation of the Safeguarding Rules. Significant breaches of NACAC Athletics' policy and rules will be dealt by the NACAC Athletics' Disciplinary Committee. Upon receipt of information about an alleged breach of the NACAC Safeguarding Rules, the NACAC Safeguarding Officer may decide that the

safeguarding concern should be referred to the appropriate member federation for follow up, or that the allegation should be dealt with by direct intervention by the Safeguarding Officer with the person alleged to have breached the NACAC Safeguarding Policy. (The NACAC Safeguarding Officer may, following engagement with the person alleged to have breached the NACAC Safeguarding Policy, decide that the case should be referred to the Disciplinary Committee or the appropriate Member Federation.)

The NACAC Safeguarding Officer is also authorized to make decisions about withdrawal of accreditation of an individual alleged to have breached the NACAC Safeguarding Policy at a NACAC competition, event or activity. Unless circumstances dictate otherwise, the Safeguarding Officer should consult the Chair of the NACAC Disciplinary Committee before making a decision on referral of an allegation to a MF. The NACAC President and/or the Chair of the LOC should be consulted before any final decision on suspension or withdrawal of accreditation is taken.

#### **4. NACAC Athletics Disciplinary Committee**

NACAC Athletics Disciplinary Committee exists to consider alleged contraventions of NACAC rules by persons under its jurisdiction at events, activities or competitions under NACAC's jurisdiction. [General Rules governing the operations of the NACAC Disciplinary Committee and any procedures specific to safeguarding will be developed in accordance with the provisions of the NACAC Athletics Constitution.]

The NACAC Council will appoint a group of individuals who are competent to consider cases which arise under these Rules ("the Disciplinary Committee"). The Disciplinary Committee will comprise a Chairperson and 5 members. With respect to allegations of contraventions of the NACAC Safeguarding Policy, the Chairperson in consultation with the NACAC Safeguarding Officer will determine whether the allegation will be dealt with by 1 member of the Committee or a panel of up to 3 Committee members. The Chair will also decide whether the Chairperson of the Committee will chair the Panel or whether another member will be appointed to serve as Chair. The Chair of each disciplinary panel which is convened shall be an attorney –at –law who practises in a NACAC member Federation or a experienced and formally certified arbitrator or mediator.

The panel may meet as often as is necessary and will have written Terms of Reference explaining their purpose and role as well as outlining how often they will meet, the format of the meeting and the individuals involved. The Disciplinary Committee may meet either in person, via email, remote platforms (such as Zoom, Teams or Google Meet) or by telephone and may have to do so quickly to consider urgent matters. The alleged prohibited conduct, whether any sanctions should be imposed and any applications from individuals requesting their sanction to be varied or lifted. Minutes of all meetings and decisions will be kept securely and confidentially for at least [ten] years whether in written or digital format.

### **5. Investigations and Risk Assessment**

If NACAC Athletics is made aware of any Participant engaging in prohibited conduct and there are reasonable grounds to believe that the conduct has occurred, the matter will need to be investigated by the designated Safeguarding Officer (SO) and the Participant must be referred to the Disciplinary Committee in cases where the allegation needs further referral. The Disciplinary Committee has the power to impose an interim sanction on a Participant alleged to have engaged in prohibited conduct prior to an investigation being conducted if the Committee believes that the Participant poses any immediate risk of harm to others in athletics.

The Participant must provide information requested by, or on behalf of, NACAC Athletics (for example by an Safeguarding Officer and/or the Disciplinary Committee about the conduct which has raised concerns. On occasion, Participants may be interviewed (in person or online) to obtain information directly from them.

The Participant must be provided with details which the Safeguarding Officer or the Disciplinary Committee has gathered following any investigation that may have been carried out and asked to respond to the concerns, allegations or questions raised as a result of the investigation. The Participant will be provided with the information to be relied on by the Safeguarding Officer /Disciplinary Committee in determining what to do. All of this information must be kept confidential by the Participant. They may only share it with professional advisors if it is entirely necessary to do so.

The Participant will be given an opportunity to respond to the concerns following receipt of the information to be relied on by the Safeguarding Office/Disciplinary Committee. Following receipt of the response from the Participant all the information will be put to the Disciplinary Committee to review and decide on the appropriate course of action.

### **6. Sanctions**

The Disciplinary Committee has the power to impose a sanction on a Participant who may have engaged in prohibited conduct (a “Sanction”). When considering whether to impose a Sanction on someone who is considered a potential risk of harm to others involved in athletics, the Disciplinary Committee may only consider information provided to the Participant and their response.

The Disciplinary Committee also has the power to keep a Sanction already imposed in place. If there is already an interim Sanction imposed, it may be that the terms of the Sanction are varied to ensure the appropriate safeguarding measures are in place.

A Sanction may be one of the following:

- removal from some or all NACAC Athletics events (including competitions, training, governance roles, social activities, either for an interim period, a set period of time or an indeterminate period;
- a financial penalty;
- training or education requirement(s); or
- any other safeguarding measure which is considered to be appropriate to the situation.

A Sanction may be imposed when the NACAC Athletics is notified that a Participant:

- has been charged with a criminal offence that raises a safeguarding concern;
- is being or has been investigated by law enforcement or any other authority relating to social care of children or adults;
- has been convicted of an offence or been warned about behaviour which would potentially harm an individual; and/or
- has behaved in such a way as to be considered a potential risk to anyone involved in athletics.

A Sanction must be reasonable, proportionate to the conduct that has been alleged and must take the following into account:

- whether any Participant or any other person is, or may be, at risk of harm;
- the seriousness of the conduct alleged to have been committed;
- the potential risk of harm the Participant poses to others, both within the athletics' community and the wider population;
- whether a Sanction is necessary or desirable to allow an investigation to be undertaken by the NACAC AA, the police or any other relevant agency or authority to proceed unimpeded having regard for the need for any Sanction to be proportionate; and
- any other relevant circumstances deemed relevant.

In considering whether to impose a Sanction or not, the above criteria should be assessed, a note made of the decision and the basis of the criteria upon which the Sanction has been imposed.

When the Sanction has been imposed, the Participant must be informed of:

- the decision;
- the reasons for its imposition;
- the terms;
- the date it will take effect;
- when it will end (if an end date has been prescribed or if it will remain in place until the end of an investigation, when that will be considered to have ended); and
- the right to appeal against the Sanction within [30 days] of the date of the Sanction.

The details of the Sanction will also be sent to the Participant's member country or associate member country and any other agencies, authorities or individuals who it is believed should be made aware of the Sanction to ensure its enforcement. As sanctions and penalties imposed by the NACAC Disciplinary Committee pertain to participation in NACAC events, activities or competitions. The MF in the country of residence or citizenship of the individual sanctioned by NACAC is expected to consider whether the type of penalty imposed by NACAC should be extended to MF activities. (See section 8 below for information regarding decisions and how and to whom they should be communicated.)

### 7. Appeals

A decision of the Disciplinary Committee may be challenged by way of an **appeal by the** NACAC Council or the Participant who is the subject of the Disciplinary Committee decision. The decision of the Disciplinary Committee shall remain in place whilst any appeal is being considered.

For the avoidance of doubt an appeal may be brought by either the NACAC Council or the Participant against a decision of the Disciplinary Committee to impose an interim Sanction and again following a further decision of the Disciplinary Committee to impose a Sanction for a set period of time or an indefinite period.

Notice of appeal must be sent to NACAC Athletics and received within [30] calendar days of the decision by the Disciplinary Committee. Within 14 calendar days of receipt of notice to appeal the NACAC Council will appoint an appeal panel with no members of the Disciplinary Committee on it ("the Appeal Panel").

If the NACAC Council decides to appeal the decision of the Disciplinary Committee the Participant must be informed by a Notice of Appeal.

The Appeal Panel will usually consider the appeal on the papers. It will usually be a consideration of whether or not the Disciplinary Committee considered the information either unfairly or prejudicially to the appellant, misinterpreted or failed to or wrongly applied these Rules or applicable law or came to a decision no reasonable decision-maker could have come to (either in respect of liability, sanction, safeguards or any other relevant matter). In very exceptional cases will the Appeal Panel rule that the appeal shall be a hearing in person. It is only in very exceptional cases that a hearing will be re-heard and considered to be a completely new hearing with new panel members and if the hearing has been held in person the witnesses will need to be heard again by the new panel.

The original decision may be upheld or a new decision may be issued to replace the original decision either increasing or decreasing the original Sanction or the matter may be referred back to the Disciplinary Committee for further consideration.

If the Sanction is lifted or varied by the Appeal Panel or following referral back to the Disciplinary Committee, the Participant shall be notified and all those who have previously been informed of its existence shall be informed of its variation or lifting within 15 days of this occurrence.

Appeals will be held expeditiously and unless all the parties agree, or fairness dictates otherwise, the appeal hearing will be started no later than 30 calendar days after the appointment of the Appeal Panel.

- 8.** Any decision made by the Appeal Panel shall be the full, final and complete disposition of the matter and will be binding on all parties. All parties waive irrevocably any right to any other form of appeal, review or recourse by, or in any court or judicial authority, insofar as such waiver may validly be made.

Any decisions (whether by the Disciplinary Committee or an Appeal Panel) will be made in writing and sent to all the parties involved.

In some cases the decision made by the Disciplinary Committee may be publicized. There may sometimes be a need to have a publicly available list of individuals that have been suspended, deemed ineligible or have restrictions in place that would be of particular interest to athletes. The manner in which any public disclosure is made must be made clear to the parties to the hearing.

It may be necessary to share the decision with other authorities or agencies if NACAC Athletics is required to inform another authority as a result of relevant legislation. There may be other authorities who need to be made aware of the outcome of the hearing even if the decision is not to sanction the individual but to put other safeguards in place.

NACAC Athletics may be required to inform World Athletics about any sanction imposed especially in circumstances related to officials and coaches who might be assigned to World Athletics' events or competitions or who serve on WA's committees or commissions.

If World Athletics requests the decision from NACAC Athletics, it must be sent to World Athletics by NACAC Athletics together with any further information requested around the matter.

This Policy will be reviewed every two years. Review may also be conducted in response to changes in legislation affecting aspects of the policy. Until such time as NACAC Athletics creates a formal Disciplinary Committee or similar body to adjudicate safeguarding matters, the Council of NACAC Athletics will use an ad hoc process if and as needed. The ad hoc process will be designed to avoid any conflicts of interest by individuals involved in the process.