

CHAPTER 3: PROFESSIONAL ETHICS, STANDARDS and BEHAVIORS

This material in this chapter is intended to represent the history, evolution and discussion of “Professional Conduct” of coaches, beginning with the original USOC Coaching COE, through the newest USAV Regional Coaches Code of Ethics.

USOC Coaching Code of Ethics (COE)

The following original document was first released in 1995 at the USOC Coaching Symposium. It was adopted by the USOC for all USOC directly supported functions (Olympics, World University Games, Pan American Games, etc.) and must be signed by all coaches participating in events or training on-site at any of the U.S. Olympic Training Centers, including USAV events. This document in effect became the national coaching ethics standard and USOC officials urged adoption by each of their National Governing Bodies. **USAV requires all CAP candidate coaches and High Performance, National Team coaches/staff to sign this full document.** For more information on the USOC Coaching Code of Ethics, contact USOC Coaching Division, One Olympic Plaza, Colorado Springs, CO 80909.

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This USOC Coaching Code of Ethics was the result of the work of many people and committees. The approach, structure and contents of this code were inspired by the ***Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct***, December 1992 (American Psychological Association, Vol. 47, No. 12, 1597-1611). Many of the ideas for these ethical standards were drawn from numerous other codes. The most significant of these were developed by the Coaching Association of Canada, The British Institute of Sport Coaches and the NCAA. In particular, the USOC would like to thank:

- USOC Coaching Committee, Ray Essick, chair
- USOC Ethics Oversight Committee, Harry Groves, chair
- USOC Games Preparation and Services Committee, Joe Kearney, chair
- USOC Training Centers Committee, Mike Jacki, chair
- USOC Vice President Michael B. Lenard
- USOC General Counsel Ronald T. Rowan

COACHES ETHICS CODE

This Ethics Code is intended to provide standards of professional conduct that can be applied by the USOC and its member organizations that choose to adopt them. Whether or not a coach has violated the Ethics Code does not by itself determine whether he or she is legally liable in a court action, whether a contract is enforceable or whether other legal consequences occur. These results are based on legal rather than ethical rules. However, compliance with or violation of the Ethics Code may be admissible as evidence in some legal proceedings, depending on the circumstances.

This Code is intended to provide both the general principles and the decision rules to cover most situations encountered by coaches. It has, as its primary goal, the welfare and protection of the individuals and groups with whom coaches work. ***This Code also provides a common set of values upon which coaches build their professional work.*** It is the individual responsibility of each coach to aspire to the highest possible standards of conduct. Coaches respect and protect human and civil rights and do not knowingly participate in or condone unfair discriminatory practices.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES
Principle A: Competence

Coaches strive to maintain high standards of excellence in their work. They recognize the boundaries of their particular competencies and the limitations of their expertise. They provide only those services and use only those techniques for which they are qualified by education, training or experience. In those areas in which recognized professional standards do not yet exist, coaches exercise careful judgment and take appropriate precautions to protect the welfare of those with whom they work. They maintain knowledge of relevant scientific and professional information related to the services they render and they recognize the need for ongoing education. Coaches make appropriate use of scientific, professional, technical and administrative resources.

Principle B: Integrity

Coaches seek to promote integrity in the practice of coaching. Coaches are honest, fair, and respectful of others. In describing or reporting their qualifications, services, products, or fees, they do not make statements that are false, misleading or deceptive. Coaches strive to be aware of their own belief systems, values, needs and limitations and the effect of these on their work. To the extent feasible, they attempt to clarify for relevant parties the roles they are performing and to function appropriately in accordance with those roles. Coaches avoid improper and potentially harmful dual relationships.

Principle C: Professional Responsibility

Coaches uphold professional standards of conduct, clarify their professional roles and obligations, accept appropriate responsibility for their behavior and adapt their methods to the needs of different athletes. Coaches consult with, refer to or cooperate with other professionals and institutions to the extent needed to serve the best interest of their athletes or other recipients of their services. Coaches' moral standards and conduct are personal matters to the same degree as is true for any other person, except when coaches' conduct may compromise their professional responsibilities or reduce the public's trust in the coaching profession and coaches. Coaches are concerned about the ethical compliance of their colleagues' professional conduct. When appropriate, they consult with colleagues in order to prevent or avoid unethical conduct.

Principle D: Respect for Participants* and Dignity

Coaches respect the fundamental rights, dignity and worth of all participants. Coaches are aware of cultural, individual and role differences, including those due to age, gender, race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, disability, language and socioeconomic status. Coaches try to eliminate the effect on their work of biases based on those factors and they do not knowingly participate in or condone unfair discriminatory practices. * = **Participants: Those taking part in sport (athletes and their family members, coaches, officials, volunteers, administrators and spectators).**

Principle E: Concern for Others' Welfare

Coaches seek to contribute to the welfare of those with whom they interact professionally. In their professional actions, coaches consider the welfare and rights of their athletes and other participants. When conflicts occur among coaches' obligations or concerns, they attempt to resolve these conflicts and perform their roles in a responsible fashion that avoids or minimizes harm. Coaches are sensitive to differences in power between themselves and others and they do not exploit or mislead other people during or after professional relationships.

Principle F: Responsible Coaching

Coaches are aware of their professional responsibilities to the community and the society in which they work and live. They apply and make public their knowledge of sport in order to contribute to human welfare. Coaches try to avoid misuse of their work.

Coaches comply with the law and encourage the development of laws and policies that serve the interest of sport. They are encouraged to contribute a portion of their professional time for little or no personal advantage.

1.0 GENERAL STANDARDS

These General Standards are applicable to the professional activities of all coaches.

1.01 Applicability of the Ethics Code

While many aspects of personal behavior and private activities seem far removed from official duties of coaching, all coaches should be sensitive to their position as role models for their athletes. Private activities perceived as immoral or illegal can influence the coaching environment and coaches are encouraged to observe the standards of this Ethics Code consistently.

NOTES:

1.02 Boundaries of Competence

- (a) Coaches provide services only within the boundaries of their competence, based on their education, training, supervised experience or appropriate professional experience.
- (b) Coaches provide services involving new techniques only after first undertaking appropriate study, training, supervision and/or consultation from persons who are competent in those areas or techniques.
- (c) In those emerging areas in which generally recognized standards for preparatory training do not yet exist, coaches nevertheless take reasonable steps to ensure the competence of their work and to protect athletes and other participants from harm.

1.03 Maintaining Expertise

Coaches maintain a reasonable level of awareness of current scientific and professional information in their fields of activity and undertake ongoing efforts to maintain competence in the skills they use.

1.04 Basis for Professional Judgments

Coaches rely on scientifically and professionally derived knowledge when making professional judgments or when engaging in professional endeavors.

1.05 Describing the Nature and Results of Coaching Services

When coaches provide services to an individual, a group or an organization, they provide, using language that is reasonably understandable to the recipient of those services, appropriate information beforehand about the nature of such services and appropriate information later about results and conclusions.

1.06 Respecting Others

Coaches respect the rights of others to hold values, attitudes and opinions that differ from their own.

1.07 Nondiscrimination

Coaches do not engage in discrimination based on age, gender, race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, disability, language, socioeconomic status or any basis proscribed by law.

1.08 Sexual Harassment

- (a) Coaches do not engage in sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is sexual solicitation, physical advances or verbal or nonverbal conduct that is sexual in nature and that either:
 - (1) Is unwelcome, is offensive or creates a hostile environment, and the coach knows or is told this;
 - (2) Is sufficiently severe or intense to be abusive to a reasonable person in the context. Sexual harassment can consist of a single intense/ severe act or of multiple persistent or pervasive acts;
- (b) Coaches will treat sexual harassment complainants and respondents with dignity and respect. Coaches do not participate in denying an athlete the right to participate based upon their having made, or their being the subject of, sexual harassment charges.

1.09 Other Harassment

Coaches do not engage in behavior that is harassing or demeaning to persons with whom they interact in their work based on factors such as those persons' age, gender, race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, disability, language or socioeconomic status.

1.10 Personal Problems and Conflicts

- (a) Coaches recognize that their personal problems and conflicts may interfere with their effectiveness. Accordingly, they refrain from undertaking an activity when they know or should know that their personal problems are likely to lead to harm to athletes or other participants to whom they may owe a professional obligation.
- (b) In addition, coaches have an obligation to be alert to signs of, and to obtain assistance for, their personal problems at an early stage, in order to prevent significantly impaired performance.
- (c) When coaches become aware of personal problems that may interfere with their performing work-related duties adequately, they take appropriate measures, such as obtaining professional consultation or assistance, and determine whether they should limit, suspend or terminate their work-related duties.

1.11 Avoiding Harm

Coaches take reasonable steps to avoid harming their athletes or other participants and to minimize harm where it is foreseeable and unavoidable.

1.12 Misuse of Coaches' Influence

Because coaches' professional judgments and actions may affect the lives of others, they are alert to guard against personal, financial, social, organizational or political factors that might lead to misuse of their influence.

1.13 Multiple Relationships

- (a) In many communities and situations, it may not be feasible or reasonable for coaches to avoid social or other nonprofessional contacts with athletes and other participants. Coaches must always be sensitive to the potential harmful effects of other contacts on their work and on those persons with whom they deal. A coach refrains from entering into or promising another personal, professional, financial or other relationship with such persons if it appears likely that such a relationship reasonably might impair the coach's objectivity or otherwise interfere with the coach effectively performing his or her functions as a coach, or might harm or exploit the other party.
- (b) Likewise, whenever feasible, a coach refrains from taking on professional obligations when preexisting relationships would create a risk of such harm.
- (c) If a coach finds that, due to unforeseen factors, a potentially harmful multiple relationship has arisen, the coach attempts to resolve it with due regard for the best interests of the affected person and maximal compliance with the Ethics Code.

1.14 Exploitative Relationships

- (a) Coaches do not exploit athletes or other participants over whom they have supervisory, evaluative or other authority.
- (b) Coaches do not engage in sexual/romantic relationships with athletes or other participants over whom the coach has evaluative, direct or indirect authority, because such relationships are likely to impair judgment or be exploitative.

1.15 Consultations and Referrals

When indicated and professionally appropriate, coaches cooperate with other professionals in order to serve their athletes or other participants effectively and appropriately.

1.16 Delegation to and Supervision of Subordinates

- (a) Coaches delegate to their employees, supervisors and assistants only those responsibilities that such persons can reasonably be expected to perform competently, on the basis of their education, training or experience, either independently or with the level of supervision being provided.
- (b) Coaches provide proper training and supervision to their employees or supervisors and take reasonable steps to see that such persons perform services responsibly, competently and ethically.

1.17 Fees and Financial Arrangements

- (a) As early as is feasible in a professional relationship, the coach and the athlete or other participants reach an agreement specifying the compensation and the billing arrangements.
- (b) Coaches do not exploit recipients of services or players with respect to fees.
- (c) Coaches' fee practices are consistent with law.
- (d) Coaches do not misrepresent their fees.
- (e) If limitations to services can be anticipated because of limitations in financing, this is discussed with the athlete or other participant as appropriate.

2.0 ADVERTISING AND OTHER PUBLIC STATEMENTS**2.01 Definition of Public Statements**

Coaches comply with the Ethics Code in public statements relating to their professional services, products or publications.

NOTES:

2.02 Statements by Others

- (a) Coaches who engage others to create or place public statements that promote their professional practice, products or activities retain professional responsibility for such statements.
- (b) In addition, coaches make reasonable efforts to prevent others whom they do not control (such as employers, publishers, sponsors, organizational clients and representatives of the print or broadcast media) from making deceptive statements concerning the coach or his professional activities.
- (c) If coaches learn of deceptive statements about their work made by others, coaches make reasonable efforts to correct such statements.
- (d) Coaches do not compensate members of press, radio, television or other communication media in return for publicity in a news item.
- (e) A paid advertisement relating to the coach's activities must be identified as such, unless it is already apparent from the context.

2.03 Avoidance of False or Deceptive Statements

Coaches do not make public statements that are false, deceptive, misleading, or fraudulent, either because of what they state, convey or suggest or because of what they omit, concerning their work activities or those of persons or organizations with which they are affiliated. As examples (and not in limitation) of this standard, coaches do not make false or deceptive statements concerning:

- a) Their training, experience, or competence;
- b) Their academic degrees;
- c) Their credentials;
- d) Their institutional or association affiliations;
- e) Their services;
- f) The basis for, or results or degree of success of their services; or
- g) Their fees.

2.04 Media Presentations

When coaches provide advice or comment by means of public lectures, demonstrations, radio or television programs, prerecorded tapes, printed articles, mailed material or other media, they take reasonable precautions to ensure that the statements are consistent with this Ethics Code.

2.05 Testimonials

Coaches do not solicit testimonials from current athletes or other participants who, because of their particular circumstances, are vulnerable to undue influence.

2.06 Recruiting

Coaches do not engage, directly or through agents, in uninvited in-person solicitation of business from actual or potential athletes or other participants who, because of their particular circumstances, are vulnerable to undue influence. However, this does not preclude recruiting athletes deemed eligible by appropriate governing bodies.

3.0 TRAINING ATHLETES**3.01 Structuring the Relationship**

- (a) Coaches discuss with athletes as early as is feasible appropriate issues, such as the nature and anticipated course of training, fees and confidentiality.
- (b) When the coach's work with athletes will be supervised, the above discussion includes that fact and the name of the supervisor.
- (c) When the coach is uncertified the athlete is informed of that fact.
- (d) Coaches make reasonable efforts to answer athletes' questions and to avoid apparent misunderstandings about training. Whenever possible, coaches provide oral and/or written information, using language that is reasonably understandable to the athlete.

3.02 Family Relationships

- (a) When a coach agrees to provide services to several persons who have a relationship (such as parents and children), the coach attempts to clarify at the outset which of the individuals are athletes; and the relationship the coach will have with each person. This clarification includes the role of the coach and the probable uses of the services provided.
- (b) As soon as it becomes apparent that the coach may be called on to perform potentially conflicting roles (such as intermediary between parents and children or sibling teammates), the coach attempts to clarify and adjust, or withdraw from, roles appropriately.

- 3.03 Providing Coaching Services to Those Served by Others**
In deciding whether to offer or provide services to those already receiving coaching services elsewhere, coaches carefully consider the potential athlete's welfare. The coach discusses these issues with the athlete or another legally authorized person on behalf of the athlete, in order to minimize the risk of confusion and conflict.
- 3.04 Sexual Intimacies with Current Athletes**
Coaches do not engage in sexual intimacies with current athletes.
- 3.05 Coaching Former Sexual Partners**
Coaches do not coach athletes with whom they have engaged in sexual intimacies.
- 3.06 Sexual Intimacies with Former Athletes**
- (a) Coaches should not engage in sexual intimacies with a former athlete for at least two years after cessation or termination of professional services.
 - (b) Because sexual intimacies with a former athlete are so frequently harmful to the athlete, and because such intimacies undermine public confidence in the coaching profession and thereby deter the public's use of needed services, coaches do not engage in sexual intimacies with former athletes even after a two-year interval except in the most unusual circumstances. The coach who engages in such activity after the two years following cessation or termination of the coach-athlete relationship bears the burden of demonstrating that there has been no exploitation, in light of all relevant factors, including:
 - (1) The amount of time that has passed since the coach-athlete relationship terminated;
 - (2) The circumstances of termination;
 - (3) The athlete's personal history;
 - (4) The athlete's current mental status;
 - (5) The likelihood of adverse impact on the athlete and others;
 - (6) Any statements or actions made by the coach during the course of the athlete-coach relationship suggesting or inviting the possibility of a post-termination sexual or romantic relationship with the athlete or coach.
- 3.07 Drug-Free Sport**
Coaches do not tolerate the use of performance enhancing drugs and support athletes' efforts to be drug-free.
- 3.08 Alcohol and Tobacco**
- (a) Coaches discourage the use of alcohol and tobacco in conjunction with athletic events or victory celebrations at playing sites and forbid use of alcohol by minors.
 - (b) Coaches refrain from tobacco and alcohol use while they are coaching and make every effort to avoid their use while in the presence of their athletes.
- 3.09 Interruption of Services**
- (a) Coaches make reasonable efforts to plan for training in the event that coaching services are interrupted by factors such as the coach's illness, death, unavailability or relocation or by the client's relocation or financial limitations.
 - (b) When entering into employment or contractual relationships, coaches provide for orderly and appropriate resolution of responsibility for athlete training in the event that the employment or contractual relationship ends, with paramount consideration given to the welfare of the athlete.

NOTES:

3.10 Terminating the Professional Relationship

- (a) Coaches terminate a professional relationship when it becomes reasonably clear that the athlete no longer needs the service, is not benefiting or is being harmed by continued service.
- (b) Prior to termination, for whatever reason, except where precluded by the athlete's conduct, the coach discusses the athlete's views and needs, provides appropriate pre-termination counseling, suggests alternative service providers as appropriate and takes other reasonable steps to facilitate transfer of responsibility to another provider if the athlete needs one immediately.

4.0 TRAINING SUPERVISION**4.01 Design of Training Programs**

Coaches who are responsible for training programs for other coaches seek to ensure that the programs are competently designed, provide the proper experiences and meet the requirements for certification or other goals for which claims are made by the program.

4.02 Descriptions of Training Programs

- (a) Coaches responsible for training programs for other coaches seek to ensure that there is a current and accurate description of the program content, training goals and objectives, and requirements that must be met for satisfactory completion of the program. This information must be readily available to all interested parties.
- (b) Coaches seek to ensure that statements concerning their training programs are accurate and not misleading.

4.03 Accuracy and Objectivity in Coaching

- (a) When engaged in coaching, coaches present information accurately and with a reasonable degree of objectivity.
- (b) When engaged in coaching, coaches recognize the power they hold over athletes and therefore make reasonable efforts to avoid engaging in conduct that is personally demeaning to athletes and other participants.

4.04 Assessing Athlete Performance

- (a) In coach-athlete relationships, coaches establish an appropriate process for providing feedback to athletes.
- (b) Coaches evaluate athletes on the basis of their actual performance on relevant and established program requirements.

4.05 Honoring Commitments

Coaches take reasonable measures to honor all commitments they have made to athletes.

5.0 TEAM SELECTION

- (a) Coaches perform evaluations or team selection only within the context of a defined professional relationship.
- (b) Coaches' assessments, recommendations, reports, and evaluative statements used to select team members are based on information and techniques sufficient to provide appropriate substantiation for their findings.

6.0 RESOLVING ETHICAL ISSUES**6.01 Familiarity with Ethics Code**

Coaches have an obligation to be familiar with this Ethics Code, other applicable ethics codes, and their application to the coaches' work. Lack of awareness or misunderstanding of an ethical standard is not itself a defense to a charge of unethical conduct.

6.02 Confronting Ethical Issues

When a coach is uncertain whether a particular situation or course of action would violate the Ethics Code, the coach ordinarily consults with other coaches knowledgeable about ethical issues, with NGB or USOC ethics committees, or with other appropriate authorities in order to choose a proper response.

6.03 Conflicts Between Ethics and Organizational Demands

If the demands of an organization with which coaches are affiliated conflict with this Ethics Code, coaches clarify the nature of the conflict, make known their commitment to the Ethics Code, and to the extent feasible, seek to resolve the conflict in a way that permits the fullest adherence to the Ethics Code.

6.04 Informal Resolution of Ethical Violations

When coaches believe that there may have been an ethical violation by another coach, they attempt to resolve the issue by bringing it to the attention of that individual if an informal resolution appears appropriate and when intervention does not violate any athlete rights that may be involved.

6.05 Reporting Ethical Violations

If an apparent ethical violation is not appropriate for informal resolution under Standard 6.04 or is not resolved properly in that fashion, coaches take further action appropriate to the situation, unless such action conflicts with athlete rights in ways that cannot be resolved. Such action might include referral to NGB or USOC committees on professional ethics.

6.06 Cooperating with Ethics Committees

Coaches cooperate in ethics investigations, proceedings and resulting requirements of the USOC and any NGB to which they belong. Failure to cooperate is itself an ethics violation.

6.07 Improper Complaints

Coaches do not file or encourage the filing of ethics complaints that are frivolous and are intended to harm the respondent rather than to protect the public.

7.0 PROCESS RELATING TO VIOLATION OF CODE

7.01 The coach acknowledges that this Ethics Code is administered under the authority of the NGB or other responsible organization and that a violation of this Code subjects the coach to the processes of the NGB or other such organization required to be provided in the event of disciplinary action. The NGB or other such organization acknowledges that all violations of the Ethics Code will be reviewed for possible disciplinary action and it will provide a written report to the USOC on all reviews and actions.

7.02 In the event that a violation of the Ethics Code occurs during an authorized U.S. Olympic Training Center activity, USOC may, as landlord of the facility, take action separate and independent from that of the NGB or member of the USOC in order to protect its interests and those of athletes, coaches and others at the location.

7.03 Any action taken by an NGB or member of the USOC which affects the opportunity of a coach to participate in "protected" competition as defined in the USOC Constitution shall be entitled to processes assured under the USOC Constitution and the Amateur Sports Act of 1978. This includes process within the NGB, the USOC and the American Arbitration Association.

7.04 If the violation of the Ethics Code occurs while a member of a USOC team or event, the coach and NGB acknowledge that the USOC may institute its own proceeding regarding the violation, which action shall not restrict the ability or obligation of the NGB to take its own separate and independent action.

7.05 In the event that a coach is found to have violated the Ethics Code, such action is separate and apart from any other legal consequences which may occur as a result of the act.

NOTES:

USAV/AVCA COACHES CODE OF ETHICS

Continuing the focus on further defining professional standards of behavior for volleyball coaches, and in addition to the USOC Coaches Ethics Code, USA Volleyball later adopted (February, 1999), in conjunction with the American Volleyball Coaches Association (AVCA), a volleyball-specific Code of Ethics that includes standards of behavior not just for coaches, but also for athletes, parents, support personnel, spectators, officials, administrators, as well as for dealing with the media and sponsors. Those guidelines are below.

Principle-Prologue/Creed

I, _____, as a coach in a USA Volleyball sponsored program, am committed to sound educational processes, establishing traditions and promoting values for my volleyball community. I am dedicated to advancing the welfare of those who seek my assistance and to the maintenance of high standards of professional conduct and competence. I am accountable for all of my actions and to this Code of Ethics and my acceptance of this fiduciary responsibility is expressed in all my personal and professional relationships. In that coaching may involve my direction of youth, adolescent or adult teams, I will follow these principles in all environments and abide by them completely when coaching.

USA Volleyball has adopted, in its entirety, the United States Olympic Committee's Coaching Ethics Code, and it is my responsibility to familiarize myself with that document and conduct myself according to its tenets. Failure to understand any of the principles of these documents does not constitute a defense for violation of its rules. The principles outlined in the document are intended to be clarifications or expansions on the USOC document, and are an emphasis on the values of USAV; this document should not be considered to be the full scope of regulations and Ethics Codes required of coaches. Further, where this document supersedes, contradicts or exceeds the scope of the USOC Coaching Ethics Code, I will adhere to the principles and intent of the USAV Code. I recognize that this Code of Ethics goes beyond the scope of the law, and should be treated with the same, or greater, respect and gravity with which I treat the laws and standards of my community.

Principle I - Professional Practices

I pledge to maintain practices that protect the public and advance my profession; I will

- A. Maintain responsible association with USA Volleyball, its national programs and member organizations.
- B. Continue personal and professional growth, remaining current on new developments in the field through continuing education.
- C. Use my knowledge and professional association(s) for the benefit of the people I serve.
- D. Always strive to be truthful and put colleagues or other professionals in a positive light.
- E. Avoid discrimination in all of its forms.

Principle II - Coach/Athlete Relationships

I pledge to maintain relationships with athletes on a professional basis. I will:

- A. Conduct all my relationships from a perspective of dignity and sound educational and scientific foundation to:
 1. Direct comments or criticism relative to the performance, not the athlete.
 2. Ensure that all activities are suitable for the age, experience and ability of the athletes.
 3. Educate athletes as to their responsibilities in contributing to a safe environment, and to do my best to ensure that all facilities and equipment meet safety standards and that they are age/ability appropriate.
 4. Consider the athlete's future health and well being as foremost when making decisions regarding an injured athlete's ability to continue competing or training, and seek professional medical opinions to serve as a basis for my decisions.
 5. Be aware of academic responsibilities; conduct practices and match schedules in a manner so as not to unduly interfere with academic success. Never encourage, condone, or require any behavior that threatens an athlete's high school, USA Volleyball, collegiate eligibility or amateur status.
 6. Comply with regulations and ethical guidelines for recruiting practices as defined by governing sport organizations.
 7. Strive to develop individual and team respect for the ability of opponents.
 8. Prioritize being present at all practices and competitions and, when unable to, assure knowledgeable and safe supervision.
 9. Work with and strive to develop every member of the team.
 10. Show sensitive regard for the moral, social, religious, and sexual orientations of others and communities. I will not impose my beliefs on others.
 11. Recognize the trust placed in, and the unique power of, the coach and athlete relationship. I will not exploit the dependency of athletes and will avoid dual relationships (e.g., business or close personal relationships) which could impair my professional judgment, compromise the integrity of the process and/or take advantage of the relationship for my own gain.
 12. While serving in a professional capacity or as a role model, avoid any drug, tobacco or alcohol use while in the presence of athletes. I will discourage by way of education any consumption of these substances by minors and will remain at all times within the limits of the law with regard to legal substances. I will avoid illegal ones entirely.
 13. Not engage in physical, verbal or emotional harassment, abusive words or actions, or exploitative coercion of current or former athletes. I will report any suspected cases of abuse to the appropriate authorities immediately.
 14. Recognize that all forms of sexual abuse, assault or harassment with athletes are illegal and unethical, even when an athlete invites or consents to such behavior or involvement. Sexual abuse and harassment is defined as, but not limited to, repeated comments, gestures, or physical contacts of a sexual nature. I will report all suspected cases of sexual assault or abuse to law enforcement as required by law.

Principle III - Confidentiality

I will respect the integrity and protect the welfare of all persons with whom I am working and pledge to safeguard information about them that has been learned or obtained during the coaching relationship, including performance reviews, statistics and all personal confidence. Further, I will obtain permission from athletes before sharing videotape recordings or other data of them with anyone excepting the recognized coaching staff; when current or former athletes are referred to in a publication, while teaching or in a public presentation that is not laudatory, their identity will be thoroughly disguised. The only exception to this will be that I will not use these standards of confidentiality to avoid intervention when it is necessary (e.g., when there is evidence of physical or psychological abuse of minors, or legal issues).

Principle IV- Staff/Employee Relationships

All relationships with employees and staff will be maintained on a professional and confidential basis, and I will avoid exploiting their trust and dependency.

Principle V-Process Relating to Violation of Code

I acknowledge that this Ethics Code is administered under the authority of USA Volleyball or other responsible organization and that a violation of this code subjects me to the process of USA Volleyball or other such organization required to be provided in the event of disciplinary action. (February, 1999)

CODES OF BEHAVIOR FOR NON-COACHES

The quest for performance excellence in volleyball continues to increase as all those associated with the sport (including athletes, coaches, administrators, parents, spectators, sports medicine support teams, officials, media and sponsors) constantly search for strategies that will grow the game and increase levels of success.

As this search for excellence continues, so does the increasingly important need for a moral compass to continue to guide all from the direction originally established with the foundation of the sport by William G. Morgan at a YMCA in Massachusetts. Central to this discussion is the need for organized sport for youth (ages 5-18) to serve as one of the strategies to grow the game of volleyball worldwide.

USA Volleyball has been and continues to be committed to creating and upholding traditions of excellence through volleyball based upon the existence of supportive and nurturing environments in which individuals can become successful. age-group volleyball programs (5 through 18 years of age) can provide such environments. All associated with these age-group programs, must display and insist upon behaviors which foster beneficial growth and development of children and improvement of motor skills through volleyball. Some of these behaviors for specific groups are as follows. Coaches should share these codes with their athletes and all associated with the "team around the team".

⇒ ATHLETE CODE OF BEHAVIOR

As an athlete, I will aspire to:

- Participate in volleyball alcohol- and drug-free;
- Play by the rules of volleyball;
- Use positive verbal and physical behavior, controlling temper and aggression (intent to do harm);
- Tell the truth about another person's involvement in or knowledge of something that violates the rules;
- Show fair play by treating all those involved in the match with dignity and respect;
- Treat others as I would like to be treated;
- Work hard and honestly to improve performance and participation;
- Maintain a positive image of myself by playing volleyball for enjoyment.

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⇒ **PARENT CODE OF BEHAVIOR (see Chapter 8 for more on a Parent Code of Behavior)**

As a parent, I will aspire to:

- Be positive in attitude toward volleyball and emphasize the cooperative nature of the sport;
- Encourage hard work and honest effort that will lead to improved performance and participation;
- Encourage athletes to participate in volleyball alcohol - and drug-free;
- Encourage and respect referees and officials and their integrity;
- Encourage athletes to participate for their own enjoyment;
- Applaud fair play and good play during games and/or matches;
- Be supportive of all attempts to remove verbal and physical abuse from organized volleyball activities, including language;
- Meet the required administrative and programmatic rules if in some cases the athletes are not able to do so;
- Protect athletes from sanctions and/or suspension by producing accurate documentation;
- Attend age-group (5-18) volleyball events alcohol- and drug-free;
- Use only designated smoking areas that are clearly posted at age group (5-18) volleyball events.

⇒ **SPORTS MEDICINE SUPPORT TEAM CODE OF BEHAVIOR**

As a sports medicine support team member, I will aspire to:

- Represent professional qualifications and/or credentials;
- Provide appropriate emergency services at practices and matches;
- Work professionally to condition athletes to prevent injuries and rehabilitate athletes from injuries incurred;
- Encourage athletes to participate in volleyball alcohol and drug-free;
- Make true claims about efficacy of care;
- Maintain knowledge and skills required for continuing professional competence;
- Maintain a professional relationship with athletes;
- Disclose to athletes any interest in commercial enterprises which the sport medicine support member or team promotes to athletes for the purpose of personal gain or profit;
- Provide services without discrimination based on race, sex, creed, sexual orientation, religion, national origin, ability or age;
- Provide confidentiality of records on athletes within federal and state status.

⇒ **SPECTATOR CODE OF BEHAVIOR**

As a spectator, I will aspire to:

- Respect the rights of others and treat the visiting team and their spectators courteously;
- Attend age-group (5-18) volleyball events alcohol/drug-free;
- Abide by federal, state and local laws while attending any match;
- Cheer positively for my team, rather than against them or their opponents, using socially acceptable language;
- Respect the integrity and judgment of the officials without taunting or approaching them between games or at the end of a match;
- Applaud good performances by all teams;
- Use items to cheer with that of non-violent nature;
- Discourage all forms of violent behavior;
- Use only designated smoking areas that are clearly posted;
- Use litter receptacles to properly dispose of trash.

⇒ **OFFICIATING TEAM CODE OF BEHAVIOR**

As a part of the officiating team (first referee, second referee, scorekeeper, libero tracker, scoreboard operator, line judge), I will aspire to:

- Maintain a dignified and professional appearance at all times;
- Devote time, thought and study to the rules and mechanics to carry out the rules effectively;
- Maintain appropriate credentialing as part of the officiating team;
- Display impartial, consistent and courteous officiating behavior;
- Display quiet efficiency in the performance of officiating duties;
- Enforce rule modifications for those present with special needs;
- Work with other officiating personnel as an officiating team;
- Accept officiating team feedback positively.

⇒ **ADMINISTRATOR CODE OF BEHAVIOR**

As an administrator/director, I will aspire to:

- Provide quality supervision and instruction by coaches who demonstrate qualities of hiring positive role models for youth in volleyball;
- Insist that coaches conduct themselves in a professional manner (according to USA Volleyball Coaches Code of Behavior);
- Assist coaches in professional development to improve the standards of coaching;

- Provide visible security (Security should be equipped with radio equipment that permits communication at all times);
- *Provide appropriate emergency and medical services at practices and matches;*
- Provide equal opportunities and equal access for everyone to participate;
- Insist that unruly spectators be removed from the premises;
- Follow the rules and regulations of USA Volleyball to ensure that the association's philosophy and objectives are enhanced;
- Adjust the equipment, practice sessions and match schedule based on the ability, maturity levels, ages and special needs of the athletes involved;
- Develop programs that encompass fairness to the participants and promote fair play;
- Positively promote and publicize volleyball.

It is also the intent of USA Volleyball leadership to conduct business with media and sponsor partners in the following manner:

⇒ MEDIA RELATIONSHIPS

- Have respect for truth and for the right of the public to the truth;
- Defend the principles of freedom in the honest collection and publication of news and the right of fair comment and criticism;
- Use fair methods to obtain news, photographs and documentation as they relate to volleyball;
- Be aware of the danger of discrimination being furthered by the media and avoid facilitating such discrimination based upon race, creed, sex, sexual orientation, religion and national or social origins;
- Be aware of the differences in the rules of volleyball for all those who participate (e.g. special Olympics (Unified), Sitting and Standing, Seniors, Juniors, Mixed Six);
- Minimize the impact of isolated incidents of inappropriate sporting behavior in volleyball.

⇒ SPONSOR RELATIONSHIPS

- Use responsible advertising appropriate for age-group volleyball programs;
- Advertise to promote healthy lifestyles;
- Maintain reputable business practices involving labor laws, racial and gender advancement;
- Treat other sponsors with respect by not degrading other competitive products;
- Provide positive support for volleyball by watching even if it is not the sport of choice;
- Fulfill the obligations to USA Volleyball as described in contractual agreements;
- Encourage the responsible use of products.

NOTES:

Coordinated by:

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Resources:

American Volleyball Coaches Association, Coaches Code of Ethics and Conduct (1996). Australian Sports Commission, Aussie Sport Codes of Behaviors. (1995). Martens, R., & Deefeldt, V. (Eds.), (1987). Guidelines for Children's Sports. Reston, VA: AAHPERD. NAGWS Volleyball Rules. (1997-1998). SEC. Sportsmanlike Conduct. (1996). Texas Department of Health. (1996). Athletic Trainers General Requirements and Guidelines. USAV Coaches Code of Ethics and Conduct. (1996). USA Volleyball Rules. (1997-1998). USOC, Coaching Ethics Code. (1995) YMCA of the USA, Officials' Code of Ethics. (1997)

In Discussion with:

Central Hockey League, Eureka Junior/Senior High School Athletics, Department, Eureka, KS; Moore High School Athletics Department, Moore, OK; Professional Golf Association; United States Golf Association; University of Oklahoma Office of Athletic Directors; USA Volleyball Executive Committee & Executive Council; USA Volleyball Member Organizations & Division Leadership; Group D through Vice President Bonbright; Juniors Division through Vice President Pingel.

NATIONAL CODE OF ETHICS FOR JR CLUB PERSONNEL!

In addition to ensuring that every junior club staff member has a current USAV Background Screen on file, and each coach is IMPACT certified, it now becomes a requirement that all adult Junior Club personnel registering online via the National Membership Registration System each year also sign and submit the new nationwide standard Code of Conduct. Regions may still also require coaches to sign a Region-specific document in addition to this one. Please refer to specific requirements as published by your Region.

This new document is intended to replace inconsistent Regional requirements and to provide a uniform nationwide Code of Ethics for all USAV members, regardless of membership Region. This document was approved in concept by the RVAs in May 2009. An ad-hoc committee was formed and charged to work with the USAV National Office Staff to write the document. In accordance with our risk managers, the approved Code of Ethics is for all individuals in a non-player role, that are actively participating in a junior club program. This includes but is not limited to the following roles: Club Director, Club Administrator, Head Coach, Assistant Coach, Trainer, Manager, Chaperone, Team Representative/Parent, etc., but excludes individuals who only participate in the capacity of a player.

USA VOLLEYBALL JUNIOR CLUB PERSONNEL CODE OF ETHICS

It is the duty and obligation of USA Volleyball affiliated Junior Club Program administrators, directors, coaches and other club personnel to assure the following Code of Ethics is followed and adhered to by all individuals who have an active role in a USA Volleyball Junior Club Program in any Region of USA Volleyball.

In a continuing effort to promote safe, healthy and ethical communication, relationships and treatment of all USA Volleyball players and personnel, all adults associated with a junior club program now must read, accept and submit this USAV Junior Club Personnel Code of Ethics before they are eligible to actively participate in a junior club program associated, affiliated, or participating in USA Volleyball.

1. All adult club personnel affiliated with a junior program must be a registered member with a Region of USA Volleyball and USA Volleyball.
2. All adult club personnel including coaches, chaperones, assistant coaches, trainers, etc. affiliated with a junior program intending to participate in USA Volleyball must have an approved and current background screen on file as per USA Volleyball policy. It is intended that the term "all adult club personnel" be all inclusive and not limited to only those categories identified herein.
3. A head coach or assistant coach affiliated with a junior program must also: be an adult (see Region definition of an adult) and be IMPACT certified according to USA Volleyball and Region policies.
4. If allowed by Region rules, an assistant coach who has not yet met the age of majority in the state of residence must be supervised by a head coach recognized by the Region and must meet all applicable Region and USA Volleyball requirements. Individuals who are registered as junior players and also have an interest in coaching should contact their region regarding coaching eligibility.
5. **Responsibilities:**
 - A. A head coach or other equally qualified club personnel must be present at all practices and competitions. A head coach, adult club representative personnel or registered chaperone must be present during team-supervised travel. This individual shall be responsible for the moral, legal and ethical well-being for each participant during team/club activities.
 - B. Coaches shall understand the unique power of a coach-athlete relationship. Coaches and all other club personnel shall not exploit athletes and shall avoid any relationships which could compromise the integrity of the learning and participation process, impair their professional judgment and/or take advantage of a situation for their own personal gain or gratification.

All Club Personnel:

- C. Must understand that all forms of sexual abuse, assault or harassment of a current or former athlete are unethical and illegal even when an athlete invites or consents to such behavior or involvement. Club personnel shall not engage in sexual/romantic relationships with current athletes or other participants over whom there is/was authority. See B above.
- D. Shall insure that all individuals have met all Regional Volleyball Association and USA Volleyball membership requirements prior to participation in any club, team and/or Region/National USA Volleyball activity.
- E. Must inform the players and their parent(s)/ guardian(s) about any Region and/or USA Volleyball transfer policy. This policy may restrict or prohibit a participant from transferring to another club or team if specified criteria have been met. Likewise, all club personnel must inform the players and their parent(s)/guardian(s) of any rules or policies regarding coaching transfers during a particular season.
- F. Shall abide by and inform the players and their parent(s)/guardian(s) of applicable regional recruiting policies.
- G. May not participate in, require another individual to participate in, or condone any act considered to be illegal under federal, state or local laws and/or ordinances.
- H. Shall strive to educate their athletes and personnel to respect, honor and adhere to the rules of the facility being used during practices, tournaments or events. In this regard, the rules of the facility shall have priority over the rules of the Regional Volleyball Association.
- I. Shall ensure that all activities are suitable for the age, experience and ability of their athletes.

- J. Shall seek professional medical advice when making decisions regarding an injured athlete's ability to continue training or playing.
- K. Shall, while serving in a professional capacity, avoid any drug, tobacco or alcohol use while in the presence of athletes.
- L. Shall not supply or condone the use of drugs, alcohol, tobacco, fireworks, ammunition, firearms, knives or any item or material that can be used as a weapon, to any of the participants or athletes and shall report any athlete using or in the possession of the same.
- M. Shall not allow, encourage, condone or require any behavior that threatens an athlete's amateur status or Regional, USA Volleyball, school and/or collegiate eligibility.
- N. Shall maintain all relationships with other club personnel on a professional and confidential basis.
- O. Must be positive role models. This includes being courteous, respectful and polite to players, parents, other coaches, club directors, event personnel, and officials.
- P. Will not engage in any physical, verbal or emotional harassment, abusive words or actions, or coercion of current and/or former athletes.
- Q. All club personnel will immediately report any suspected case of illegal activity, abuse, assault, harassment, or ethical violations of this club personnel code of ethics to the appropriate authorities, including Regional Volleyball Administrators.

Any violation of this Code may result in sanction being issued against the club representative, the individual(s) and the club/team involved. These sanctions may extend to the loss of eligibility of the club representative, the individual(s), the entire club and the team involved.

As mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, any coach wishing to become CAP certified will still need to accept, acknowledge and submit the existing full USOC/USAV Coaches Code of Conduct as part of their certification requirements.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

⇒ If you want to read more about the volleyball topics below, or others related to this chapter, download and print out the articles found at www.usavolleyball.org under the Resources tab, then click on the Education/IMPACT/Articles links.

- [2011-2012 USAV Junior Club Personnel Code of Ethics Form](#)
- [Gold Medal Standards for Youth Sport](#), from Pursuing Victory With Honor Summit on Youth Sports, Feb. 10-11, 2002
- [Fifteen Important Points About Volleyball Coaching Ethics](#), by John Kessel

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