

# **Holston Rowing Club SafeSport Policy**

## **Introduction**

As a US Rowing member organization, Holston Rowing Club (HRC) is required to abide by the tenants of SafeSport. These tenants aim to eliminate any forms of sexual misconduct, emotional misconduct, physical misconduct, bullying, harassment and hazing in our sport. This document will layout and describe our SafeSport policy.

Many of the specific SafeSport policies apply to clubs with staff/coaching positions and youth rowing programs. At the present, HRC does not include these functions, but the following policies will be applied in that eventuality.

## **Policy**

HRC is committed to creating a positive and safe environment on and off the water for every member and has a zero-tolerance policy for bullying and harassment. The definitions of such actions are described as follows:

1. Misconduct - Conduct that results in harm, the potential for harm or the imminent threat of harm. Age is irrelevant to misconduct. There are six primary types of misconduct in sports: emotional, physical and sexual misconduct, bullying, harassment and hazing.

2. Bullying – Bullying is an intentional, persistent and repeated pattern of committing or willfully tolerating physical and non-physical behavior that is intended, or has the reasonable potential, to cause fear, humiliation or physical harm in an attempt to socially exclude, diminish or isolate the targeted athlete(s) as a condition of membership. It includes any act or conduct described as bullying under federal or state law.

3. Harassment - Harassment is a repeated pattern of physical and/or non-physical behavior intended to cause fear, humiliation or annoyance, offend or degrade, create a hostile environment; or reflect discriminatory bias in an attempt to establish dominance, superiority or power over an individual athlete or group based on gender, race, ethnicity, culture, religion, sexual orientation, gender expression or mental or physical disability. It includes any act or conduct described as harassment under federal or state law.

4. Hazing - Hazing involves coercing, requiring, forcing or willfully tolerating any humiliating, unwelcome or dangerous activity that serves as a condition for joining a group or being socially accepted by a group's members. It includes any act or conduct described as hazing under federal or state law. Activities that fit the definition of hazing are considered to be hazing regardless of an athlete's willingness to cooperate or participate.

5. Emotional Misconduct - Emotional misconduct involves a pattern of deliberate, noncontact behavior that has the potential to cause emotional or psychological harm to an athlete. Non-contact behavior includes verbal and physical acts, as well as actions that deny

attention or support. It also includes any act or conduct (e.g., child abuse and child neglect) described as emotional abuse or misconduct under federal or state law.

6. Physical Misconduct - Physical misconduct involves contact or non-contact behavior that can cause physical harm to an athlete or other sport participants. It also includes any act or conduct described as physical abuse or misconduct under federal or state law (e.g., child abuse, child neglect and assault).

7. Sexual Misconduct, including Child Sexual Abuse - Sexual misconduct involves any touching or non-touching sexual interaction that is nonconsensual or forced, coerced or manipulated, or perpetrated in an aggressive, harassing, exploitative or threatening manner. It also includes any sexual interaction between an athlete and an individual with evaluative, direct or indirect authority. Last, any act or conduct described as sexual abuse or misconduct under federal or state law (e.g., sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, rape) qualifies as sexual misconduct.

**All forms of misconduct are intolerable and in direct conflict with the SafeSport policy of HRC and will NOT be tolerated to any degree.** Please reference the SafeSport website <http://safesport.org> for further explanation of the above forms of misconduct and specific examples.

#### Staff Members and Athletes

##### Applicant Screening

HRC has the authority to conduct interviews and reference checks on coaching applicants and will conduct background checks on all newly hired coaching staff members. All new employees shall be subject to criminal background checks as a condition of employment. A new employee is defined as any individual who has not held employment with HRC in the past 12 months.

##### Education and Training

All HRC coaches, employees, and active volunteers are required to complete the on-line SafeSport training at <http://training.teamusa.org>. Active volunteers are those considered to have a high degree of contact with youth. A list of active volunteers will be generated by the board.

##### Athlete Education

Before each annual meeting, the board will review the Membership Agreement and ensure that it properly communicates HRC's commitment to the SafeSport policy.

##### Reporting

Coaches, staff members, athletes and volunteers must report abuse, misconduct and policy violations to the club President or the board and, where applicable, appropriate law enforcement authorities. Failure to do so is grounds for disciplinary action.

## Enforcement

HRC has adopted an internal grievance procedure providing for prompt and equitable resolution of complaints alleging any action prohibited as described in the previous section on prohibited conduct. Any person who believes he or she has witnessed or been made aware of misconduct must file a grievance under this procedure. It is against policy for HRC to retaliate against anyone who files a grievance or cooperates in the investigation of a grievance. Grievances must be submitted to the President or a board member within one week of the date the person filing the grievance becomes aware of the alleged action concerning the grievance. A complaint must be in writing, containing the name and address of the person filing it. The complaint must state the problem or action alleged to be discriminatory and the remedy or relief sought. The President and at least two other members of the board shall conduct an investigation of the complaint. This investigation may be informal, but it must be thorough, affording all interested persons an opportunity to submit evidence relevant to the complaint. The President or an appointed board member will maintain the files and records of HRC relating to such grievances. The investigation will include a review of the case by a disinterested third party. The President or an appointed representative will issue a written decision on the grievance no later than 30 days after its filing.