



# Squash Canada

## Athlete Protection Policy

*Approved by the Squash Canada Board of Directors, September 10, 2020*

*This Policy has been prepared by Squash Canada to be a Pan-Canadian Policy applicable to Squash Canada and its Member Provincial/Territorial Squash Associations that have approved the adoption of the Policy.*

### Definitions

1. The following terms have these meanings in this Policy:

- a) *“Athlete”* – includes any Individual who is registered with Squash Canada or a Member for either recreational or competitive purposes.
  - b) *“Members”* – Includes Provincial/Territorial Organizations and National Team Athletes.
  - c) *“Minor”* – any Individual who is under the age of majority at the time and in the jurisdiction where the alleged breach of any Squash Canada or Member policy has occurred. Adult Individuals are responsible for knowing the age of a Minor. For the purpose of protection in each Canadian province and territory, the age of a child is defined as follows:
    - i. 16 years old: Newfoundland and Labrador; Saskatchewan; Northwest Territories; Nunavut
    - ii. 18 years old: Prince Edward Island; Quebec; Ontario; Manitoba; Alberta;
    - iii. 19 years old: Nova Scotia; New Brunswick; British Columbia; Yukon.
- \*\*\* Please verify local jurisdictions for potential changes \*\*\***
- d) *“Person in Authority”* – An Individual who holds a position of authority within Squash Canada including, but not limited to, coaches, managers, support personnel, chaperones, and Directors.
  - e) *“Vulnerable Individuals”* – Includes Children / Youth (minors) and Vulnerable Adults (people who, because of age, disability or other circumstance, are in a position of dependence on others or are otherwise at a greater risk than the general population of being harmed by a Person in Authority).

### Purpose

2. This Athlete Protection Policy describes how Persons in Authority shall maintain a safe sport environment for all Athletes.

### Interactions between Persons in Authority and Athletes – the ‘Rule of Two’

3. Squash Canada and its Members strongly recommend the ‘Rule of Two’ for all Persons in Authority who interact with Athletes. The Coaching Association of Canada describes the intention of the ‘Rule of Two’ as follows:

A coach must never be alone or out of sight with a minor athlete. Two NCCP trained or certified coaches should always be present with an athlete, especially a minor athlete, when in a potentially vulnerable situation such as in a locker room or meeting room. All one-on-one interactions between a coach and an athlete must take place within earshot and in view of a second coach except for medical emergencies.

One of the coaches must also be of the same gender as the athlete. Should there be a circumstance where a second screened and NCCP trained or certified coach is not available, a screened volunteer, parent, or adult can be recruited.

4. Squash Canada recognizes that fully implementing the 'Rule of Two', as described above (and modified accordingly for Persons in Authority), in all circumstances, may not always be possible. Consequently, at a minimum, interactions between Persons in Authority and Athletes must respect the following:
  - a) The training environment should be open to observation so that all interactions between Persons in Authority and Athletes are observable.
  - b) Private or one-on-one situations must be avoided unless they are open and observable by another adult or Athlete.
  - c) Persons in Authority shall not invite or have a Vulnerable Individual (or Vulnerable Individuals) in their home without the written permission and contemporaneous knowledge of the Vulnerable Individual's parent or guardian.
  - d) Vulnerable Individuals must not be in any situation where they are alone with a Person in Authority without another screened adult or Athlete present unless prior written permission is obtained from the Athlete's parent or guardian.

### **Practices and Competitions**

5. As it relates to practices and/or competitions, the following shall be respected:
  - a) A Person in Authority should never be alone with a Vulnerable Individual prior to or following a competition or practice unless the Person in Authority is the Athlete's parent or guardian.
  - b) If the Vulnerable Individual is the first Athlete to arrive, the Athlete's parent should remain until another Athlete or Person in Authority arrives.
  - c) If a Vulnerable Individual would potentially be alone with a Person in Authority following a competition or practice, the Person in Authority should ask another Person in Authority (or a parent or guardian of another Athlete) to stay until all of the Athletes have been picked up. If an adult is unavailable, another Athlete, who is preferably not a Vulnerable Individual, should be present in order to avoid the Person in Authority being alone with a Vulnerable Individual.
  - d) Persons in Authority giving instructions, demonstrating skills, or facilitating drills or lessons to an individual Athlete should always do so within earshot and eyesight of another Person in Authority.

### **Communications**

6. Communications between Persons in Authority and Athletes should respect the following:

- a) Group messages, group emails or team pages are to be used as the regular method of communication between Persons in Authority and Athletes
- b) Persons in Authority may only send personal texts, direct messages on social media or emails to individual Athletes when necessary and only for communicating information related to team issues and activities (e.g., non-personal information). Any such texts, messages or emails shall be professional in tone.
- c) No personal texts between Vulnerable Individuals and Persons in Authority may be sent; however, if this is necessary, it should include one other adult person on the message.
- d) Parents and guardians may request that their child not be contacted by a Person in Authority using any form of electronic communication and/or to request that certain information about their child may not be distributed in any form of electronic communications.
- e) All communication between a Person in Authority and Athletes must be between the hours of 6:00am and midnight unless extenuating circumstances justify otherwise.
- f) Communications concerning drugs or alcohol use (unless regarding its prohibition) is not permitted.
- g) No sexually explicit language or imagery or sexually oriented conversation may be communicated by any medium.
- h) Persons in Authority are not permitted to ask Athletes to keep a secret for them.

### **Travel**

- 7. Any travel involving Persons in Authority and Athletes shall respect the following:
  - a) Teams or groups of Athlete shall always have at least two Persons in Authority with them.
  - b) For mixed gender teams or groups of Athletes, there will be one Person in Authority from each gender.
  - c) Screened parents or other volunteers will be available in situations when two Persons in Authority cannot be present.
  - d) No Person in Authority may drive a vehicle with an Athlete alone unless the Person in Authority is the Athlete's parent or guardian.
  - e) A Person in Authority may not share a room or be alone in a hotel room with an Athlete unless the Person in Authority is the Athlete's parent or guardian.
  - f) Room or bed checks during overnight stays must be done by two Persons in Authority.
  - g) For overnight travel when Athletes must share a hotel room, roommates will be age-appropriate (e.g., within two years of age of one another) and of the same gender identity.

### **Locker Room / Changing Areas / Meeting Rooms**

- 8. The following shall apply to locker rooms, changing areas, and meeting rooms:
  - a) Interactions (i.e., conversation) between Persons in Authority and Athletes should not occur in any room where there is a reasonable expectation of privacy such as a locker room, restroom or changing area. A second adult should be present for any necessary interaction between an adult and an Athlete in any such room (e.g., the Rule of Two

must be respected).

- b) If Persons in Authority are not present in the locker room or changing area, or if they are not permitted to be present, they should still be available outside the locker room or changing area and be able to enter the room or area if required, including but not limited to team communications and/or emergency.

### **Photography / Video**

9. Any photograph or video involving Athletes shall respect the following:

- a) Photographs and video may only be taken in public view, must observe generally accepted standards of decency, and be both appropriate for and in the best interest of the Athlete.
- b) The use of recording devices of any kind in rooms where there is a reasonable expectation of privacy is strictly prohibited.
- c) Examples of photos that shall be edited or deleted include:
  - i. Images with misplaced apparel or where undergarments are showing.
  - ii. Suggestive or provocative poses.
  - iii. Embarrassing images.
- d) If any photographs or videos will be used on any form of public media, an Image Consent Form must be completed before any images are taken and used.

### **Physical Contact**

10. It is recognized that some physical contact between Persons in Authority and Athletes may be necessary for various reasons including, but not limited to, teaching a skill or tending to an injury. Any physical contact shall respect the following:

- a) Unless it is otherwise impossible because of serious injury or other justifiable circumstance, a Person in Authority must always clarify with an Athlete where and why any physical contact will occur prior to the contact occurring. The Person in Authority must make clear that he or she is requesting to touch the Athlete and not requiring physical contact.
- b) Infrequent, non-intentional physical contact during a training session is permitted
- c) Hugs lasting longer than five seconds, cuddling, physical horseplay, and physical contact initiated by the Person in Authority is not permitted. It is recognized that some Athletes may initiate hugging or other physical contact with a Person in Authority for various reasons (e.g., such as crying or celebrating after a performance), but this physical contact should always be limited to circumstances where the Person in Authority believes it is in the best interest of the Athlete and when it occurs in an open and observable environment.

### **Additional Guidelines**

11. Squash Canada strongly recommends the following additional guidelines:

- a) A Person in Authority should never be alone with an athlete prior to or following a competition or practice, unless the Person in Authority is the athlete's parent or guardian. If the athlete is the first athlete to arrive, the athlete's parent should remain until another athlete or Person in

Authority arrives. Similarly, if an athlete would potentially be alone with a Person in Authority following a competition or practice, the Person in Authority should ask another Person in Authority (or a parent or guardian of another athlete) to stay until all the athletes have been picked up. If an adult is not available then another athlete should be present in order to avoid the Person in Authority being alone with a single athlete.

- b) Persons in Authority giving instructions, demonstrating skills, or facilitating drills or lessons to an individual athlete should always be doing so within earshot and eyesight of another Person in Authority.
- c) Further implementation guidelines provided by the Coaching Association of Canada are included as Annexes to this Policy.

### **Enforcement**

12. Any alleged violations of this *Athlete Protection Policy* shall be addressed pursuant to Squash Canada's *Discipline and Complaints Policy*.

<b>Policy History</b>	
Approved	September 10, 2020
Next Review Date	September 2023
Revision Approval Dates	

# APPLYING THE RULE OF TWO IN A VIRTUAL SETTING

The goal of the **Rule of Two** is to ensure all interactions and communications are open, observable and justifiable. Its purpose is to protect participants (especially minors) and coaches in potentially vulnerable situations by ensuring more than one adult is present. There may be exceptions for emergency situations.

The Rule of Two should continue to apply to all minor athletes in virtual environments (additionally, for those athletes under age 16, a parent or guardian should be present during the session where possible).

We recommend applying the Rule of Two to non-minor athletes, as well, in the current circumstances.



For every session, the Rule of Two would require two adult coaches be present, or one coach and one adult (parent, guardian, volunteer, club administrator) – one-on-one sessions should be prohibited.

Parents/guardians should be fully informed beforehand about the activities undertaken during the sessions, as well as the process of the virtual session.

Parents/guardians should be required to consent to virtual sessions prior to each session, if irregularly scheduled, or prior to the first session if there is a series of regularly scheduled sessions.

A clear statement of professional standards expected of the coach during calls should be communicated – (i.e., sessions are not social engagements, and should be focused on training/coaching).

It is recommended to record sessions where that capacity exists.

Encourage parents/guardians to debrief with U-16 athletes about virtual training on a weekly basis.

Communication during each session should be in an open and observable environment (i.e., avoid bedrooms) in the athlete's home (athlete's parents'/guardians' home), and the coach must initiate the session from an appropriate location (i.e., avoid bedrooms or "overly personal"/unprofessional settings).

Prohibit one-on-one texting, emailing or online contact between coach and athlete – any texting, emailing or online contact should be limited to group text/email that includes at least 2 adults (2 coaches or 1 coach and 1 adult (parent, guardian, volunteer, club administrator), and limited to coaching (non-social) matters, and parents of minor athletes should be provided the opportunity to receive these texts/emails. Social media contact by coach to athlete should be prohibited (including the sharing of memes, non-training video, etc.)



# RULE OF TWO

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Its purpose is to protect participants (especially minors) and coaches in potentially vulnerable situations by ensuring more than one adult is present. There may be exceptions for emergency situations.



## GOOD RULE OF TWO IMPLEMENTATION PRACTICES

- The coach is never alone and out of sight with a participant without another screened coach or screened adult (parent or volunteer) present.
- Allow training environment to be open to observation.
- Ensure a participant rides in a coach's vehicle with another adult present.
- Consider the gender of the participant(s) when selecting the screened coaches and volunteers who are present.
- Eliminate one-to-one electronic messaging. Ensure that all communications are sent to the group and/or include parents.

**Learn more:** [coach.ca/responsiblecoaching](https://coach.ca/responsiblecoaching)

