



RCA Transition to the Canadian Safe Sport Program

Background

An Independent Third Party (ITP) for Rowing in Canada has been in place since April 2019 and one of our priority initiatives was the creation and adoption of a pan-Canadian Safe Sport Policy Manual which is harmonized across our sport by being uniform and aligned at the RCA, Provincial Rowing Association and local levels. This has ensured that standards of behaviour and conduct, as well as procedures and sanctions as part of a complaint management process, are consistent across the country and at all levels for rowing in Canada.

In June 2022, services from the Office of the Sport Integrity Commissioner (OSIC) became available to National Sport Organizations through Abuse-Free Sport (AFS). As of April 1st, 2025, the Canadian Safe Sport Program (CSSP) will replace the AFS. In March 2025, RCA became a Signatory of the CSSP.

About the Canadian Safe Sport Program

As of April 1, 2025, the Canadian Centre for Ethics in Sport (CCES) will independently administer the Universal Code of Conduct to Prevent and Address Maltreatment in Sport (UCCMS) for federally funded national sport organizations through the CSSP. The CCES receives and responds to reports about individuals subject to the CSSP who may have engaged in Prohibited Behaviour under the UCCMS.

The UCCMS commits the Canadian sport sector to advancing a respectful sport culture that delivers quality, inclusive, accessible, welcoming, and safe sport experiences. The CSSP is similarly committed to advancing this fundamental goal.

The CCES is committed to providing a safe, timely, reliable, and procedurally fair environment for anyone involved in a Report of Prohibited Behaviour. It is expected that anyone connecting with the CCES team will be treated with respect, dignity, and compassion.

The CCES welcomes and encourages feedback about the CSSP as it evolves to meet the needs of the national sport community.

For more information, go to: <http://cces.ca/canadian-safe-sport-program>.

Moving Forward

RCA is currently in a transition phase and we are working to shift certain components of complaint management to the CSSP with a targeted effective date of April 1, 2025. Once in effect, some key features of this new approach will be as follows:

- Depending on one’s role, some individuals will be designated as “Participants” subject to the CSSP as required by the CSSP or as identified by RCA. In general, such Participants have a role at the National level. A list of roles that will be assigned as Participants subject to the CSSP is outlined later in this resource. All other individuals who are subject to RCA’s policies are defined as “Individuals”.
- Complaints related to **alleged breaches to the UCCMS by Participants subject to the CSSP** must be filed with the CCES.
- All other complaints related to **alleged breaches to the UCCMS by Individuals** must be filed with the Independent Third Party (ITP) for rowing.
- Complaints related to other **alleged misconduct under RCA Policies** must be filed with the Independent Third Party (ITP) for rowing. This applies to both **Participants** subject to the CSSP and **Individuals**.

Table 1. Jurisdiction for complaints filed against Participants subject to the CSSP and Individuals

Type of Complaint	Where Complaint is Filed	
	CSSP	ITP for Rowing
Participant subject to CSSP		
Alleged UCCMS Breach	X	
Other misconduct (non UCCMS Breach) allegation under RCA Policies		X
Individual		
Alleged UCCMS Breach		X
Other misconduct (non UCCMS Breach) allegation under RCA Policies		X*

*including if allegations against a Participant subject to the CSSP

Participants (CSSP)

Effective April 1, 2025 individuals in the following roles are now considered Participants and any complaints against them related to alleged breaches to the UCCMS while active/participating in these roles should be filed with the CCES:

- RCA Board Members
- RCA Employees and Contractors
- RCA Seasonal Team Coaches
- RCA Team Support Staff
- RCA Athletes (Athlete Assistance Program support, National team program, or National Athlete Pool)

What to Expect

As indicated above, all complaints involving alleged breaches of the UCCMS committed by Participants subject to the CSSP must be reported to the CCES as of April 1, 2025. Any complaints sent to the Office of the Sport Integrity Commissioner after this date will be sent to the CCES.

Matters that are pending before the OSIC as of March 31, 2025 and that started before February 1, 2025 will be completed by the OSIC by July 31, 2025. Any matter received by the OSIC between February 1, 2025 and March 31, 2025 will be transferred to the CCES with the consent of the parties to determine whether they may be accepted under the CSSP.