



RCA Safe Sport Policy Implementation

February 25, 2026



Outline + Process

- Introductions
- Progress to Date
- Updates to Safe Sport Policies
- Implementation
- Next Steps
- Questions- Chat Function
- Session is Recorded

RCA Safe Sport Policy Working Group

- Heather Clarke - National Team Family Member (British Columbia)
- Nancy Fischer - Peterborough Rowing Club (Ontario)
- Simon Litherland - False Creek Rowing Club (British Columbia)
- Adam Klevinas - Legal Counsel
- Marisha Roman - RCA Volunteer
- Lisa Tschannen - PRA Staff (until March 2025)
- Lisa Roddie - RCA Contractor
- Jennifer Fitzpatrick - RCA Staff



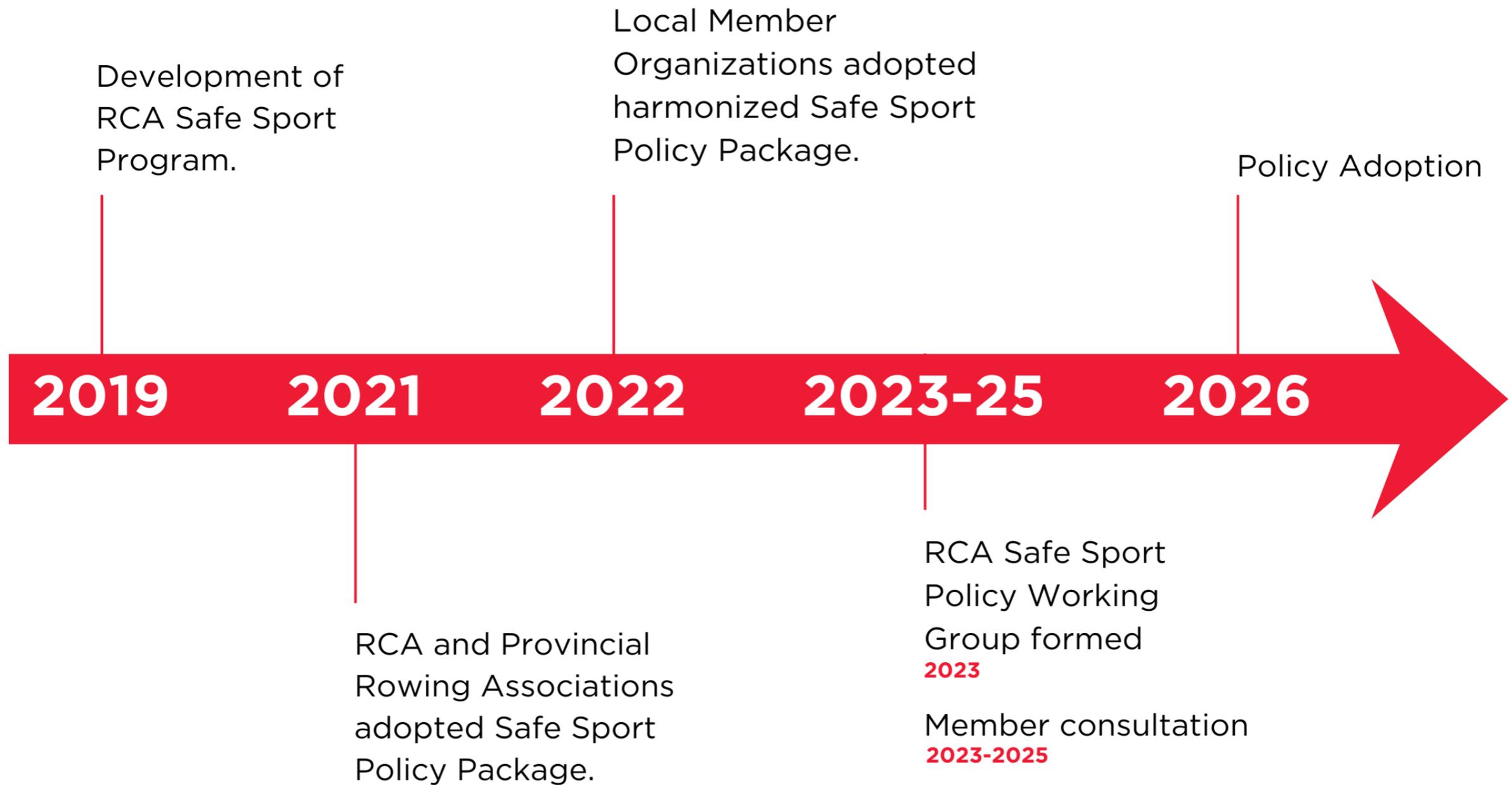
Why a Harmonized Approach

Uniformity and policy alignment

- The substantive and procedural aspects of all policies must be the same at the national, provincial/territorial and club level
- Standards of behaviour and conduct should be consistent across the country and at all levels
- Breaches, sanctions, and procedures should be consistent across the country and at all levels
 - An athlete/parent/volunteer/coach/etc. from B.C. should be subject to the same standards and treated the same way as the same individual in Ontario



Progress to Date





Consultation Milestones

- Fall 2023 - Broad Stakeholder Survey
- April 2024 - Webinar to review Survey feedback
- March 2025 - Draft Policy Package - Club Review & Consultation



Key Considerations

- Evergreen document
- Improve User-friendliness/accessibility
- Include federal and provincial regulatory body requirements
 - e.g. Sport Integrity Canada



Policy Updates

- What has remained the same?
 - Expectations of how rowers create positive culture and the processes in place to address concerns have not fundamentally changed.
 - ITP contact and support services remain in place
 - Roles of complaint resolution officers remain in place
- **No substantive changes to the policies and processes**



EVERYONE IN ROWING HAS THE RIGHT TO ENJOY OUR SPORT AT ALL LEVELS OF PARTICIPATION

All interactions between a coach, official, umpire or other representative and an athlete and/or vulnerable individual should be **open** and **observable**.

What is an **open** environment?

An environment that **isn't closed or concealed** from others. Interactions should not take place behind closed doors or in secluded locations. **Others should be aware** the interaction is taking place.



BEFORE INTERACTING WITH AN ATHLETE ASK YOURSELF:

- Is this an **open** interaction?
- Are we in a closed or secluded place?
- Who knows this interaction is taking place?
- Does the individual have an easy and accessible exit path?

What is an **observable** environment?

A space where **others can see** or take note of the interaction.



BEFORE INTERACTING WITH AN ATHLETE ASK YOURSELF:

- Is this interaction **observable**?
- Is anyone else with us?
- Can anyone see us?
- Can anyone hear us?

rowingcanada.org/safe-sport/



EVERYONE IN ROWING HAS THE RIGHT TO ENJOY OUR SPORT AT ALL LEVELS OF PARTICIPATION

Individuals who are experiencing or are aware of any forms of maltreatment should connect with the support services below.

The Canadian Sport Helpline

Funded by the Government of Canada, the Canadian Sport Helpline is a listening and referral service monitored by live operators from 8am to 8pm Eastern time, 7 days a week. Users can communicate via toll-free phone line, email, text or live chat.

1-888-83-SPORT

www.abuse-free-sport.ca

Independent Third Party for Rowing in Canada

RCA has enlisted the services of an Independent Third Party, Gord Hopper. Gord is a highly skilled professional equipped to deal with Safe Sport issues, and is able to review, advise and refer issues for further investigation independently of RCA.

itpcomplaints@gmail.com

If you require assistance or would like to talk to a trained professional about a suspected incident of child abuse, contact your local child welfare agency.
If you suspect a child is in immediate danger, call 9-1-1 or your local police.

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Policy Updates



- **What is New?**
 - **No substantive changes to preventative expectations or to the process for an individual to follow in case of a concern**
 - Updated the references to outside bodies to reflect changes in national bodies with jurisdiction
 - Policy Name Changes – Protection Policy to reinforce that the intent of the policy is to protect everyone; Complaints and Discipline to follow the chronological order and reinforce that it is a complaint process, discipline may result.
 - To improve accessibility and navigation of policies: added acronym page as a resource and changed the order of the policies in the package



Key Changes – Policy Specific

Code of Conduct

- Wording changed to clarify where consultations reflect areas of concern
- Notably related to alcohol & cannabis – clarifying social events, the recognition of cannabis and the Anti-Doping requirements
- Removed Member Organizations to separate RCA membership requirements from Code of Conduct
- Added broader language to cover multiple areas with inclusion of emphasis on the need to abide by applicable laws

Implementation

- Inform Membership of changes
- Update wherever Code of Conduct is shared



Key Changes – Policy Specific

Protection Policy

- Removed definition of Rule of Two to be clearer that open and observable is requirement with understanding gold standard of Rule of Two may not be practical
- In response to clubs focused on more adult activities and the social aspect with adult rowing activities changed to address concerns over requirements with adult participants – see specific use of “Vulnerable Participant” as key term to help distinguish which obligations apply to which participants and when

Implementation

- Review the changes with the operations groups (athlete support personnel) to see if any changes in daily activities need to be made

Key Changes – Policy Specific



Screening Policy

- Screening Matrix expanded in response to concerns raised about event volunteers – added fourth level to clarify event type volunteers with lighter requirements
- Changes to clarify criminal record check options (Note provincial regulations)
- Removed overall volunteer/staff orientation to recognize feedback on club and provincial differences, separating safe sport from other aspects
- Clarifying wording around renewal to improve ease of managing renewals

Implementation

- Board role to assign club roles to levels in matrix. Re-evaluate Screening Matrix impact on all positions. If changes, implement change in requirements for those positions.



Key Changes – Policy Specific

Complaints & Discipline Policy

- For ease of complaint management, removed the request for reconsideration step to streamline to appeal process
- From feedback from CRO's new policy includes more examples of sanctions and offenses to guide process and improve consistency
- Clarified provisional suspension process to improve understanding of options

Implementation

- Review Complaints and Discipline Policy to ensure understanding
- Club/Provincial CRO's should be made aware of new policies and ensure they can access and review



Package Implementation Checklist

- Board to review new policies and make formal motion to approve effective April 1st
- Archive Old Policies - date accordingly and maintain in files
- Update Policies in relevant locations - website, membership communication tools, policy files, other locations
- Share Changes with Members - can use provided template, communicate in way you normally communicate with your membership



Next Steps

- Adoption of Policies
- Recording on Website
- Ongoing incorporation of additional regulatory body requirements
- Contact us for additional support



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