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HARRASSMENT POLICY

Adopted

This Policy sets out the principles and practices of Rugby Alberta regarding harassment. Rugby Alberta has adopted this harassment policy to make clear that harassment will not be tolerated in our sport. Rugby Alberta encourages reporting of all incidents of harassment, regardless of who the offender may be.

This policy is in addition to and not in substitution for such rights as an individual may have under the *Alberta Human Rights, Citizenship and Multiculturalism Act*, as amended.

Rugby Alberta is committed to providing a sport and work environment which promotes equal opportunities and prohibits discriminatory practices. Harassment is a form of discrimination which is prohibited by human rights legislation in Canada. Rugby Alberta supports the right of all its members, whether athletes, volunteers or staff, to participate in all Rugby Alberta activities free from any form of harassment. Further, Rugby Alberta emphasizes the importance of eliminating harassment in judo as a key element in ensuring the safety of participants. A sports environment which actively discourages harassment and builds relationships based on trust and mutual respect and encourages the overall development of the individual.

In order to further these aims, Rugby Alberta will make every reasonable effort to promote awareness of the problem of harassment among all its members, and to respond swiftly and effectively to complaints or disclosures of harassment.

#### **PURPOSE**

The purposes of this policy are:

to maintain an environment that is free from harassment;  
to set out the types of behaviour that may be considered objectional, abusive or offensive;  
to establish a mechanism for receiving complaints of harassment and to provide a procedure by which Rugby Alberta will deal with these complaints; and  
to provide an example of the steps that can be taken towards maintaining an environment in which members treat each other with mutual respect.

This policy is not intended to constrain social interaction between people in Rugby Alberta or to affect the ordinary and proper evaluation of the performance of a judoka. The policy is intended to foster an environment in which members treat each other with mutual respect.

#### **POLICY**

It is the policy of Rugby Alberta that harassment in all its forms will not be tolerated during the course of any Rugby Alberta activity or program. Accordingly, all Rugby Alberta members, staff and volunteers are responsible for making every reasonable effort to uphold this commitment. Specifically, this includes refraining from harassing behaviour, responding promptly and informally to minor incidents of harassment and following guidelines for reporting or responding to more serious complaints of harassment. Judo members are expected to refrain from harassing behaviour and are encouraged to report incidents of harassment.

#### **DEFINITION OF HARASSMENT**

Harassment is defined as conduct, gestures or comments which are insulting, intimidating, humiliating, hurtful, malicious, degrading or otherwise offensive to an individual or group of individuals, and which create a hostile or intimidating environment for work or sports activities, or which negatively affects the individual or group. Any of the different forms of harassment may be based on the grounds prohibited in human rights



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legislation, such as race, ethnicity, sex, sexual orientation and religion. Harassment may occur between peers (eg: athlete to athlete, parent to official, coach to coach) or between someone in a position of power or authority and an someone in a subordinate position (eg: coach to athlete).

The following is a non-exhaustive list of examples of harassment:

unwelcome jokes, innuendo or teasing about a person's body, looks, race, sexual orientation etc.;

condescending, patronizing, threatening or punishing actions which undermine self-esteem;

practical jokes which cause awkwardness or embarrassment, or may endanger a person's safety;

any form of hazing;

unwanted or unnecessary physical contact including touching, patting, pinching;

unwanted conduct, comments, gestures or invitations of a sexual nature which are likely to cause offence or humiliation, or which might on reasonable grounds be perceived as placing a condition of a sexual nature; and

sexual assault or physical assault

### **INCLUDED BEHAVIOUR AND LOCATIONS**

For the purposes of this policy the types of behaviour which constitute harassment include, but are not limited to verbal abuse or threats, offensive comments and actions which demeans, belittles or humiliates an individual or group, and physical assault, and can occur:

at the judo hall or dojo;

at judo-related social functions;

at judo-related conferences or training sessions;

during judo-related travel;

over the telephone or by e-mail; or

elsewhere if the person harassed is there as a result of judo-related responsibilities or a judo-related relationship.

### **RESPONSE AND REMEDIES**

It is the position of Rugby Alberta that harassment will not be tolerated. Harassment is unacceptable and harmful. Rugby Alberta recognizes the serious negative impact of all types of harassment on personal dignity, individual and group development and performance, enjoyment of the sport and in some cases, personal safety.

At the same time, Rugby Alberta recognizes that not all incidents of harassment are equally serious in their consequences. Harassment covers a wide spectrum of behaviours, and the response to harassment must be equally broad in range, appropriate to the behaviour in question and capable of providing a constructive remedy. There must be no summary justice or hasty punishment. The process of investigation and settlement of any complaint of harassment must be fair to all parties, allowing adequate opportunity for the presentation of a defense to the charges.

Every member of Rugby Alberta has a responsibility to play a part in ensuring that the environment is free from harassment. This responsibility can only be met if every member ensures that his or her conduct avoids even the suggestion that it might constitute harassment.



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Minor incidents of harassment (eg: inappropriate jokes) should be corrected promptly and informally, taking a constructive approach and with the aim of bringing about a change in negative attitudes and behaviour.

More serious incidents (eg: a course of repeated taunting, any form of sexual or physical assault) should be dealt with according to the Rugby Alberta Harassment Complaint Procedures. Complaints should be handled in a timely, sensitive, responsible and confidential manner. There should be no tolerance of reprisals taken against any party to a complaint.

Anyone making a complaint which is found to be clearly unfounded, false, malicious or frivolous will be subject to discipline.

Procedures for the handling of complaints brought against all members, staff and volunteers of Rugby Alberta are detailed below in the document entitled "Rugby Alberta Harassment Complaint Procedures."

## **RUGBY ALBERTA HARRASSMENT COMPLAINT PROCEDURES**

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**Note:** For convenience, this policy uses the term "Complainant" to refer to the person who experiences harassment, even though not all persons who experience harassment will make a formal complaint. The term "Respondent" refers to the person against whom a complaint is made.

### **APPLICATION**

This policy applies to all Rugby Alberta staff, volunteers, and members. It applies to harassment that may occur during the course of all Rugby Alberta business, activities and events.

### **MINOR INSTANCES OF HARRASSMENT**

This policy does not prevent an appropriate person having authority from taking immediate, informal, corrective disciplinary action in response to behaviour that, in their view, constitutes a minor incident of harassment.

### **REPORTING HARRASSMENT**

A person who experiences harassment is encouraged to make it known to the harasser that the behaviour is unwelcome, offensive and contrary to the policies of Rugby Alberta.

If confronting the harasser is not possible, or if after confronting the harasser the harassment continues, the Complainant should request a meeting with a Harassment Officer of Rugby Alberta. For the purposes of this Policy, a "Harassment Officer" is a male and female appointed by the Rugby Alberta President, and shall preside over these procedures. The Harassment Officer shall advise the President of Rugby Alberta, or designate, whether an investigation under this policy is required.



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Once contacted by a Complainant the role of the Harassment Officer is to serve in a neutral, unbiased capacity in receiving the complaint and assisting in its informal resolution. If the Harassment Officer considers that he or she is unable to act in this capacity, the Complainant will be referred to the President of Rugby Alberta, or designate.

Where a person believes that staff, a volunteer or member of Rugby Alberta has experienced or is experiencing harassment and reports this belief to a Harassment Officer, the Harassment Officer will meet with the person said to have experienced harassment and proceed in accordance with these procedures.

Where a Harassment Officer believes there is sufficient evidence to warrant laying a formal complaint but the Complainant does not wish to do so, the Harassment Officer may lay a formal complaint and proceed in accordance with these procedures.

#### **COMPLAINT PROCEDURE**

There are three possible outcomes to a meeting of Complainant and the Harassment Officer:

It may be determined that the conduct does not constitute harassment as defined in this policy, in which case the matter will be closed;

The Complainant may decide to pursue an informal resolution of the complaint in which case a mediator as agreed to by both the Complainant and the Respondent will assist the two parties to negotiate or mediate an acceptable resolution of the complaint; or

The Complainant may decide to lay a formal written complaint, in which case the Harassment Officer will receive the written complaint and will advise the President of Rugby Alberta, or designate, and the Harassment Officer will conduct an investigation of the complaint.