



## **International Pickleball Teaching Professional Association (IPTPA)**

### **Athlete Safety & Safeguarding Policy**

#### **1. Commitment to Athlete Safety**

The International Pickleball Teaching Professional Association (IPTPA) is committed to providing a safe, respectful, and professional environment for all athletes, students, coaches, officials, and participants involved in pickleball activities conducted under their certification, programming, or affiliation.

Athlete welfare is paramount. IPTPA maintains a zero-tolerance stance toward harassment, abuse, neglect, discrimination, and misconduct in any form. All certified professionals, affiliated clubs, event operators, volunteers, and participants are expected to uphold the highest standards of ethical and professional conduct.

IPTPA aligns with internationally recognized safeguarding principles, including guidance established by the International Olympic Committee (IOC), and supports global best practices in athlete protection.

#### **2. Scope of Application**

This policy applies to:

- IPTPA-certified teaching professionals
- Athletes competing at IPTPA sanctioned events and/or training camps
- Assistant instructors and apprentices
- Event directors and tournament staff affiliated with IPTPA
- Volunteers operating within IPTPA programs
- Athletes and students
- Parents and guardians
- Clubs and academies affiliated with IPTPA

This policy applies to conduct occurring in person, during travel, at events, in training environments, and in digital or online communications.

### **3. Definitions**

#### **3.1 Harassment and Abuse**

Includes psychological abuse, physical abuse, sexual harassment, and neglect. These forms of misconduct may occur individually or in combination.

#### **3.2 Psychological Abuse**

Any unwelcome conduct such as verbal assault, humiliation, intimidation, coercion, bullying, manipulation, or actions that diminish an individual's dignity, identity, or self-worth.

#### **3.3 Physical Abuse**

Any deliberate act causing physical trauma or injury, including inappropriate physical contact, excessive or age-inappropriate training demands, or forced participation while injured.

#### **3.4 Sexual Harassment**

Any unwelcome verbal, non-verbal, or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Consent obtained through coercion, manipulation, or abuse of authority is not valid consent.

#### **3.5 Neglect**

Failure to provide an appropriate standard of care, supervision, or protection that results in harm or risk of harm.

Harassment and abuse may be based on race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, age, religion, disability, nationality, socio-economic status, or athletic ability. Misconduct may involve a single incident or a pattern of behavior and may occur in person or online.

### **4. Education and Prevention**

IPTPA is committed to proactive prevention through:

- Safeguarding education within certification programs
- Ongoing professional development for instructors
- Distribution of educational materials on professional boundaries
- Promotion of respectful coaching practices
- Encouragement of safe reporting cultures within clubs and academies

IPTPA strongly recommends that affiliated organizations implement appropriate screening and background verification procedures where permitted by law.

### **5. Reporting Procedures**

Any individual who experiences, witnesses, or becomes aware of suspected harassment or abuse is encouraged to report the concern promptly.

Reports should include:

- Name(s) of involved individuals
- Description of the incident

- Date, time, and location (if applicable)
- Any supporting documentation or witnesses

Reports may be submitted through IPTPA's designated safeguarding contact channel (as published on the official website) (Anti-Doping Committee Chair – Brad Guye [Brad@IPTPA.com](mailto:Brad@IPTPA.com))

Retaliation against any individual who reports a concern in good faith is strictly prohibited.

## **6. Investigation Process**

Upon receipt of a report, IPTPA will:

1. Acknowledge receipt of the complaint
2. Conduct a preliminary review
3. Initiate a fair and impartial investigation when warranted
4. Gather relevant information from involved parties
5. Determine findings and appropriate action

IPTPA may engage independent advisors or legal counsel when necessary.

All parties will be treated with fairness and respect throughout the process.

## **7. Disciplinary Measures**

If a violation of this policy is confirmed, IPTPA may impose disciplinary action proportionate to the severity of the conduct. Sanctions may include:

- Written warning
- Mandatory education or corrective training
- Probationary status
- Suspension of IPTPA certification
- Revocation of certification
- Prohibition from participation in IPTPA-affiliated activities
- Suspension for future IPTPA Events as a competitor and/or spectator
- Withdrawal of prize purse or reward earned from previous IPTPA sanctioned events

In cases involving potential criminal conduct, appropriate law enforcement authorities may be notified consistent with applicable laws.

## **8. Confidentiality**

Safeguarding matters will be handled with appropriate confidentiality. Information will be disclosed only:

- When required by law
- When necessary to protect individuals from harm

- When consent is provided by the concerned individual

Absolute confidentiality cannot be guaranteed where safety or legal obligations require disclosure.

## **9. Athlete Involvement**

IPTPA values athlete input in shaping policies that impact participant safety. The organization supports continued review and enhancement of safeguarding standards with stakeholder engagement.

## **10. Event and Program Safeguarding Measures**

To promote safe environments, IPTPA encourages:

- Clearly posted Codes of Conduct
- Defined supervision standards for youth programming
- Appropriate coach-to-athlete ratios
- Professional boundaries in communication and social media
- Controlled access to restricted competition or training areas
- Visible safeguarding contact information at events

## **11. Ongoing Commitment**

IPTPA remains committed to continuous improvement in athlete protection standards. Safeguarding is an ongoing responsibility shared by instructors, athletes, clubs, administrators, and the broader pickleball community.

All members and certified professionals are expected to uphold this policy and actively contribute to a culture of safety, dignity, and respect in the sport of pickleball.

For safeguarding inquiries or to report a concern, please refer to the official contact information listed on the IPTPA website.

IPTPA Anti-Doping Committee Chair

Brad Guye

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