NEW BRUNSWICK TABLE TENNIS ASSOCIATION
ATHLETE PROTECTION GUIDELINES

Definitions

1. The following terms have these meanings in these Guidelines:
    a) "*Person in Authority*" – An Individual who holds a position of authority within the New Brunswick Table Tennis Association (NBTTA) including, but not limited to, coaches, managers, support personnel, chaperones, staff and Directors.

Purpose

2. These Athlete Protection Guidelines describe how Persons in Authority can maintain a safe sport environment for athletes.

Rule of Two

3. The NBTTA will strongly recommend the 'Rule of Two' for all Persons in Authority who interact with athletes. The Coaching Association of Canada defines the 'Rule of Two' as:
    a) The 'Rule of Two' means that the coach is never 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 the 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. To ensure adherence to the 'Rule of Two', the NBTTA will ensure:
    a) Teams or groups of athletes will 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.

5. The NBTTA recognizes that fully implementing the 'Rule of Two' in all circumstances may not be possible. In these cases, to adhere as much as possible with the spirit of the 'Rule of Two', interactions between coaches and athletes should be:
    a) Transparent
        i. Encourage parents to appropriately support their children's involvement.
        ii. Allow the training environment to be open to observation by parents. Ensure an open and observable environment for all interactions between adults and athletes. This could include leaving the door open when having a meeting, moving away from others in a public space but staying within eyesight.

iii. Avoid private or one-on-one situations unless they are open and observable by another adult or athlete.

b) Authorized
   i. Limit any situation when a coach is alone with an athlete.
   ii. Ensure coaches and volunteers do not invite or have an athlete(s) in the home without the permission of the athlete's parent (or legal guardian).
   iii. Ensure athletes find themselves in a situation where they are alone with a coach without another adult or athlete present unless prior parental written permission is obtained.
   iv. When only one athlete and coach travel to a competition, the coach and athlete should attempt to establish a "buddy" club at the competition to associate with both during the competition and away from the venue.

c) Accountable
   i. If a situation arises where an interaction that breaks the spirit of the 'Rule of Two' arises, coaches should make themselves accountable by reporting it to a staff or volunteer supervisor.

Communications

6. The NBTTA will strongly recommend the following communication guidelines for all coaches and other adults in a position of authority who interact with athletes:
   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 the purpose of communicating information related to team issues and activities (e.g., non-personal information).
   c) Parents and guardians have the right to request that their child not be contacted by Persons 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.
   d) The content of all electronic communication between Persons in Authority and athletes must be professional in tone and for the purpose of communicating information related to team issues or activities.
   e) All communication between Persons in Authority and athletes must be between the hours of 6:00 am and midnight unless extenuating circumstances exist.
   f) No communication concerning drugs or alcohol use (unless regarding its prohibition) is permitted.
   g) No sexually explicit language or imagery or sexually oriented conversation is permitted.
   h) Persons in Authority are not permitted to ask athletes to keep a secret for them.
   i) A Person in Authority should not become overly-involved in an athlete's personal life.

Travel

7. The NBTTA will strongly recommend the following travel guidelines for all coaches and other adults in a position of authority who travel with athletes:
   a) A Person in Authority may not be alone in a car with an athlete unless the Person in Authority is the athlete's parent or guardian.
   b) 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.
   c) Room or bed checks during overnight stays must be done by two Persons in Authority.
   d) For overnight travel when athletes share a hotel room, roommates will be age-appropriate (e.g., within 2 years of age) and of the same gender identity.

Locker Room / Changing Area / Meeting Room

8. The NBTTA will strongly recommend the following guidelines for the locker room, changing area, and meeting rooms:
    a) Interactions between a Person in Authority and an individual athlete should not occur in any room where there is a reasonable expectation of privacy such as the locker room, meeting room, restroom, or changing area. A second Person in Authority should be present for any necessary interaction in any such room.
    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 or another screened volunteer, parent or guardian should still be available outside the locker room or changing area and be able to enter the room or area if required.

Photography / Video

9. The NBTTA will strongly recommend the following photography / video guidelines:
    a) Parents/guardians must sign a photo release form (i.e., as part of the registration process) that describes how an athlete's image may be used by the NBTTA.
    b) 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.
    c) The use of recording devices of any kind in rooms where there is a reasonable expectation of privacy is strictly prohibited.
    d) Examples of photos that could be requested to be edited or deleted by the NBTTA (or an alternative representative) include:
        i. Images with misplaced apparel or where undergarments are showing
        ii. Suggestive or provocative poses
        iii. Embarrassing images

Physical Contact

10. The NBTTA understands 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. The NBTTA will strongly recommend the following touch guidelines:
    a) Unless it is not possible because of serious injury or other circumstance, a Person in Authority should always clarify with an athlete where and why any touch will occur. The Person in Authority must make clear that he or she is *requesting* to touch the athlete and not *requiring* the physical contact.
    b) Infrequent, non-intentional physical contact, particularly contact that arises out of an error or a misjudgment on the part of the athlete during a training session, is permitted.
    c) Making amends, such as an apology or explanation, is encouraged to further help educate athletes on the difference between appropriate and inappropriate contact.
    d) Hugs lasting longer than 5 seconds, cuddling, physical horseplay, and physical contact initiated by the Person in Authority is not permitted. The NBTTA is aware that some younger athletes may initiate hugging or other physical contact with a Person in Authority for various reasons (e.g., such as crying after a poor performance) but this physical contact should always be limited.

Sport-Specific Guidelines

11. The NBTTA strongly recommends the following sport-specific 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.

Review and Approval

12. This Policy was reviewed and approved by the NBTTA on this 20th day of January, 2025.