



PICKLEBALL CANADA – ABUSE PREVENTION POLICY

1 POLICY STATEMENT

Pickleball Canada Organization (PCO) takes all reasonable steps to ensure a safe and welcoming environment for everyone engaged in PCO events and activities. PCO responds promptly to any suspected abuse of children and vulnerable persons.

2 CONTEXT/BACKGROUND

Pickleball Canada Organization has zero tolerance for any type of abuse. PCO will provide information to its paid staff, volunteers and members about how to prevent the abuse of children and vulnerable persons as well as how to report suspected abuse.

3 APPLICATION

This policy applies to all individuals participating in PCO programs, activities and events.

4 COMING INTO FORCE

April 12, 2022

5 DEFINITIONS

For the purpose of this policy, the following definitions apply:

- Child: a person under the age of majority¹ as defined by the province or territory of jurisdiction.
- Vulnerable Person: a person who, because of age, disability or other circumstance, is in a position of dependence on others or is otherwise at a greater risk than the general population of being harmed by people in positions of trust or authority.
- Abuse: Child Abuse or Vulnerable Person Abuse as described in this policy.

6 TYPES OF ABUSE

The following types of abuse of a child or vulnerable person are addressed under this policy:

- Emotional Abuse: A mental or emotional injury to a person that results in serious observable impairment in the individual's growth, development or psychological functioning.

¹ Currently, the age of majority is **18** in 6 provinces: Alberta, Manitoba, Ontario, Prince Edward Island, Quebec and Saskatchewan.

The age of majority is **19** in 4 provinces and 3 territories: British Columbia, New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Labrador, North West Territories, Nova Scotia, Nunavut and Yukon.

- Neglect: Failure to provide adequate care for an individual resulting in physical or emotional harm to the person.
- Physical Abuse: Intentional injury to a person that results in physical harm to an individual.
- Sexual Abuse: Using a child or vulnerable person for sexual purposes. Examples of sexual abuse include fondling, inviting a child to touch or be touched sexually, intercourse, exhibitionism, or involving a child in prostitution or pornography.

7 PREVENTING ABUSE

Pickleball Canada Organization will enact measures aimed at preventing abuse. These measures include screening, orientation and training, and practice.

1) Screening

All paid staff and volunteer positions within Pickleball Canada Organization are assessed by the Board to determine the position's potential risk of harm to PCO and its participants. All individuals applying for a paid staff or volunteer position within PCO that is one of trust or authority involving the supervision of, or unsupervised access to, children or vulnerable persons are subject to Pickleball Canada Organization's Screening Policy.

In accordance with the Screening Policy, the independent Screening Committee established by PCO will assess individuals and, based on that assessment, will either:

- i) Approve an individual's application;
- ii) Deny an individual's application; or,
- iii) Approve an individual's application subject to terms and conditions as the Screening Committee deems appropriate.

2) Orientation and Training

Pickleball Canada Organization will deliver mandatory abuse prevention orientation and training:

- to new paid staff upon hiring, and annually thereafter;
- to new volunteers who will have access to children or vulnerable persons, where the parent or guardian of the child or vulnerable person will not be present, upon assignment, and annually thereafter.

Orientation may include, but is not limited to: introductory presentations, facility tours, equipment demonstrations, parent/athlete meetings, meetings with colleagues and supervisors, orientation manuals, orientation sessions, and increased supervision during initial tasks or period of engagement.

Training may include, but is not limited to: certification courses, online learning, mentoring, workshop sessions, webinars, on-site demonstrations, and peer feedback.

At the conclusion of the orientation and training, individuals will be required to acknowledge, in written form, that they have received and completed the training.

3) Practice

General Practice regarding children and vulnerable persons

Paid staff and volunteers are not allowed to implement new activities or programs for children and vulnerable persons without the consent of Pickleball Canada Organization.

Written permission must be obtained from a parent or guardian before any paid staff or volunteer transports children or vulnerable persons while conducting PCO activities.

Children under the age of 12 participating in PCO activities will only be released to a parent, legal guardian or person designated by a parent or legal guardian.

Practice involving interaction with children and vulnerable persons

Pickleball Canada Organization paid staff and volunteers strive to provide a safe, respectful and healthy environment for all individuals involved in PCO activities. Special consideration must be given when interacting with children and vulnerable persons.

The following practices are meant to guide Pickleball Canada Organization's paid staff and volunteers during their interactions with children and vulnerable persons. These include, but are not limited to:

- i) Treating all children and vulnerable persons with respect. Treatment must be fair and equal and not based on sex, race, religion, sexual orientation or economic or social status. All efforts must be made to avoid favouritism or the appearance of favouritism.
- ii) Refraining from harsh or inappropriate language, degrading punishment, physical punishment or any type of restraining device in the name of behaviour management.
- iii) Restricting physical interactions to non-threatening or non-sexual touching (e.g. high-fives, pats on the back or shoulder, handshakes, specific skill instruction, etc.).
- iv) Ensuring paid staff and volunteers do not undress, shower or bathe with, or in the presence of, children and/or vulnerable persons.
- v) Prohibiting discussion about their own sexual history, preference or fantasies nor their use of illicit or pornographic materials.
- vi) Prohibiting the possession of sexually oriented materials when involved in PCO activities.
- vii) Refraining from consumption or distribution of alcohol or drugs when involved in PCO activities.
- viii) Ensuring that children and vulnerable persons are always supervised by more than one adult. When one on one discussion or counselling is warranted, these interactions are to take place in an area that allows for private conversation while remaining in view of others.
- ix) Where a child or vulnerable person needs to be segregated from the group for disciplinary actions (e.g. a child is misbehaving and has been given a "time-out"), ensuring the child or vulnerable person is located in an area where they are still always supervised.
- x) Having more than one person responsible for team selection (thereby limiting the consolidation of power to one individual).

- xi) Including parents and guardians in communication (e.g. electronic, telephonic) with children and vulnerable persons. Parents and guardians should also be advised that some non-personal information sharing may take place electronically (e.g. texting) and that this type of communication is considered to be commonplace, especially with older individuals (e.g. teenagers). Individuals are aware that such communication is subject to Pickleball Canada Organization's Code of Conduct Policy.

8 REPORTING INCIDENTS AND ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE

Reporting suspected abuse by a child's parent or guardian

Everyone has a responsibility to keep children safe and report suspected abuse of a child. If a person suspects that a child has been or is likely to be abused by the child's parent or guardian, that person also has a legal duty to report this to [child welfare authorities](#). Failure to report is an offence in most jurisdictions.

You do not need proof that the abuse has happened, only a reason to believe that it has happened or may happen. Reports can be made confidentially. If a person believes that a child is in immediate danger, they should contact the police.

Reporting suspected abuse of a vulnerable person

A number of jurisdictions require individuals to report suspected abuse of a vulnerable person to authorities. It is important for all individuals to understand and comply with the reporting requirements in their jurisdiction.

Reporting suspected abuse of a child or vulnerable person by Pickleball Canada Organization paid staff or volunteers

All persons are to report any incidents of suspected abuse of a child or vulnerable person by paid staff or volunteers of Pickleball Canada Organization to the necessary law enforcement and child protection agencies.

A paid staff or volunteer of Pickleball Canada Organization that suspects, or it has been disclosed, that abuse of a child or vulnerable person by another paid staff or volunteer of PCO has occurred, must also report immediately to the President or Executive Director of Pickleball Canada Organization.

Upon receiving a report of suspected abuse, the President or Executive Director will ensure that:

- the child or vulnerable person's parents or guardians are notified immediately, unless it would be inappropriate to do so in the circumstances;
- All paid staff and volunteers identified in the incident or allegation of abuse are immediately removed from situations involving unsupervised access to children and vulnerable persons pending the outcome of the investigation conducted by the appropriate authorities;
- Pickleball Canada Organization's insurance provider is made aware of the situation;
- Depending on the outcome of the investigation, any necessary disciplinary measures are initiated, in accordance with PCO's Complaints and Discipline Policy; and

- A review of Pickleball Canada Organization's Abuse Prevention Policy and practices is conducted to ensure they provide the necessary protection for children and vulnerable persons.

The Canadian Centre for Child Protection has developed programs and resources to help organizations reduce the risk of abuse of children and create safer environments for children in their care. Pickleball Canada Organization is not affiliated with or endorsed by the Canadian Centre for Child Protection and does not own or control the Canadian Centre for Child Protection's website or materials. However, the following information developed by the Canadian Centre for Child Protection is being provided for informational purposes. For detailed information related to a specific jurisdiction, refer to its governing legislation or contact its applicable child welfare agency.

*Note that clicking on the links below will take you to the Canadian Centre for Child Protection's website.

Click [here](#) for a summary of the steps in reporting incidents and allegations of inappropriate behaviour such as intimidating a child, inappropriate touching of a child and inappropriate communication with a child.

Click [here](#) for a summary of the steps in reporting incidents and allegations of child sexual abuse.

9 IMPLEMENTATION

PCO will communicate this policy to its Board, paid staff, relevant volunteers and its members and provide the necessary training and orientation material.

10 RESULTS

PCO Board members, paid staff, volunteers and members are aware of their responsibilities to prevent the abuse of children and vulnerable persons and know how to report abuse should it occur.

Children and vulnerable persons are protected from abuse while participating in PCO programs, activities and events.