

PICKLEBALL CANADA – ABUSE PREVENTION POLICY

1. POLICY STATEMENT

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

2. CONTEXT/BACKGROUND

Pickleball Canada has zero tolerance for any type of abuse. It 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 Pickleball Canada programs, activities, and events.

4. COMING INTO FORCE

June 10, 2025

5. DEFINITIONS

- **Child:** A person under the age of majority 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

- **Emotional Abuse:** A mental or emotional injury that results in serious observable impairment in the individual's growth, development, or psychological functioning.
- **Neglect:** Failure to provide adequate care, resulting in physical or emotional harm.
- **Physical Abuse:** Intentional injury resulting in physical harm.
- **Sexual Abuse:** Using a child or vulnerable person for sexual purposes. Examples include fondling, sexual intercourse, coercing or forcing a child to engage in sexual acts, exposing them to pornography or explicit content, exhibitionism, involving them in prostitution, or manipulating the victim through grooming behaviors to facilitate the abuse.

7. PREVENTING ABUSE

Pickleball Canada will enact measures aimed at preventing abuse.

These include:

1. Screening

All individuals applying for a paid staff or volunteer position that is one of trust or authority involving the supervision of children or vulnerable persons are subject to a national vulnerable sector check every three years at minimum.

2. **Orientation and Training**

All staff and volunteers will receive orientation and training.

They will be required to sign off on receipt and understanding of all protocols.

3. **Safe Communication**

All communication with minors must be conducted through their parent/guardian. Staff and volunteers may not have direct contact information for minors, including email, phone, or social media. Communication may occur via:

- Parent/guardian directly
- Posted team/group communication on the website
- Non-reply mass emails that do not expose personal contact information

Staff and volunteers must not friend, follow, or connect with minors on social media, email, phone, or any platform outside of team activity channels.

4. **Transportation and Supervision**

Minors or vulnerable persons must never be alone in a vehicle with a single adult. A minimum of two adults must be present during transport.

5. **Program Locations**

All activities and programs must occur in commercial, municipal, or public facilities. Events may not take place in a private residence, including the homes of staff or volunteers.

6. **Anonymous Reporting**

An anonymous reporting mechanism will be made available to all members. This may include an online reporting form, or a confidential email system monitored by an independent party.

8. **GENERAL PRACTICES**

- Existing behavioural guidance (e.g., physical boundaries, respectful interaction, no discussion of sexual topics, etc.) will be cross-referenced in Pickleball Canada's Code of Conduct and orientation materials.
- Team selection must involve more than one person to avoid power imbalances or perceptions of favouritism.