



SWPSA CODE OF CONDUCT

Schools Water Polo South Africa

Effective 1 May 2026

1. PREAMBLE

Schools Water Polo South Africa (“SWPSA”) is committed to promoting and developing school water polo in a safe, respectful, inclusive and professional environment.

This Code of Conduct establishes the standards of behaviour expected of all individuals participating in, attending, administering or representing SWPSA activities, competitions, tournaments, tours and events.

This Code of Conduct is grounded in, and must be read in conjunction with, applicable South African legislation and regulatory frameworks. These include, but are not limited to:

- The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996
- The Children’s Act 38 of 2005
- The Protection of Personal Information Act 4 of 2013 (POPIA)
- The South African Schools Act 84 of 1996
- National safeguarding and Safe Sport principles and guidelines applicable to youth sport in South Africa

All participants, officials, coaches, volunteers, and stakeholders are expected to act in accordance with both the letter and spirit of these frameworks. Where any conflict arises between this Code and applicable law, South African law shall prevail.

All participants are expected to uphold the values of:

- Respect
- Integrity
- Accountability
- Sportsmanship
- Inclusion
- Excellence
- Player Welfare

Participation in SWPSA activities constitutes acceptance of this Code of Conduct.



2. DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this Code of Conduct, the following definitions apply:

“Participant”

Any player, coach, manager, referee, official, volunteer, administrator, or person formally engaged in SWPSA activities or events.

“Minor”

Any person under the age of 18 years, as defined in the Children’s Act 38 of 2005.

“Safeguarding”

All policies, procedures, and actions designed to protect individuals, particularly minors, from abuse, neglect, exploitation, harassment, bullying, or any form of harm within SWPSA environments.

“Misconduct”

Any behaviour that violates this Code of Conduct, including but not limited to bullying, harassment, abuse (physical, emotional, verbal, or sexual), fraud, discrimination, unethical conduct, or breaches of safeguarding or integrity standards.

“Official”

Any person appointed or recognised by SWPSA or affiliated structures to administer, officiate, adjudicate, or manage SWPSA-related activities.

“SWPSA Activity”

Any match, training session, trial, camp, tournament, meeting, travel arrangement, or event organised, sanctioned, or affiliated with SWPSA.

“Tour”

Any organised travel activity undertaken by participants representing SWPSA or affiliated teams, including domestic and international travel.

“Online Conduct”

Any communication, content, interaction, or behaviour conducted via digital platforms, including social media, messaging applications, websites, forums, or email, that relates directly or indirectly to SWPSA or its participants.



3. APPLICATION OF THIS CODE

This Code applies to all persons involved in SWPSA activities, including but not limited to:

- Players
- Coaches
- Managers
- Selectors
- Team staff
- Referees and officials
- Administrators
- Volunteers
- Parents and guardians
- Spectators
- Medical and support personnel
- Tour staff
- Service providers and contractors

This Code applies:

- During all SWPSA events and activities, including competitions, trials, training sessions and camps;
- During travel and tours associated with SWPSA;
- At accommodation venues;
- During online or digital engagement connected to SWPSA;
- In any circumstance where conduct may affect the reputation, welfare or functioning of SWPSA or school water polo.



4. CORE PRINCIPLES

4.1. THINK

Participants are expected to think responsibly before speaking, posting or acting.

4.2. ACT

Participants must act with professionalism, honesty, integrity and respect at all times.

4.3. PLAY

Participants must compete fairly, uphold the spirit of the game and contribute positively to the culture of school water polo.

5. GENERAL STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

All participants must:

- Treat others with dignity, fairness and respect.
- Promote a safe and positive sporting environment.
- Comply with SWPSA rules, regulations, policies and directives.
- Respect referees, officials, volunteers and organisers.
- Demonstrate good sportsmanship at all times.
- Conduct themselves in a manner that reflects positively on SWPSA and their schools or provinces.
- Respect property, facilities and accommodation venues.
- Follow lawful instructions from authorised SWPSA personnel.

All participants must refrain from:

- Bullying, harassment or intimidation;
- Discrimination or hate speech;
- Violence or threatening behaviour;
- Abuse of referees, officials or volunteers;
- Dishonest or unethical conduct;
- Damage to property;
- Conduct that brings SWPSA into disrepute.



6. SAFEGUARDING AND PLAYER WELFARE

6.1. Commitment to Safeguarding

SWPSA adopts a zero-tolerance approach to:

- Abuse;
- Exploitation;
- Grooming;
- Harassment;
- Bullying;
- Neglect;
- Unsafe conduct involving minors.

The welfare and safety of players shall always take precedence over performance or competitive outcomes.

6.2. Responsibilities of Adults

All adults involved in SWPSA activities must:

- Maintain appropriate professional boundaries with players;
- Avoid situations where they are alone with a minor where reasonably possible;
- Use appropriate and professional language;
- Avoid inappropriate physical contact;
- Respect the privacy and dignity of players;
- Use approved communication channels with players;
- Report safeguarding concerns immediately.

Adults may not:

- Engage in inappropriate relationships with learners;
- Engage in conduct that could reasonably be interpreted as grooming;
- Share inappropriate content with minors;
- Communicate with minors in a secretive or inappropriate manner.



6.3. Reporting Obligations

Any participant who becomes aware of:

- abuse,
 - harassment,
 - bullying,
 - misconduct,
 - safeguarding concerns,
- must report the matter to SWPSA immediately.

Failure to report serious safeguarding concerns may itself constitute misconduct.

7. DIGITAL COMMUNICATION AND SOCIAL MEDIA

All participants are responsible for their digital conduct.

Participants must:

- Use social media responsibly and respectfully;
- Avoid abusive, defamatory or inflammatory content;
- Avoid public criticism of players, referees, coaches, schools or administrators;
- Respect confidentiality;
- Obtain appropriate consent before posting identifiable images of minors where required;
- Recognise that private online conduct may still impact SWPSA.

The following are prohibited:

- Cyberbullying;
- Online harassment;
- Sharing confidential team or disciplinary matters;
- Racist, sexist, discriminatory or offensive content;
- False or misleading statements relating to SWPSA.

Coaches and team staff:

- Must communicate with players through professional and transparent channels;



- Should include parents or guardians where appropriate;
- Must avoid inappropriate direct communication with minors.

8. PLAYER CODE OF CONDUCT

Players must:

- Play fairly and honestly;
- Respect teammates, opponents and officials;
- Accept decisions of referees respectfully;
- Demonstrate self-control and discipline;
- Attend training, meetings and matches punctually;
- Wear approved team apparel appropriately;
- Follow instructions from coaches and managers;
- Behave responsibly while representing SWPSA.

Players must not:

- Engage in bullying, hazing or initiation practices;
- Use abusive or discriminatory language;
- Damage property;
- Engage in violent or dangerous conduct;
- Possess or use prohibited substances;
- Consume alcohol, vape or use illegal substances during SWPSA activities where prohibited by law, age restrictions or event rules.



9. COACHES, MANAGERS AND TEAM STAFF

Coaches and team staff are expected to model the highest standards of professionalism and leadership.

They must:

- Prioritise player welfare;
- Promote development and inclusion;
- Treat players fairly and respectfully;
- Create a positive and safe environment;
- Avoid favouritism and conflicts of interest;
- Respect confidentiality;
- Support referees and officials;
- Conduct themselves professionally at all times.

They must not:

- Abuse or intimidate players or officials;
- Coach while under the influence of alcohol or drugs;
- Engage in discriminatory conduct;
- Undermine SWPSA governance structures or disciplinary processes.

10. PARENTS AND SPECTATORS

Parents and spectators play an important role in promoting positive sporting culture.

They must:

- Encourage players positively;
- Respect coaches, referees and officials;
- Demonstrate appropriate sideline behaviour;
- Respect host schools and venues;
- Refrain from coaching from the sidelines;
- Avoid public criticism of players, coaches or officials.

Parents and spectators must not:



- Abuse referees or officials;
- Engage in threatening or aggressive conduct;
- Disrupt matches or events;
- Use discriminatory or offensive language.

11. REFEREES AND OFFICIALS

Referees and officials must:

- Officiate fairly and impartially;
- Apply rules consistently;
- Treat participants respectfully;
- Avoid conflicts of interest;
- Conduct themselves professionally.

SWPSA supports a zero-tolerance approach to abuse of referees and officials.

12. TOURS, TRAVEL AND ACCOMMODATION

Participants representing SWPSA on tours or at events must:

- Follow all tour rules and instructions;
- Respect accommodation providers and venue staff;
- Observe curfews and supervision requirements;
- Behave responsibly during travel;
- Maintain standards expected of SWPSA representatives.

Participants must not:

- Engage in unlawful conduct;
- Consume prohibited substances;
- Endanger themselves or others;
- Damage property;
- Leave accommodation or venues without permission where supervision rules apply.



13. INCLUSION AND NON-DISCRIMINATION

SWPSA is committed to providing an environment free from discrimination, harassment and victimisation.

Discrimination on the basis of:

- race,
 - gender,
 - sex,
 - religion,
 - culture,
 - language,
 - disability,
 - socioeconomic background,
 - sexual orientation,
 - identity,
- or any other protected characteristic will not be tolerated.

All participants are expected to contribute to an inclusive and respectful environment.

14. CONFIDENTIALITY

Participants entrusted with confidential information must:

- Respect privacy;
- Protect sensitive information;
- Avoid unauthorised disclosure of internal matters.

Confidential information includes:

- disciplinary matters,
- safeguarding reports,
- selection discussions,
- medical information,
- governance discussions,
- personal information.



15. ANTI-RETALIATION / VICTIMISATION

SWPSA is committed to ensuring a safe reporting environment.

Retaliation, victimisation, intimidation, or adverse treatment against any person who, in good faith:

- Reports misconduct
- Raises a concern
- Provides information
- Participates in an investigation or disciplinary process

is strictly prohibited.

Any such conduct will itself constitute misconduct and may result in disciplinary action.

16. ALCOHOL, DRUGS AND SUBSTANCES

Participants must comply with:

- applicable laws,
- host venue rules,
- tour regulations,
- school policies,
- SWPSA directives.

Illegal drug use is strictly prohibited.

Alcohol consumption by minors is prohibited.

Adults representing SWPSA are expected to exercise appropriate judgment and professionalism at all times.

17. BREACHES OF THE CODE

A breach of this Code includes (but not limited to):

- Conduct contrary to the principles outlined herein;
- Failure to comply with SWPSA directives;
- Bringing SWPSA or school water polo into disrepute;



- Failure to cooperate with investigations.
- Abuse in any form (physical, emotional, verbal, sexual)
- Bullying or harassment
- Discrimination
- Dishonesty or fraud
- Breaches of safeguarding protocols
- Unprofessional or unsafe conduct
- Breach of confidentiality or POPIA obligations
- Inappropriate online conduct

Breaches may occur:

- In person;
- Online;
- During travel;
- At accommodation venues;
- Through digital communication or social media.

18. DISCIPLINARY PROCESS

SWPSA may investigate alleged breaches of this Code.

Disciplinary processes may include:

- Informal resolution;
- Formal investigation;
- Suspension pending investigation;
- Disciplinary hearings;
- Appeals processes.

Sanctions may include:

- Verbal or written warnings;
- Removal from matches or events;
- Suspension;



- Removal from teams or tours;
- Loss of accreditation;
- Referral to schools, provinces or safeguarding authorities;
- Permanent exclusion from SWPSA activities.

SWPSA reserves the right to take immediate action where participant welfare or safety is at risk.

All disciplinary actions will follow SWPSA's Disciplinary Procedure, ensuring procedural fairness

19. SUSPENSION PENDING INVESTIGATION

SWPSA may impose a precautionary suspension on any participant pending investigation into alleged misconduct.

Such suspension:

- Is a precautionary safeguard measure only
- Does not constitute a finding or presumption of guilt
- May be implemented to protect participants, ensure safety, or preserve the integrity of an investigation
- May be applied particularly in safeguarding-related matters or where continued participation may pose a risk

Suspended individuals will be afforded procedural fairness and the opportunity to respond in accordance with SWPSA disciplinary processes.

20. REPORTING PROCEDURE

Reports of misconduct should be submitted to:

- The relevant SWPSA official;
- Tournament Director;
- Safeguarding Officer;
- SWPSA Executive Committee;
or any designated reporting channel.

Reports should include:

- Details of the incident;



- Date, time and location;
- Persons involved;
- Witnesses where applicable.

SWPSA will treat reports seriously and confidentially where reasonably possible.

21. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

All participants, and where applicable parents or guardians, must acknowledge annually that they:

- Have read and understood this Code of Conduct;
- Agree to comply with it;
- Understand the consequences of breaches;
- Commit to upholding the values and reputation of SWPSA.

22. IMPLEMENTATION AND REVIEW

This Code of Conduct:

- Takes effect on 1 January 2026;
- Applies to all SWPSA activities and affiliated events;
- Shall be reviewed periodically by the SWPSA Executive Committee.

Approved by:

SWPSA Executive Committee

Date: 1 May 2026