

Discipline and Complaints Policy

Purpose

The Canadian Fitness and Lifestyle Research Institute (CFLRI) is committed to maintaining a respectful, safe, and inclusive environment for all staff, volunteers, research participants, and partners. This Discipline and Complaints Policy outlines the process for addressing concerns, complaints, or breaches of conduct in alignment with Safe Sport principles and Canadian not-for-profit governance best practices.

Scope

This policy applies to all individuals engaged with CFLRI, including:

- Employees
- Board members
- Research participants
- Contractors, consultants, and partners
- Volunteers

It covers all activities conducted under the organization's auspices, including research projects, events, meetings, online platforms, stakeholder engagement, and all partner activities.

Principles

CFLRI is committed to:

Respect and Safety: Ensuring a safe and inclusive environment free from harassment, abuse, discrimination, or bullying.

Transparency and timely action: Providing a clear, accessible, timely, and fair process for reporting and resolving complaints.

Accountability: Responding promptly and appropriately to concerns while respecting confidentiality and due process.

Alignment with Safe Sport: Following the values of Safe Sport, including zero tolerance for harassment, abuse, and unethical behaviour.

Process

1. Reporting a Complaint

Individuals who experience or witness behaviour that contravenes this policy are encouraged to report it promptly.

Complaints may relate to (Category 1):

- Harassment, bullying, or discrimination
- Sexual misconduct or abuse
- Misconduct affecting research integrity
- Any behavior that violates organizational codes of conduct
- Repeated incidents as described in Process #1
- Abusive, racist, or sexist comments, conduct or behaviour
- Any incident of hazing
- Behaviour that constitutes Maltreatment, Prohibited Behaviour, or Harassment
- Major incidents of violence (e.g., fighting, attacking)
- Pranks, jokes, or other activities that endanger the safety of others
- Conduct that intentionally interferes with a competition
- Conduct that intentionally damages the organization's image, credibility, or reputation
- Consistent disregard for the organization's bylaws, policies, rules, and regulations
- Major or repeated violations of the *Code of Conduct and Ethics*
- Intentionally damaging the organization's property or funding
- Abusive use of alcohol or any other intoxicating substance, any use or possession of alcohol or any other intoxicating substance by Minors, or use or possession of illicit drugs and narcotics
- A conviction for any *Criminal Code* offense
- Any possession or use of prohibited substances or prohibited methods

How to Report:

- Complaints can be submitted confidentially to Sport Integrity Canada's [Canadian Safe Sport Program \(CSSP\)](#) and be pursuant to the CSSP policies and procedures.
- Anonymous reports will be accepted; however, limited action may be possible if further information is required.

If the complaint does not involve alleged breaches that would fall under the Universal Code of Conduct to Prevent and Address Maltreatment in Sport (UCCMS), CSSP or CFLRI Policies then they can be reported to an identified Case Designate within 14 days of the alleged incident and follow the review process in #2 below. Following the determination that the complaint or incident will be handled under Category 2, the Case Designate will appoint a CFLRI Discipline Chair which by default, will be the President of CFLRI. In the event that the President is unable to act as the Discipline Chair, due to conflict of interest or because they are a Party to the complaint, the Case Designate will work with the CFLRI Board of Directors to determine a suitable replacement. Examples of these types of behaviours include (Category 2):

- Disrespectful comments, conduct or behaviour
 - Minor acts of physical violence, unless the physical violence is between a Person in Authority and a Vulnerable Participant, in which case the matter will fall under Category 1
 - Conduct contrary to the values of CFLRI
 - Non-compliance with CFLRI's by-laws, policies, rules, or regulations
 - Violations of CFLRI's *Code of Conduct* that do not fall within Category 1
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2. Complaint Review Process for Category 2

1. Acknowledgment: Complaints will be acknowledged within five business days of receipt by the Case Designate.
 2. Preliminary Assessment: The designated officer will determine whether the complaint falls under this policy and are Category 2, and whether immediate measures are required to ensure safety.
 3. Investigation: If warranted, a fair and impartial investigation will be conducted. This may involve interviews, document review, or other appropriate fact-finding steps.
 4. Resolution: Based on the findings, the organization may:
 - Provide guidance or education
 - Issue warnings or corrective action
 - Suspend access to organization programs or facilities
 - Terminate employment, volunteer participation, or partnership agreements
 5. Appeal: Individuals may appeal decisions by submitting a written request within 15 business days, detailing the grounds for appeal. Appeals will be reviewed by an independent panel.
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Discipline

Discipline may be applied when an individual is found to have violated organizational policies, codes of conduct, or Safe Sport standards. Disciplinary measures are determined based on:

- Severity of the behaviour
- Intent and impact
- History of conduct
- Risk to individuals or the organization

Discipline may include verbal or written warnings, temporary suspension, mandatory training, or removal from the organization, up to and including termination, or conditions set by the CSSP process.

Confidentiality

All complaints and investigations will be treated with the utmost confidentiality. Information will only be shared on a need-to-know basis to:

- Protect the safety and rights of those involved
 - Conduct a fair investigation
 - Comply with legal and research ethics board obligations
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Protection Against Retaliation

CFLRI strictly prohibits retaliation against anyone who, in good faith, reports a complaint or participates in an investigation. Retaliation itself may result in disciplinary action.

Resources

Individuals affected by misconduct may access confidential support through:

- Sport Integrity Canada resources: <https://sportintegrity.ca/report-process>
 - UCCMS <https://sportintegrity.ca/news/first-draft-canadian-safe-sport-program-rules-now-available>
 - CSSP https://sportintegrity.ca/sites/default/files/content/docs/2026-05/CSSPRules_2025-Final-EN.pdf
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Review and Updates

This policy will be reviewed every two years by the CFLRI Board of Directors, or sooner if required, to ensure alignment with Canadian legal standards, Safe Sport principles, and best practices in research governance.

Contact

For questions or to report a complaint:

President, CFLRI or Chair, CFLRI Board of Directors

Research_recherche *at* cflri.ca

613-233-5528

Approved by the Board of Directors on: June 25, 2026