

IPF Safeguard and Protection Policy

Introduction

The International Powerlifting Federation (**IPF**) is committed to providing a safe environment for all participants at IPF Events, free from discrimination on any ground and from harassment at work including sexual harassment. The IPF will operate a zero-tolerance policy for any form of misconduct including but not limited to harassment, treat all incidents seriously and promptly investigate all allegations of misconduct. Any person found to have harassed another will face disciplinary action. All complaints of misconduct will be taken seriously and treated with respect and in confidence. No one will be victimized for making such a complaint.

Jurisdiction

Persons participating in IPF sanctioned events or activities (including but not limited to the entire duration of events, congresses, meetings or any other activity that could be construed as under the authority of the IPF) will refrain from all forms of misconduct including but not limited to:

- harassment and abuse, be it sexual, physical or psychological, whether occurring in isolation or in combination or whether consisting of a one-off incident or a series of incidents, whether done in person or online, (including but not limited to social media); or
- any abuse of authority, i.e. the improper use of a position of influence, power or authority over another person. Abuse can also take the form of not providing protection.

Abuse does not need to be by a person in a position of authority to be considered abuse.

If an alleged misconduct of harassment or abuse has occurred between persons belonging to the same National Federation Delegation (**NF**), the incident will be resolved by such NF with the support of the IPF. If the circumstances of the incident are such that could create a conflict of interest within the concerned NF, the matter will be dealt directly by the IPF.

Definitions

Accused Individual: A Participant who is alleged to have violated this policy.

Athlete: Any powerlifting athlete who participates in any IPF sanctioned event.

Child, children, minor and youth: Every human being below the age of 18 unless under the law applicable to the child. Here, “child,” “children,” “minor” and “youth” are used interchangeably.

Coach/Trainer/Athlete Support Personnel: Any adult who has or shares the responsibility for instructing, teaching, schooling, training, or advising an athlete. Here, “coach”, “trainer”, and “athlete support personnel” are used interchangeably.

Coach-Athlete Relationship: Exists when a Coach interacts with an Athlete. Interactions may include but are not limited to:

- providing an Athlete with a training program whether written or oral;
- assisting an Athlete during a training session; or
- handling an Athlete during a powerlifting competition,

whether privately or as part of a NF team.

Intimate Relationship: An interpersonal relationship that involves physical or emotional intimacy.

Misconduct: Conduct which results in harm, the potential for harm or the imminent threat of harm. Age is irrelevant to misconduct. There are six primary types of misconduct in sport:

1. Emotional Misconduct;
2. Physical Misconduct;
3. Sexual Misconduct;
4. Bullying;
5. Harassment; or
6. Hazing (or any form of ragging).

Participants: Individuals who participate at IPF Events including but not limited to Minor Athletes, Athletes, Athlete Support Personnel, IPF Technical Officials, elected or appointed IPF Officers and the IPF Secretariat Members.

Power Imbalance: A Power Imbalance may exist where, based on the totality of the circumstances, one person has supervisory, evaluative, or other authority over another. Whether there is a Power Imbalance depends on several factors, including but not limited to:

- the nature and extent of the supervisory, evaluative or other authority over the person;
- the actual relationship between the parties;
- the parties' respective roles;
- the nature and duration of the relationship;
- the age of the parties involved;
- whether there is an aggressor; or
- whether there is a significant disparity in age, size, strength, or mental capacity.

Once a Coach-Athlete Relationship is established, a Power Imbalance is presumed to exist throughout the Coach-Athlete Relationship (regardless of age) and is presumed to continue for Minor Athletes after the Coach-Athlete Relationship terminates until the Athlete reaches 18 years of age. A Power Imbalance may exist, but is not presumed, where an Intimate Relationship existed before the Coach-Athlete Relationship (e.g., a relationship between two spouses or life partners that preceded the Coach-Athlete Relationship).

Nothing contained in this policy is intended to supersede, replace, or otherwise invalidate the IPF Constitution and By-Laws or the applicable Luxembourg Laws.

All forms of Misconduct are intolerable and in direct conflict with the Olympic Ideals.

Types of Misconduct in detail

1. Emotional Misconduct

- I. A pattern of deliberate, non-contact behaviour that has the potential to cause emotional or psychological harm to an Athlete or Participant, regardless of age.

Non-contact behaviours include:

- a. verbal acts;
- b. physical acts in the presence of an Athlete or Participant; and
- c. acts that deny attention or support.

- II. Any act or conduct described as emotional abuse or misconduct under Luxembourg Law.

Emotional misconduct does not include professionally accepted coaching methods of skill enhancement, physical conditioning, team building, discipline or improving athletic performance.

Examples

Emotional misconduct prohibited by this policy includes, without limitation:

- I. **Verbal Acts:** A pattern of verbal behaviours that:
 - a. repeatedly attack an Athlete or a Participant personally (e.g., calling them worthless based on their performance, fat or disgusting); or
 - b. repeatedly and excessively yelling at a particular Participant or Participants in a manner that serves no productive motivational purpose.

- II. **Physical or Violent Acts:** A pattern of physically aggressive behaviours, such as:
 - a. throwing sport equipment, water bottles or chairs at, or in the presence of, Participants; or
 - b. punching walls, windows or other objects.

- III. **Acts that Deny Attention and Support:** A pattern of:
 - a. ignoring an Athlete for extended periods of time; or
 - b. routinely or arbitrarily excluding Participants from practice.

Comment:

Bullying, harassment, and hazing, defined below, often involve some form of emotional abuse.

2. Physical Misconduct

- I. Contact or non-contact conduct that results in, or reasonably threaten to, cause physical harm to an Athlete or Participants, regardless of age; or

- II. Any act or conduct described as physical abuse or misconduct under Luxembourg Law.

Examples

Physical misconduct prohibited by this policy includes, without limitation:

- I. **Contact offences.** Behaviours that include:

- a. punching, beating, biting, striking, choking or slapping an Athlete or a Participant; or
- b. intentionally hitting an Athlete or a Participant with objects or sporting equipment;

III. **Non-contact offences.** Behaviours that include:

- a. isolating an Athlete or a Participant in a confined space (e.g., locking an Athlete or a Participant in a small space);
- b. forcing an Athlete or a Participant to assume a painful stance or position for no athletic purpose (e.g. requiring an Athlete or a Participant to kneel on a harmful surface);
- c. withholding, recommending against or denying adequate hydration, nutrition, medical attention or sleep.
- d. providing alcohol to an Athlete or a Participant under the legal age;
- e. encouraging or permitting an Athlete to return to competition or training prematurely following a serious injury (e.g., a concussion) and without the clearance of a medical professional;
- f. prescribing dieting or other weight-control methods (e.g., weigh-ins, caliper tests) without regard for the nutritional well-being and health of athlete.

Comment:

Bullying, harassment and hazing, defined below, often involve some form of physical abuse.

3. Sexual Misconduct

IPF Participants should have a basic understanding of sexual abuse, as well as “grooming” – the most common strategy used by offenders to seduce their victims. Using a combination of attention, affection and gifts, offenders win the victim’s trust, manipulate the victim into sexual activity, and keep the victim from disclosing abuse.

- I. Any touching or non-touching sexual interaction that is:
 - a. non-consensual or forced;
 - b. coerced or manipulated; or
 - c. perpetrated in an aggressive, harassing, exploitative or threatening manner.
- II. Any sexual interaction between an Athlete or a Participant and an Accused individual with evaluative, direct, or indirect authority. Such relationships involve a Power Imbalance; or

- III. Any act or conduct described as sexual abuse or misconduct under Luxembourg Law, including in relation to Minors.

Examples

Sexual misconduct prohibited under this policy includes, without limitation:

- I. **Touching offences:** Behaviours that include:
 - a. unwanted fondling an Athlete's or a Participant's body part;
 - b. exchange of reward in sport (e.g., team placement, scores, feedback) for sexual favours;
 - c. genital contact; or
 - d. sexual relations or intimacies between persons in a position of trust, authority and/or evaluative and supervisory control over the Athletes.

- II. **Non-touching offences:** Behaviours that include:
 - a. a Coach discussing his or her sex life with an Athlete;
 - b. a Coach asking an Athlete about his or her sex life;
 - c. Coach requesting or sending a nude or partial-dress photo to Athlete;
 - d. exposing Athletes or Participants to pornographic material;
 - e. sending Athletes or Participants sexually explicit or suggestive electronic or written messages or photos (e.g. "sexting");
 - f. deliberately exposing an Athlete or a Participant to sexual acts;
 - g. deliberately exposing an Athlete or a Participant to nudity (except in situations where locker rooms and changing areas are shared);
 - h. sexual harassment; specifically, the sexual solicitation, physical advances, or verbal or nonverbal conduct that is sexual in nature, and is unwelcome, offensive or creates a hostile environment, and the Accused individual knows or is told this; or
 - i. is sufficiently severe or intense to be harassing to a reasonable person in the context.

In case of the weigh-in procedure the IPF Technical and Competition Rules (**TCR**) will be observed in accordance with this stipulation of this policy.

A Minor Athlete cannot give consent and therefore any sexual contact or misconduct with a Minor is deemed to be sexual abuse. This includes sexual contact with a Minor Athlete or Participant that is accomplished by deception, manipulation, force or threat of force, regardless of the age of the participants, and all sexual interactions between an adult and a Minor Athlete or Participant, regardless of whether there is deception or the Minor Athlete or Participant understands the sexual nature of the activity.

Note concerning peer-to-peer child sexual abuse: sexual contact between Minors also can be abusive. Whether or not a sexual interaction between Minors constitutes sexual abuse turns on the existence of an aggressor, the age difference between the children, and/or whether there is a Power Imbalance, and/or the intellectual capabilities of the children.

4. Bullying

- I. An intentional, persistent and repeated pattern of committing, or willfully tolerating by another person, physical and non-physical behaviors that are intended, or have the reasonable potential, to cause fear, humiliation or physical harm in an attempt to socially exclude, diminish or isolate the targeted Athlete(s) or Participant(s), as a condition of membership
- II. Any act or conduct described as bullying under Luxembourg Law.

Examples

Bullying prohibited by this policy includes, without limitation:

- I. **Physical behaviours.** Behaviours that include:
 - a. hitting, pushing, punching, beating, biting, striking, kicking, choking, or slapping an Athlete or a Participant.
 - b. throwing at, or hitting an Athlete or a Participant with, objects such as sporting equipment.
- II. **Verbal and emotional behaviours.** Behaviours that include:
 - a. teasing, ridiculing, intimidating;
 - b. spreading rumors or making false statements; or
 - c. using electronic communications, social media, or other technology to harass, frighten, intimidate or humiliate (“cyber bullying”).

5. Harassment

- I. A repeated pattern of physical and/or non-physical behaviors that:
 - a. are intended to cause fear, humiliation or annoyance,
 - b. offend or degrade,
 - c. create a hostile environment or

- d. reflect discriminatory bias in an attempt to establish dominance, superiority or power over an individual athlete or group based on gender, race, ethnicity, culture, religion, sexual orientation, gender expression or mental or physical disability; or

II. Any act or conduct described as harassment under Luxembourg Law.

Examples

Harassment prohibited by this policy includes, without limitation:

I. **Physical offences.** Behaviours that include:

- a. hitting, pushing, punching, beating, biting, striking, kicking, choking or slapping an Athlete or Participant; or
- b. throwing at or hitting an Athlete or a Participant with objects including sporting equipment.

II. **Non-physical offences.** Behaviours that include:

- a. making negative or disparaging comments about an Athlete's or a Participant's sexual orientation, gender expression, disability, religion, skin color, or ethnic traits;
- b. Repeatedly undermining an Athlete or a Participant personally or professionally based on performance or qualifications;
- c. displaying offensive materials, gestures, or symbols; or
- d. disadvantaging an Athlete based on his or her sexual orientation.

6. Hazing

I. Coercing, requiring, forcing or willfully tolerating any humiliating, unwelcome or dangerous activity that serves as a condition for

- a. joining a group; or
- b. being socially accepted by a group's members; or

II. Any act or conduct described as hazing under Luxembourg Law.

Examples

Hazing prohibited by this policy includes, without limitation:

- I. requiring, forcing, or otherwise requiring the consumption of alcohol or illegal drugs (except performance enhancing drugs which would be set out in the IPF Anti-Doping policy considered as alleged anti-doping rule violation.);
- II. tying, taping or otherwise physically restraining an Athlete or a Participant;
- III. sexual simulations or sexual acts of any nature;
- IV. sleep deprivation, otherwise unnecessary schedule disruption or the withholding of water and/or food;
- V. requiring social actions (e.g. grossly inappropriate or provocative clothing) or public displays (e.g. public nudity) that are illegal or meant to draw ridicule;
- VI. beating, paddling or other forms of physical assault; or
- VII. excessive training requirements focused on individuals in a team.

Willfully Tolerating Misconduct

It is a violation of this policy if any person is aware of any Misconduct, but takes no action to intervene on behalf of the Athlete(s), Participant(s).

No Retaliation

Regardless of outcome, the IPF will support the complainant(s) and his or her right to express concerns in good faith. The IPF will not encourage, allow or tolerate attempts from any person to retaliate, punish, allow or in any way harm any person(s) who reports a concern in good faith. Such actions against a complainant will be considered a violation of this policy and grounds for disciplinary action. Any allegations of retaliation should be reported using the same process as for reporting an initial concern.

Bad-Faith Allegations

A report of abuse, misconduct or policy violations that is malicious, frivolous, or made in bad faith is prohibited. Such reports will be considered a violation of this policy and grounds for disciplinary action. Depending on the nature of the allegation, a person making a malicious, frivolous, or bad-faith report may also be subject to civil or criminal proceedings.

Reporting Procedure

The IPF also encourages Athlete's parents, Athletes and all Participants to communicate violations of the IPF Safeguard and Protection policy and/or allegations and suspicions of child physical and sexual abuse.

Anyone affected by or who has observed an alleged incident of harassment or abuse during the period of an IPF Event or any other IPF activity may either file a Statement of Complaint against the Accused Individual to the IPF.

Reports should be made to: Safeguard@Powerlifting.sport

Reporting

The report will include the name, place, time, address, contact information, country or NF which the reported person is affiliated to, information pertaining to the basis for the report with the description of the involved parties, including any facts and evidence (e.g. video recording, photos, other documentary or electronic evidence, and names of other persons who witnessed the alleged incident).

Any report made through any channel must be referred to the Safeguard Officer within 24hrs without exception.

Safeguard Officer will be appointed by the IPF Executive Board. The Safeguard Officer will ensure reports are documented to the extent possible.

Jurisdiction and Validity of Allegations

Based on the facts and evidence in the report, the Safeguard Officer will, first determine whether the case falls under the jurisdiction of the IPF, and then determine whether any follow-up action is warranted and recommend to the reporting person whether the matter should be submitted to the IPF Court of Justice and/or notified to local authorities, as appropriate and required by local law.

In case the reporting person decides not to submit the matter to the IPF Court of Justice and/or to notify it to local authorities against the recommendation of the Safeguard Officer, the Safeguard Officer will forward the report together with any comments to the IPF Executive Board which may then decide whether to file a Statement of Complaint to the IPF Court of Justice and/or notify the local authorities in its own name. However, if the reporting person is the alleged victim of the alleged incident, the Safeguard Officer will forward the report only with the explicit oral or written consent of the reporting person.

Preliminary Suspension/Interim Measures

If the reported complaint indicates that an individual's continued participation poses an acute risk of ongoing physical or emotional harm, the IPF Court of Justice may preliminarily suspend or impose other interim measures against the Accused Individual

pending final resolution of the complaint to eliminate such risk or harm. In such instances, the IPF Court of Justice will provide the Accused Individual with 14 days' notice and offer her/him an opportunity to contest the preliminary suspension or other interim measure.

For the purposes of this policy, a preliminary suspension means that the Accused Individual may not participate in any capacity or in any role in the business, events, or activities of the IPF.

Any preliminary suspension or interim measure may be appealed to the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) in Lausanne, Switzerland at the written request of the Accused individual within 14 days' of the suspension or imposition of the interim measure.

Investigation

As appropriate, and at its discretion, the IPF Court of Justice may institute a formal investigation and hearing procedure to address serious allegations of misconduct (e.g., physical and sexual misconduct).

If an investigation is conducted, the complainant, victim and Accused Individual will have the right to:

- receive written notice of the report or complaint, including a statement of allegations;
- present relevant information to the investigator(s); and,
- legal counsel, at their own expense.

Hearing

In every case where a hearing is conducted pursuant to this policy, it will comply with the IPF Constitution and By-laws, provided that all of the following conditions are satisfied:

- the Accused Individual is informed of the allegations and evidence brought against them;
- the Accused Individual is given a reasonable opportunity to respond to the allegations brought forward;
- the Accused Individual may be represented by legal counsel at their expense;
- the IPF Court of Justice member(s) who make the determination can render an unbiased decision; and,
- there is a right to appeal the IPF Court of Justice's decision.

Notice

The Accused Individual will be notified of a specific date and time to ensure that they are available for the hearing. Unless the IPF Court of Justice requires the Accused Individual to attend the hearing in person, the Accused Individual may appear by telephone conference call. In case the hearing is held in person, the Accused Individual may participate at their own cost. The Accused Individual has the right to be represented by legal counsel at the hearing, provided that the counsel's participation may be subject to the reasonable hearing rules related to the conduct of the hearing.

In case any disciplinary procedure (notification, imposing preliminary sanctions) will start against the Accused Individual the related NF will be informed of the allegations immediately.

In case a minor Athlete or Participant is involved the responsible Member Federation is obliged to provide the IPF with the name and contacts of the Parents or Legal Guardian.

Timing

The IPF Court of Justice will have the authority to set timelines and other rules regarding the proceeding and the conduct of the hearing, as it deems necessary.

On request of the Accused Individual, and provided that it is necessary to expedite the proceeding to resolve a matter relating to a scheduled training or competition, the IPF Court of Justice may render an expedited determination.

Evidence

At the hearing, the Accused Individual will be allowed to present any reasonable evidence or argument that they wish the IPF Court of Justice to consider. IPF Court of Justice may require or permit documentary evidence, such as the written report of any investigator or other fact-finder before the hearing, and that the names of any witnesses be shared before the hearing. The IPF Court of Justice may also consider another organization's determination as evidence to be considered.

If the complainant/alleged victim(s) is a minor, the investigator's or other fact-finder's report may substitute for the minor witness's direct testimony, provided that the accused had an opportunity to present and respond to relevant information collected during the investigation and before the report was transmitted to the IPF Court of Justice.

The IPF Court of Justice may proceed in the Accused individual's absence if it cannot locate the Accused individual or if the Accused individual declines to attend the hearing.

Findings and Sanctions:

The IPF Court of Justice has the discretion to impose sanctions on the Accused Individual in accordance with the Article 5 of the IPF By-laws, if it finds based on a preponderance of the evidence that Misconduct has occurred.

The IPF Court of Justice will communicate its finding to the Accused Individual. The IPF Court of Justice may impose sanctions on the Accused Individual in its findings.

The decision regarding the appropriate sanction will be up to the IPF Court of Justice deciding each complaint. In imposing a sanction, the IPF Court of Justice will consider:

- whether the Accused Individual poses an ongoing concern for the safety of the IPF participants;
- the seriousness of the offence or act;
- the ages of the Accused Individual and alleged victim when the offence or act occurred;
- any information produced by the Accused Individual, or produced on behalf of the Accused Individual, in regard to the Accused Individual's rehabilitation and good conduct
- the effect on the IPF's reputation; and
- any other information, which in the determination of the Commission, bears on the appropriate sanction.

The respective NF, who the Accused Individual is affiliated with will be informed of the findings/sanctions imposed on the Accused Individual.

Cases will be closed by the IPF Disciplinary and Court of Justice in a timely manner.

Rehabilitative care

It is the IPF's obligation to ensure that all victims (Athletes, Participants) of Misconduct set out in this policy will receive guidance for appropriate treatment for their recovery and social reintegration.

Loss of Benefits:

An Accused Individual who has committed a violation and who receives benefits from the IPF may, at the discretion of the IPF, lose those benefits. Benefits that may be lost or restricted may include, but are not limited to, the IPF's Development Program, Per Diems at IPF Events or any remuneration received from the IPF.

In the event that a preliminary suspension or other interim measure is imposed on an Accused Individual, the IPF may suspend any payment that is to be paid to the Accused individual. If the Accused Individual is found not to have committed any violation, the suspended payment will then be paid to the individual. If a payment is made to an Accused Individual after the Accused Individual has been accused of a violation, but prior to a final determination, and the Accused Individual is found to have committed a violation, the Accused Individual may be obligated to repay the payment.

Appeal

If the Accused Individual disagrees with the finding or sanction of the IPF Court of Justice and wishes to appeal, they may file an appeal to the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) within 14 days of the IPF Court of Justice finding. A decision rendered by the IPF Court of Justice will be final and binding on all parties.

Confidentiality

Confidential information will be disclosed to appropriate persons or authorities on a need to know basis, only, unless failure to disclose said information may result in harm to Athletes, Participants or any other persons.

Publications

In publishing any sanction or decision of the IPF Court of Justice, the IPF will only publish victim related information with the expressed permission of the victim, received in writing.