

# Steel City Inclusive Softball Association

## Code of Conduct



Updated: February 28, 2024

# Steel City Inclusive Softball Association Code of Conduct

*Please note: This document must be acknowledged and signed by all players in order to be eligible to play*

## INTRODUCTION

Steel City Inclusive Softball Association is a proud 2SLGBTQIA+ organization offering softball programming in the Hamilton area since 2020. Our mission is to foster, promote and teach amateur softball to all those with a desire to play, without regard to citizenship, race, place of origin, ethnic origin, colour, ancestry, disability, age, creed, sex/pregnancy, family status, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression. We strive to develop community spirit and encourage sportspersonship and fellowship among all who participate to benefit their physical, mental and social well-being. We seek to foster friendly and mutually beneficial relationships among members of the Association.

SCISA is guided by the values of **inclusion, integrity, trust, fair play, respect for others** and **sportspersonship**. SCISA members are expected to conduct themselves at all times in a manner consistent with the values of SCISA, fulfill certain responsibilities and obligations, including but not limited to, complying with the Code of Conduct, policies, rules and regulations of SCISA.

## PURPOSE

The purpose of this Code is to ensure a safe and inclusive environment within SCISA by making individuals aware that there is an expectation, at all times, of behaviour consistent with SCISA's core values. SCISA is committed to providing an environment in which individuals are treated fairly, equitably, and respectfully, and to provide an environment that is inclusive, welcoming, and free from discrimination and harassment.

This Code also outlines the steps to be taken with respect to reporting, investigating, and resolving discrimination and harassment complaints by the SCISA membership and defines the responsibilities of the parties throughout the process.

## SCOPE

This code applies to all SCISA participants, which includes all members, coaches and developers, umpires, sponsor representatives and club supporters, and members of the general public attending as spectators.

This Code of Conduct is expected to be followed:

- At the fields of play during game days, whether as a participant or spectator.

- While participating in any SCISA event.
- When posting on social media sites (such as Facebook and Instagram pages) controlled and managed by SCISA and International Pride Softball (IPS, formerly NAGAAA), or other organizations/leagues associated with IPS .
- Whenever a member is participating in an IPS event.
- Whenever a member is participating with another league/organization associated with IPS, including tournaments.

## POLICY

SCISA shall:

1. Create and maintain an environment for SCISA participants that is free from harassment of any kind, including sexual harassment, or harassment based on prohibited grounds of the Ontario *Human Rights Code*.
2. Establish a positive environment in which all individuals are treated with respect and dignity, and where they feel they are safe and supported by a culture of inclusion, integrity, trust, fair play, respect for others, and sportspersonship.
3. Receive all reports of discrimination and/or harassment in a manner that recognizes their seriousness and protects the reporter from retaliation
4. Respond to all reports of discrimination and harassment through appropriate conflict management in a timely manner, and with a fair and transparent process.

**All SCISA Participants** are expected to:

1. **Show positive acts of sportspersonship**, encourage and maintain the highest standards of courtesy and fairness, and discourage all instances of foul or illegal play, or acts of violence, both during and after competitions and training.
2. **Demonstrate respect**, which includes protecting the rights, dignity and worth of every person regardless of their gender, ability/disability, sexual orientation, age, race, pronouns, national or ethnic origin, body type, colour, or religion.
3. **Support SCISA in promoting a positive environment**, with a culture of equity, diversity, and inclusion, focused on inclusion, integrity, trust, fair play, respect for others and sportspersonship.
4. **Refrain** from behaviour that is discrimination and/or harassment, including sexual harassment, where sexual harassment is defined to include such activities as, unwelcome sexual comments and advances, requests for sexual favours, or any unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature.

In addition to the above:

**Players** are expected to:

- Always respect the umpire's decision.
- Honour both the spirit and the letter of competition rules and live up to the highest ideals of ethics and sportspersonship.
- Care for and respect the facilities and equipment made available to you during training and competition; follow a "Cleaner than we left it" policy on the field, turn in any found items or equipment and dispose of all waste.
- Safeguard your health and avoid injury; playing while drunk and/or high is prohibited. Drinking, smoking cannabis and use of mind-altering substances on the field or in the dugout is prohibited.
- Treat others with respect; officials, coaches, scorekeepers and umpires are volunteers who give up their time to provide their services.

**Coaches** are expected to:

- Always respect the umpire's decision.
- Maintain professional conduct; specifically demonstrate conduct that shows leadership, respect for the sport and those that are involved with the sport – the players, officials, the fans, the parents, the umpires and the media.
- Actively discourage foul play and/or unsporting behaviour to the best of your ability.
- Respond accordingly to conflict and interpersonal issues with players on your team if they arise
- Consider the health, safety and welfare of players; show concern toward all sick and injured players.
- Maintain appropriate, professional relationships with players when coaching and when attending SCISA events.
- Seek to maximize the participation and enjoyment of all players regardless of ability.
- Know the game well and keep learning new coaching techniques.

**Umpires** are expected to:

- Be impartial. Also, be consistent, objective and courteous.
- Keep players safe and watch out for dangerous situations.
- Stay calm and polite, with coaches, team officials, and spectators, even if others are not
- Condemn all and every instance of unsporting behaviour, foul or unfair competition.

- Explain any disputed calls to coaches or players respectfully if asked

## NON-COMPLIANCE

The Steel City Inclusive Softball Association Code of Conduct identifies the standard of behaviour which is expected of all members of SCISA. Members who fail to meet this standard and/or breach code of conduct may be subject to disciplinary sanctions, including suspension or expulsion from the league.

Violations/Complaints can be reported by any of the following:

- Players can report violations to any coach, board member, online form, or may send an email to the Director of Player Experience
- Coaches should address violations of the Code of Conduct with team members as they occur. Any pattern of unsporting conduct should be reported to the division commissioner or another league official.
- Umpires have authority to determine code of conduct violations while the player is on the field, in the dugout, or in the stands. Umpires have authority to eject players, coaches, and spectators for violating the code of conduct. Umpires must report all ejections to the Director of Player Experience and Commissioner

An individual filing a complaint in bad faith may also be subject to disciplinary sanctions.

## DEFINITIONS

**Complaint Manager:** The Complaint Manager is a person responsible for handling complaints according to established policies and procedures. The Complaint Manager will be assigned to respond to complaint on a case-by-case basis. Their role involves receiving complaints, investigating them impartially, gathering relevant information, meeting with involved parties, making fair judgments, and proposing resolutions to address the issues raised in the complaints. They ensure that complaints are handled efficiently, confidentially, and in compliance with policy.

**Harassment:** defined as improper conduct by an individual during a SCISA event and that the individual knew or should have known would cause offence or harm. It includes things like rude actions, comments, or displays that make someone feel small or embarrassed, as well as any threats or attempts to scare someone.

The following are some examples of harassment:

- refusing to stop the behaviour once made aware that it is unwelcome
- abusive behaviour, sexist, racist or homophobic comments, demeaning jokes
- lewd gestures or remarks/commentary made either verbally, electronically or through drawing
- taunting about a person's clothes, customs, accent sending unwelcome images and/or pictures
- interfering with, threatening, or intimidating an individual for exercising their rights under this policy.

**Sexual Harassment:** Sexual Harassment is improper conduct against someone because of their sex, sexual orientation, or how they express their gender. This could be comments or actions that the person knows or should know are not wanted. It can also be asking for something sexual when the person asking has power and knows or should know the person does not want it. This can happen through words, writing, online, or even without speaking. The following are some examples of sexual harassment:

- unwelcome sexual attention, contact or comments; sexual innuendoes or gestures; making unnecessary physical contact including touching
- displaying or distributing pornographic or hate-based pictures or e-mail unwanted compliments or flirtatious comments
- asking for sex in exchange for a benefit or a favour
- repeatedly asking for dates and not taking no for an answer
- saying or doing something because you think a person does not conform to sex-role stereotypes
- calling people sex-specific derogatory names

**SCISA Participants:** All categories of membership defined in SCISA bylaws, as well as all individuals employed by, or engaged in activities with SCISA including, but not limited to, players, coaches, umpires, volunteers, administrators and Directors of SCISA.

## COMPLAINT RESOLUTION PROCEDURE

### Restorative Approach

This procedure addresses how complaints will be managed across SCISA. SCISA supports the principles of Restorative Justice, and is committed to managing harms, conflict and complaints through the use of facilitation, conciliation and mediation as effective ways to resolve disputes.

Restorative response is an approach that aims to “address harms, meet needs, restore trust and promote repair for all involved”.

A restorative approach:

- Invites the person who was harmed to share their thoughts, feelings, and experiences

- Gives the person who caused harm an opportunity to take responsibility for their actions
- Allow parties to come to a mutual understanding where both can heal

Restorative approaches work well in situations where nobody meant to hurt anyone and when the people involved will have to see each other again in the future.

Where possible, SCISA members will attempt to resolve issues with a restorative approach. All such issues will be treated in a professional, respectful manner in accordance with SCISA values. SCISA will support a restorative approach by supporting the process with a suitable Board Member/volunteer/Community facilitator

Should the incident not be suitable for a restorative approach, or if the participants are unwilling/unable to manage the issue through a restorative approach, SCISA will engage the formal complaint process.

## **Formal Complaint Process**

### Step 1: Recognize

- If an individual (complainant) feels that they are experiencing discrimination, harassment or any inappropriate behaviour, they should make an effort to advise the person(s) creating the issue (respondent) that the behaviour is unwelcome and request that they stop if they feel safe doing so
- If an individual observes or becomes aware of behaviour that may be considered discrimination, harassment or other inappropriate behaviour, the individual should make an effort to advise the person who is the source of the behaviour that it is unwelcome and request that they stop, if they feel safe doing so.
- All parties – players, coaches, volunteers and spectators – have the right to communicate issues without concern of reprisal.

### Step 2: Reporting

- Violation/Complaints can be reported by players, coaches, umpires and any SCISA participant. Violation/Complaints are to be reported to the Director of Player Experience, Commissioner or Vice Commissioner
- Upon receipt of any violation/complaint, the recipient shall:
  - Thank the individual (Complainant) for bringing the issue forward and acknowledge the impact of the experience on the Complainant
  - Confirm that all such reports are taken seriously by SCISA and will be addressed in accordance with this policy
  - Proceed to action the report by contacting the Director of Player Experience and/or the Board, as appropriate
- The Director of Player Experience/Board shall determine who will manage the resolution process.

- Any player or participant subject to a complaint (Respondent) will be first notified within 48 hours of reporting.

### Step 3: Respond

- A notified player or participant will have at least 48 hours to give a written response. The Director of Player Experience, in consultation from the Commissioner, might give more time if needed.
- Depending on violation/complaint, the Complaint Manager (CM) will meet with the person who complained, the person being complained about, and any witnesses, if needed.
- The CM will look at all the information fairly to decide if the policy was breached, using the balance of probabilities standard. Based on that determination, the CM will make a recommendation for resolving the matter (resolution is required whether or not a breach of policy has occurred).
- The CM's recommendation will be shared with the Director of Player Experience and/or the Commissioner. Depending on the nature of the matter, members of the Board may also be briefed. This group will review the findings, the CM's recommendation and make a decision based on the findings of fact.

### Step 4: Resolve

Follow-up on the behaviour can take a number of routes – these include restorative approaches or disciplinary action

#### Restorative Approaches

- Where possible, SCISA members will attempt to resolve issues with a restorative approach. All such issues will be treated in a professional, respectful manner in accordance with SCISA values. SCISA will support a restorative approach by supporting the process with a suitable Board Member/volunteer/Community facilitator

#### Disciplinary Action

The Board of Directors and the Commissioner will adhere to the following procedures with respect to disciplinary action:

- Procedures for Sanctions by the Commissioner: The Commissioner is authorized to suspend any player or participant for a period of up to two weeks for any



action deemed to be a violation of the Code of Conduct. The Commissioner may delegate authority under this procedure to any member of the Board of Directors designated as “board member-in-charge” at the field of play.

- Sanctions under this procedure are not subject to appeal for review by the Board of Directors.
- The Board will consider a documented response from the notified player or participant in deliberation of any sanction for possible violation of the Code of Conduct. At the discretion of the Commissioner, deliberations may be in-person, by telephone, or by e-mail.
- The Board may vote to impose any sanction, up to and including permanent expulsion, by a majority vote of all voting members. Any sanction imposed under this procedure is final and not subject to appeal.
- The Board will maintain confidential records of sanctions over time. These records will be accessible to the Director of Player Experience, Commissioner and Vice-Commissioner. Players who are not in "good standing" will not be permitted to play and may be removed indefinitely.
- The Board may consider reinstating a player who has been expelled. Such reinstatements will be managed on a case-by-case basis.

## REVISION HISTORY

<b>Version</b>	<b>Date Approved by Board</b>	<b>Commissioner Initials</b>
Original Version	May 11, 2023	JL
Revision #1	February 24, 2024	JL