IDBF Safeguarding Policy

Safeguarding Participants from Harassment and Abuse in Dragon Boating

Edition 2 - 18.04.2026

The International Dragon Boat Federation (IDBF) believes that it is a fundamental right of all individuals involved with IDBF, whether they are an athlete, staff, or a volunteer, to be able to participate in a non-violent, safe and respectful environment.

In that spirit, IDBF acknowledges its duty of care in this regard and is committed to creating and supporting an environment and a culture free from harassment and abuse. The welfare of all individuals involved with IDBF is paramount. Behavior and actions that constitute harassment and abuse will not be tolerated.

This policy also sets out the IDBF's approach to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and vulnerable adults.

All forms of harassment and abuse constitute a violation of the IDBF Code of Ethics and the International Olympic Committee (IOC) Code of Ethics.

Harassment and abuse In IDBF Championships is also a violation of the Disciplinary Code in the IDBF Rules of Racing (Annex to Racing Rule 4 – Page 27-29) and IDBF Ethics Code Edition 5 – Art. 3.3.1, 3.3.3, 4.1.1 and 4.1.3.

IDBF Member Federations, volunteers and staff are bound by the principles of this Policy and are deemed to have agreed to comply with this Policy.

The IDBF Policy on Safeguarding Participants from Harassment and Abuse in Dragon Boating aims to:

a) Provide a framework for promoting the prevention of harassment and abuse
b) Raise awareness of, and provide clarity on, what constitutes harassment and abuse
c) Outline the process of reporting incidents and case management of harassment and abuse

This policy will therefore promote a safe environment for all involved in the sport of dragon boating.

1 To whom it applies

This Policy applies to all individuals involved with IDBF, namely "any party that deals with IDBF, is a member of IDBF or shares in its activities", including:

1.1 Athletes
1.2 Coaches, medical personnel and athlete entourage
1.3 Race officials and volunteers
1.4 IDBF Staff & Consultants
1.5 IDBF Council & Commission members
1.6 All people participating in IDBF activities including representatives of Member Federations, recognized Continental Dragon Boat Confederations, recognized Member Groupings, Organizing

Committees for IDBF events, subcontractors and volunteers.

The above individuals shall be referred to as 'Participants'. See also IDBF Ethics Code Edition 5 – Art. 1

2. Definitions

IDBF has adopted the definitions of harassment and abuse as set out in the IOC Consensus Statement 2016 IOC Safeguarding Guidelines for IFs and NOCs.

"Harassment and abuse can be expressed in five forms which may occur in combination or in isolation. These include i) emotional and psychological abuse, ii) physical abuse, iii) sexual harassment, iv) sexual abuse, and v) neglect.

These forms of abuse are defined here as:

Psychological abuse: any unwelcome act including confinement, isolation, verbal assault, humiliation, intimidation, infantilization, or any other treatment which may diminish the sense of identity, dignity, and self-worth.

Physical abuse: any deliberate and unwelcome act – such as for example punching, beating, kicking, biting and burning – that causes physical trauma or injury. Such acts can also consist of forced or inappropriate physical activity (e.g., age- or physique-inappropriate training loads; when injured or in pain), forced alcohol consumption, or force doping practices.

Sexual harassment: any unwanted and unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature, whether verbal, non- verbal or physical. Sexual harassment can take the form of sexual abuse.

Sexual abuse: any conduct of a sexual nature, whether non-contact, contact or penetrative, where consent is coerced/manipulated or is not or cannot be given.

Neglect: within the meaning of this document means the failure of a coach or another person with a duty of care towards the athlete to provide a minimum level of care to the athlete, which is causing harm, allowing harm to be caused, or creating an imminent danger of harm.

Harassment and abuse can be based on any grounds including race, religion, color, ethnic origin, physical attributes, gender, sexual orientation, age, disability, socio-economic status and athletic ability. It can include a one-off incident or a series of incidents. It may be in person or online (or by other means). Harassment may be deliberate, unsolicited and coercive.

Harassment and abuse often result from an abuse of authority, meaning the improper use of a position of influence, power or authority by an individual against another person.

Safeguarding is the action that is taken to promote the welfare of children and vulnerable adults to protect them from harm. **Safeguarding means**: protecting children and vulnerable adults from abuse, harassment and maltreatment, preventing harm to their health or development. This policy strives to ensure that in all activities of the IDBF, children and vulnerable adults can participate in dragon boating in a safe environment

3. Policy Statement

3.1 IDBF is responsible for:

a) Implementing this Policy
b) Raising awareness of this Policy and the procedure for reporting an incident of harassment and abuse, across all Participants of IDBF activities
c) Ensuring that reports of harassment and abuse that are brought to its attention are managed in a timely manner, fairly and responsibly
d) Providing appropriate support to concerned Participants of an alleged incident of harassment or abuse
e) Imposing appropriate disciplinary or corrective measures when there has been a violation of this Policy
f) Ensuring that there is a safeguarding plan and reporting procedure in place at all IDBF events
g) Providing and raising awareness of suitable educational resources and training opportunities for Participants
h) Updating the Policy and related procedures from time to time

3.2 Member Federations are responsible for:

a) Defining and implementing their own policies and procedures to protect their athletes, staff and volunteers from harassment and abuse, *adapted to their own national legal framework* and consistent with the IDBF Policy. It is recommended to use the IOC Safeguarding Toolkit referenced in section 4 of this Policy when developing local national policies and procedures.
b) Managing reports of alleged incidents of harassment and abuse relating to people that are members of their national federation, through their regional bodies or clubs, including athletes, staff and volunteers.
c) Ensuring all Participants representing their National Federation in an IDBF activity, are aware of and understand the IDBF Policy on Safeguarding Participants from Harassment and Abuse in Dragon Boating.
d) Advising IDBF of any formal disciplinary sanctions relating to harassment and abuse imposed by the member federation, and of any suspensions where the individual may present a risk to IDBF Participants at that time or in the future.

3.3 Participants are responsible for:

a) Acting to safeguard others against harassment and abuse in dragon boating and its related activities and to take immediate action once it has been identified whether or not a complaint has been made
b) Reporting their concerns to the Safeguarding Officer or appropriate Designated Person where they have reason to believe that another Participant has experienced or is experiencing harassment and abuse. Information should be shared on a 'needs to know' basis only. The person making a report should keep a confidential note of the information they have passed on and to whom.
c) Advising IDBF of any formal disciplinary sanctions relating to harassment and abuse that they have received.

4. Educational & Related Resources

The IOC Safeguarding Toolkit (Safeguarding Toolkit) has been created to assist the Olympic Movement to develop and implement athlete-safeguarding policies and procedures.

To complement the toolkit and ensure that athletes, their entourage and other individuals understand the core components of this sensitive topic, a free bit-size IOC Athlete Safeguarding e-learning course has been developed and launched on the IOC Athlete 365 Safeguarding Athletes from Harassment and Abuse

Everyone involved in Administration, Entourage and Race officials are advised to undertake this e-learning course.

5. Procedures

The following procedures apply to Safeguarding children and vulnerable adults from Harassment and Abuse in Dragon Boat activities. The procedures provide guidance on how reports are made of incidents of Harassment or Abuse and managed by the IDBF.

5.1 Reporting Procedures

Anyone who has a concern about a possible incident of Harassment or Abuse that relates to IDBF activities should report it. Individuals are encouraged to submit a report through the correct channels as outlined below.

Directly affected individuals as well as third-party individuals who have witnessed a possible incident of Harassment or Abuse must report the incident.

Any person who reports a possible incident of harassment or abuse in good faith shall not be subject to repercussions because of submitting a report; their identity shall be treated confidentially. These protections shall not apply to a person intentionally making false accusations.

When a report involves a person under the age of 18, the parent/guardian or person in loco parentis must be informed immediately.

At IDBF Championships, the Safeguarding Officer (SGO) shall be the person responsible for managing and coordinating reports received under these Procedures. At all other times reports should be sent to the IDBF General Secretary (IDBF GS).

5.2 When to report

All possible incidents of Harassment or Abuse should be reported as soon as possible. If

the directly affected individual is under 18 years of age, there is a **duty to report**

If the directly affected individual is 18 years or over, their consent should be obtained to pass on information, however in some cases information may still be passed on, for example, if they are at risk of imminent harm or if not acting may harm someone else, or if there is a concern that a criminal act may have taken place.

5.2.1 How to report

i) Using the template form (appendix 1)
ii) By email to IDBF General Secretary - general-secretary@dragonboat.sport
iii) In person to the Safeguarding Officer or a designated Person

5.2.2 What to include in the report (see template form in Appendix 1):

i) For the directly affected individual, include the name, date of birth/age, gender, position or role (e.g., athlete, volunteer), contact details, country of base. Include any other additional information as relevant, e.g., if the person concerned has any disability, impairment or other special needs.

ii) If the report is being submitted by a third party, include the name and contact details of the person raising the concern

iii) A clear, concise and factual description of the alleged incident(s), including date(s)/time(s) and location(s) when the incident(s) took place, the name of any person alleged to have been involved in or causing the incident and their contact details

iv) The person reporting the incident to IDBF should keep a copy of what has been reported in a secure place.

5.2.3 What will happen once the incident has been reported:

i) All reports shall be sent to the SGO or IDBF GS

ii) The SGO/ IDBF GS shall take steps to ensure that the directly affected individual receives appropriate support

iii) When appropriate and in the case of potential criminal offences, the relevant public authorities shall be informed

iv) In some cases, a provisional suspension may be imposed as a neutral act to protect all parties. Such a decision shall be taken at an IDBF Championship by the Championship Jury in consultation with the SGO; at all other times by the IDBF Executive Committee

v) Confirmation of receipt of the report shall be promptly sent to the person submitting the report with information about the next steps

vi) The SGO/ IDBF GS shall record receipt of the report internally and file it securely

vii) The report shall be assessed in accordance with these Procedures to determine the appropriate action.

6. Confidentiality

Any information pertaining to an alleged incident of Harassment and Abuse shall be regarded as confidential and shall be shared on a strictly "needs-to-know" basis. Reports shall be treated confidentially and information (including name, date of birth, address of the person concerned or third party) shall not be disclosed, except for example if prior consent is given by that individual; if disclosure is necessary to protect someone from harm; or if a potential criminal act comes to the attention of IDBF.

However, those receiving a disclosure from a child or regarding an incident in which the victim may be a child should inform the child that they have a duty to share information with appropriate persons to ensure that action is taken where abuse may have occurred.

In cases where the safety and welfare of a child is involved, in any capacity, it is important that the best interests of the child are of primary consideration throughout the case management process.

7. Jurisdiction

The SGO/IDBF GS shall review the report and determine whether the matter relates to a participant within

IDBF's jurisdiction. When the report relates to a person(s) outside the IDBF's jurisdiction the matter will be reported to the relevant organization or authority for further investigation and action under their safeguarding procedures e.g. a member National Federation.

When the allegation relates to person(s) within the IDBF's jurisdiction, a Case Management Panel (CMP) may be convened. The CMP will consist of 3 members of the IDBF Jury at a Championship or 3 members of the IDBF Executive committee at all other times.

The SGO, with the CMP, may recommend one of the following actions:

7.2 If the report is considered to related to a criminal offence, it shall be referred to the Police and relevant authorities

7.3 If the report is within IDBF's jurisdiction, the CMP, with the SGO, shall carry out an assessment (see paragraph 10 below).

For all cases reported to IDBF, regardless of jurisdiction, the IDBF shall keep a record of the status of the reports to ensure appropriate follow-up and shall keep the directly affected individual(s) and/or third party informed on next steps.

8. Assessment

For reports that are within IDBF's jurisdiction, the CMP, with the SGO, shall make an initial assessment of the incident. This assessment is to determine the nature of the concern and whether a violation of the Policy may have occurred. During this assessment stage the agreed records of all discussions and meetings must be recorded.

The CMP may take the following actions:

9.1 Refer the report to the Police and relevant authorities, if the assessment indicates an alleged incident of Harassment or Abuse and is deemed to be related to a criminal offence.

9.2 Recommend to the Championship Jury or Executive Committee the imposition of a provisional suspension, if there is a risk of imminent or further harm or as a neutral act to protect both parties.

9.3 Appoint an investigator to carry out an investigation and produce a detailed report.

9.4 Close the report, if an incident of Harassment or Abuse is not indicated. Where there are outstanding issues that may relate to transgressions of IDBF rules, e.g., other ethic related issues, the case may be passed to the appropriate body.

Consideration shall be given as to the appropriate time to inform the accused person(s) and to advise them of the procedures that are being followed. IDBF (including the CMP and the SGO) shall provide fair procedures and shall respect the fundamental rights of the accused person(s).

9. Investigation

The CMP shall be responsible for carrying out an investigation of the reported incident and the preparation of a detailed report of the findings of the investigation. The CMP may appoint an investigator, who may be independent of IDBF, to perform this task, in accordance with these Procedures and to an agreed timeline.

The investigation may involve requesting information from relevant individuals and organizations and may

require oral or written statements from the relevant parties.

The investigation must be fair to all parties involved and respect their rights. The investigation must recognize:

9.1 that a person who may have a conflict of interest shall not be a member of decision- making body.

9.2 the right of the person(s) accused of knowing the details of the accusation to examine all pertinent documents: (sensitive personal information may be redacted)

9.3 the right to know the penalties which might be imposed.

9.4 the right to be heard, to present a defense, to produce evidence and to be assisted by a friend or another representative. The detailed report of the findings shall include all necessary evidence for consideration by the CMP. The CMP, based on the report, may determine that:

9.5 There has been a possible violation of this Policy which may include violations of the IDBF Code of Ethics and will recommend to the Championship Jury or Executive Committee to take appropriate actions based on the detailed report of the investigation, or

9.6 Further investigations are required, or

9.7 instructions, advice or guidance are provided to the relevant parties; and/or

9.8 No further action is required; the case is closed

Where a report has been submitted to the Police or relevant authorities on the grounds of a suspected criminal offence, IDBF shall work with the Police and/or that authority and take advice on how to proceed. The CMP may delay investigations until the matter has been referred to by the Police or other authorities.

10. Timeframes

It is essential that any investigation to do with safeguarding must be commenced with urgency and all actions dealt with expeditiously.

11. Sanctions

Where it is determined that a violation of this Policy has occurred, the CMP Committee may impose penalties, in accordance with IDBF Ethics Code Edition 5 Art. 14.4.

The penalty imposed shall consider the risk of repeated offence/harm; the offender's assistance, remorse and cooperation during the process, and any other mitigating factors may also be considered. The standard of proof shall be whether the CMP has established a violation of this Policy to their satisfaction.

The Disciplinary measures set out in IDBF Ethics Code Edition 5 Art. 14.4 and include the following possible actions:

- Caution
- Reprimand or Fine
- Exclude - some or all members of an IDBF Member from participation in IDBF Championships and Competitions
- Suspension
- Expulsion

The CMP may also require the offender to make a written or verbal apology and/or to undergo training or supervision.

The CMP may decide to recommend publication of the outcome of the judicial process and shall determine the appropriate level of disclosure, considering confidentiality.

Where it is determined that a violation of the Policy has occurred, IDBF may communicate the outcome of the judicial process to the appropriate person(s) in any organization with whom the individual sanctioned has a direct relationship, responsibility or where it is deemed appropriate for the purposes of safeguarding.

12. Appeals

Appeals against decisions of the CMP shall be made to the IDBF Executive Committee in accordance with paragraph Art. 15 IDBF Code of Ethics Edit. 5. The Appeal panel will not include any person previously involved in the case reporting, investigation or management.

13. IDBF Members

All IDBF Members should have their own policy on safeguarding.

14. Glossary

Abuse – abuse is defined as any action that intentionally harms or injuries another person. Abuse is sometimes also referred to as non-accidental violence.

Case Management Group (CMG) – the CMG will be responsible for ensuring that allegations, incidents or referrals related to the safeguarding of children or athletes, or other individuals in dragon boating are dealt with fairly and equitably and within appropriate timescales. This includes ensuring that information disclosed regarding the appropriateness of individuals to work in dragon boats is considered and decisions are taken on a consistent and equitable basis. The CMG will be comprised of individuals recognized for their integrity and covering a range of skills and competences, including safeguarding.

Case Management Panel (CMP) – a CMP of, usually, three persons will be convened from the members of the CMG for those cases that require oversight. The CMP is responsible for management of individual cases, including investigations and referrals to an Ethics Panel. The CMP will provide advice and support to the SGO as required.

Child – The United Nation Convention on the Rights of the Child defines child as "a human being below the age of 18 years unless under the laws applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier". Early childhood relates to those below 8 years of age. Juvenile or young people and adolescents are 10-19 years of age.

Child Protection – UNICEF uses the term 'child protection' to refer to preventing and responding to violence, exploitation and abuse against children. Article 19 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child provides for the protection of children in and out of the home.

Designated Person – a Designated Person is an appropriately trained person who oversees safeguarding responsibilities at an IDBF Championship and reports to the Safeguarding Officer.

Entourage - Entourage comprises all the people associated with the athletes, including, without limitation, managers, agents, coaches, physical trainers, medical staff, scientists, sports organizations, sponsors, lawyers and any person promoting the athlete's sporting career, including family members and official supporters.

Ethics Committee – The IDBF Ethics Committee is a group of known individuals, independent of IDBF, recognized for their involvement in the world of sport, their experience and their integrity.

Ethics Panel – A IDBF Ethics Panel is convened when it is determined that there has been a possible violation of the IDBF Code of Ethics. The Ethics Panel shall assess and decide upon the case and shall make sanctions where necessary.

Harassment and Abuse – Harassment & Abuse can be expressed in five forms which may occur in combination or in isolation. These include i) psychological abuse, ii) physical abuse, iii) sexual harassment, iv) sexual abuse, and v) neglect. Harassment and abuse can be based on any grounds including race, religion, color, ethnic origin, physical attributes, gender, sexual orientation, age disability, socio- economic status and athletic ability. It can include a one-off incident or a series of incidents. It may be in person or online (or by other means). Harassment may be deliberate, unsolicited and coercive. Harassment and abuse often result from an abuse of authority, meaning the improper use of a position of influence, power or authority by an individual against another person.

Safeguarding – safeguarding is the action that is taken to promote the welfare of vulnerable adults or children and protect them from harm, including protecting them from harassment and abuse.

Safeguarding Officer – the Safeguarding Officer is the principal person in the organization that receives reports concerning the welfare of Participants, that coordinates the management of the reports and responds to queries in relation to this Policy.

Appendix 1: Report form for incidents of harassment abuse – see next page

Acknowledgements

IDBF acknowledges the significant contribution of the IDBF Working Group on Diversity & Inclusion together with the IDBF Athlete Commission in raising awareness of this important issue and championing the needs of the Athletes.

Appendix 1

IDBF Report form for Incidents of Harassment and Abuse

Details of person making report	
1. Your name:	2. Name of Organization:
3. Your role:	
4. Contact Information Accommodation Address: Home Address: Postcode and country: Telephone number: Email:	
Details of person of concern	
5. Name:	6. Age:
7. Ethnic origin:	8. Does this person have a disability?
9. The person's position/role: athlete/coach/other	
10. Gender:	
11. The person's team:	
12. If they are under 18 years, full name(s) of their parent(s)/carer(s): Contact information Accommodation Address: Address: Postal Code and country: Telephone numbers: Email:	
13. Have the parents/carers been notified of this incident? Yes No If YES, please provide details of what was said/action agreed:	
Further Information	
14. Are you reporting your own concerns or responding to concerns raised by someone else? Responding to my own concerns Yes/No Responding to concerns raised by someone else Yes/No If you respond to concerns raised by someone else, please provide further information below:	

15. Name of the person who raised concern to you:

Position within the sport or relationship to the **individual** named above:

Accommodation Address:
Address:
Postal Code and country:
Telephone numbers:
Email:

Details of Incident

16. Are recording this incident as fact, opinion or hearsay?

17. Date and times of incident:

18. Details of the incident or concerns:
Include other relevant information, such as description of any injuries, including size and location of any visible injury (a diagram may help)

19. The **individual's** account of the incident (if known):

20. Please provide any **witness** accounts of the incident:

21. Please provide details of any **witnesses** to the incident:
Name:

Position within the club/organization or relationship to the individual:

Age (if child):

Accommodation Address:
Home Address:
Postcode and country:
Telephone number:
Email:

22. Please provide details of any person(s) involved in this incident or alleged to have caused the incident/injury:

Name:

Position within the club/organization or relationship to the individual:

Age (if child):

Accommodation Address:
Home Address:
Postcode and country:
Telephone number:
Email:

23. Please provide details of action taken to date:

24. Has the incident been reported to any external agencies?

Yes
No
If YES, please provide further details:

Name of organization/agency:

Contact person:

Telephone numbers:

Email address:

Agreed action or advice given:

Your signature:	Print name:
Date:	

Please give this form to : general-secretary@dragonboat.sport immediately.