



DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION (DEI) Policy

Introduction and Purpose

Kleinburg Nobleton Soccer Club (KNSC) is fully committed to fostering a diverse, equitable, and inclusive environment for all participants in our programs. This policy aligns with the values and guidelines of Canada Soccer and Ontario Soccer, which emphasize that a quality soccer environment **embraces diversity, supports accessibility, and demonstrates inclusion**. The purpose of this DEI Policy is to ensure everyone is treated fairly and with respect and that KNSC is equally accessible to **all members and participants**, regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, ability, age, religion, or any other protected characteristic. In line with this purpose, KNSC is committed to **confronting and eliminating discrimination** at all levels of the club's activities.

This policy is a formal affirmation that discrimination, harassment, or exclusion have no place in our club. We strive to provide an environment that is welcoming to all – players, coaches, staff, officials, volunteers, and supporters – and to ensure every individual can participate and achieve their full potential in a safe, positive atmosphere. **KNSC's standards and values** are set to apply throughout the Club at all levels, reflecting our commitment as a community organization to diversity, equity, and inclusion. This policy will be included in our League1 Ontario application and serves as an internal governance document guiding our day-to-day operations and decision-making.

Definitions of Key Terms

To ensure a common understanding, KNSC adopts the following definitions in line with Canada Soccer and Ontario Soccer principles:

- **Diversity:** Diversity refers to the broad spectrum of **demographic characteristics** and human differences within our community. It includes, but is not limited to, differences in **sex, gender identity, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, ability, age, religion, and education**. Embracing diversity means acknowledging and respecting these differences and recognizing the value and dignity of every individual. Welcoming diversity not only respects differences but also **recognizes the worth of each individual and their value to the community and society at large**.
- **Equity:** Equity is about fairness and justice in the way people are treated and the opportunities they have. It means **providing individuals with what they need to succeed**, which may not always be the same for everyone. An equitable organization allocates resources, programs, and decision-making in ways that **yield similar opportunities and benefits for all participants**, taking into account historical and present barriers faced by some groups. Applying an equity lens sometimes requires **accommodating differences and removing barriers** so that everyone can attain the full benefits of participation (for example, assisting individuals who face additional barriers with access to equipment, training, or other support). Equity is distinct from equality in that it recognizes different needs and circumstances and aims to **level the playing field** to achieve fairness.

- **Inclusion:** Inclusion refers to the creation of an **inclusive environment** where all individuals feel a sense of belonging, being valued, and are supported to participate fully. An inclusive environment means that people have both the feeling *and* the reality of belonging; they can participate in meaningful ways and the environment enables them to reach their full potential. Inclusion involves **proactively inviting and valuing participation** from diverse groups and removing systemic barriers to participation. It is the act of ensuring that **everyone is welcomed, respected, and able to contribute** in all aspects of the club's activities. In practice, inclusion requires understanding, accepting, and respecting diversity, and taking intentional steps to **eliminate barriers** that might prevent anyone from feeling fully part of the club.

These definitions are integral to how KNSC operates. We recognize that diversity is a fact of our community, equity is the means to ensure fairness, and inclusion is the action that brings diversity to life in our club culture.

Scope and Application

This DEI Policy applies to **all members of KNSC** and all individuals involved in club activities. This includes players, coaches, team managers, technical staff, club administrators, board members, volunteers, officials (referees), parents/guardians of players, and supporters. It covers all programs, competitions, training sessions, events, and any other activities sanctioned by or associated with KNSC. By participating in KNSC, all individuals agree to uphold the principles in this policy.

KNSC requires every member and participant to **abide by this policy**, as well as the requirements of applicable laws and soccer governing body regulations. This includes adherence to the **Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and the Ontario Human Rights Code**, which prohibit discrimination on grounds such as race, sex, ethnic origin, age, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, family status, and disability. We also adopt and adhere to Ontario Soccer's Diversity and Inclusiveness Policy (Ontario Soccer Policies, Appendix D) as applicable. This alignment ensures our club's practices meet or exceed the standards set by our sport's governing bodies.

Policy Statements and Commitments

KNSC is dedicated to creating and maintaining a club environment that exemplifies diversity, equity, and inclusion. The following commitments outline how we will achieve this:

- **Non-Discrimination:** KNSC will **not discriminate or tolerate discrimination** in any of its activities or operations. This means no individual shall be treated less favorably on the basis of race, ethnicity, color, nationality or national origin, ancestry, **gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, marital status, age, religion or belief, ability or disability**, or any other characteristic protected by law or applicable policy. We are committed to confronting and eliminating any form of discrimination, whether overt or subtle, individual or systemic. All club decisions – from player selection and coaching appointments to resource allocation – will be made based on merit, fairness, and the club's values, without bias or prejudice.
- **Inclusive and Safe Environment:** We strive to provide an environment that is **inclusive, welcoming, and safe for all**. Every participant has the right to enjoy soccer in an atmosphere of mutual respect and positivity. **Harassment, bullying, abuse, or victimization** of any kind is strictly prohibited. Any behavior that undermines a person's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment is considered a violation of this policy. In particular, **sexually or racially based harassment or any other discriminatory behavior, whether physical, verbal, or written, will not be tolerated**. All members of the KNSC community are expected to contribute to a club culture where **everyone feels valued and no one is excluded**.
- **Equal Opportunity:** KNSC is committed to being equally accessible to all individuals. We actively promote **equal access to opportunities** in all programs and at all levels of the club. This includes equitable access to play, to coaching and development opportunities, to leadership roles, and to facilities. We recognize that achieving true equity may require accommodations or targeted efforts to include those who face barriers. The club will endeavor to provide reasonable accommodations for individuals with disabilities and to remove obstacles that hinder participation. **The achievement of equal opportunities is a key consideration** in our development and delivery.

of programs, policies, and projects. We strive to ensure that **everyone who wants to participate in soccer can do so in a meaningful way**, and that our governance and structure promote the full participation of all groups.

- **Respect and Dignity:** Every member of the club community shall be treated with respect and dignity. We expect all players, coaches, staff, officials, volunteers, and spectators to conduct themselves in a manner that **upholds the principles of fairness, respect, and sportsmanship**. This means demonstrating inclusive behavior – for example, using inclusive language, respecting others’ identities and backgrounds, and being mindful of actions or comments that might be hurtful or exclusionary. KNSC will **celebrate the diversity** of our membership and encourage positive interactions that reflect the spirit of inclusion.
- **Alignment with Governing Bodies:** Our club will ensure that its policies and actions remain aligned with those of Ontario Soccer and Canada Soccer regarding diversity and inclusion. We embrace the principle that **soccer belongs to and should be enjoyed by anyone who wants to participate**. To that end, we continuously monitor updates to Ontario Soccer’s and Canada Soccer’s policies on DEI and will update our own policy and practices accordingly. We also commit to upholding all relevant Ontario Soccer and League1 Ontario standards related to equity and inclusion in order to remain in good standing and to provide the best possible environment for our members.

Roles and Expectations

Achieving diversity, equity, and inclusion is a **shared responsibility**. Every member of the KNSC community has a role to play in upholding this policy:

- **Players:** Players are expected to respect their teammates, opponents, coaches, and officials, regardless of background or characteristics. Players should embrace the spirit of teamwork and inclusion, supporting fellow players of all skill levels and backgrounds. Any form of bullying, slurs, or exclusion among players is unacceptable. We encourage players to be allies to one another – for example, intervening or reporting if they witness a teammate being discriminated against or harassed.
- **Coaches and Team Staff:** Coaches, managers, and support staff have a special responsibility to model inclusive behavior. They must ensure that all players are given equitable attention, coaching, and opportunities to develop. Coaches should be aware of potential biases and strive to make merit-based decisions in player selection and playing time, while also accommodating individual needs (such as religious observances, medical needs, etc.). We expect coaches to **foster a team culture of respect** where diversity is valued, and to promptly address any conduct that is disrespectful or exclusionary. All team staff must enforce this policy on their teams and ensure that the playing environment is free from discrimination or harassment.
- **Club Officials and Administrators:** The club’s board members, executives, and administrators will ensure that club policies, programs, and initiatives reflect DEI values. This includes everything from the scheduling of games and allocation of fields, to fee structures and financial assistance programs to ensure socio-economic inclusion. Hiring and volunteer recruitment should strive to be equitable and encourage participation from underrepresented groups. Club leadership must respond swiftly and effectively to any complaints or incidents of discrimination. Additionally, they are responsible for reviewing club operations (communications, marketing, partnerships, etc.) to ensure inclusivity (for example, using diverse images and languages in promotional materials, and providing information in accessible formats).
- **Volunteers:** Volunteers (including event staff, coordinators, etc.) are expected to uphold the same standards of conduct. They should be welcoming and helpful to all participants and spectators. Volunteers should receive orientation on DEI principles so they can contribute positively – for instance, ensuring that events are accessible to persons with disabilities or being mindful of cultural sensitivities when organizing activities (such as being aware of dietary restrictions for events, religious holidays when scheduling, etc.).
- **Parents and Guardians:** Parents and guardians of youth players play a crucial role in setting a positive tone. We ask that they support the club’s DEI values by encouraging their children to be respectful and inclusive team

members. Parents should lead by example on the sidelines by treating all players, coaches, and other parents with respect. Any concerns about a child's inclusion or fair treatment should be brought to the club's attention in a constructive manner. Under no circumstances should parents engage in discriminatory remarks or behavior at club events.

- **Match Officials:** Referees and other match officials affiliated with KNSC (or assigned to KNSC matches) are expected to enforce the rules of the game impartially and also intervene in cases of discriminatory abuse on the field. KNSC supports officials in applying zero tolerance when players or spectators use racist or other abusive language during games. We will work with officiating organizations to ensure officials are trained to handle such incidents appropriately.
- **Supporters and Spectators:** All supporters and attendees at KNSC games or events must behave in a manner that reflects our inclusive values. **We expect spectators to be considerate and respectful to all players, staff, officials, volunteers, and fellow supporters**, irrespective of background glasgowcityfc.co.uk. Unacceptable behaviors such as **intimidating, harassing, abusive, or derogatory language or gestures – including chants or slurs targeting someone's race, ethnicity, gender, religion, or other identity – are strictly forbidden** glasgowcityfc.co.uk. KNSC reserves the right to intervene and remove from our facilities any spectator who engages in discriminatory or harassing conduct.

In summary, **everyone involved in KNSC has a duty to uphold this policy**. By collectively embracing diversity, practicing equity, and insisting on inclusion, we create a stronger club and a better experience for all.

Education and Training

KNSC recognizes that promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion is an ongoing process that requires education, awareness, and skill-building. To that end, we are committed to providing and promoting DEI education for our members:

- The club will organize or facilitate **training sessions, workshops, and educational resources** on topics related to diversity and inclusion. This may include training on unconscious bias, inclusive coaching practices, cultural competency, anti-bullying strategies, and understanding different forms of discrimination. We will utilize resources such as *Canada Soccer's Guide to Accessibility and Inclusion* and Ontario Soccer's recommended training modules (for example, **Diversity and Inclusion training for volunteers and coaches**) to inform our programs.
- **Coaches and staff will receive training** on creating inclusive team environments. For instance, coaches are encouraged to complete modules like *Coaching Athletes with Disabilities* and *Coaching Kids of All Abilities*, as recommended by Canada Soccer, to ensure they can effectively include participants of all ability levels.
- We will educate our players (appropriate to their age level) about respect, teamwork, and inclusion. Youth players will be taught the importance of supporting teammates of all backgrounds and standing up against bullying or exclusion. Senior players and team captains may receive additional leadership training on mentoring younger players in inclusive conduct.
- **Continuous Learning:** The club will keep itself updated on best practices and emerging issues in DEI. We will participate in initiatives by Ontario Soccer's Diversity Advisory Sub-Committee and Anti-Racism, Access and Equity Committee as appropriate. KNSC is also open to collaborating with external experts or community organizations to strengthen our inclusion efforts.
- **Community Engagement:** As part of our DEI commitment, KNSC will engage with our local community to ensure our programs reach diverse populations. We will conduct outreach to underrepresented groups to encourage their participation in soccer and in our club. This includes working with schools, community centers, and local agencies to promote soccer among different communities and to identify and reduce any barriers to participation.
- **Documentation and Communication:** This policy and related educational materials will be made easily accessible to all members, including being posted on the KNSC website and included in registration packages or orientation.

tation materials. We will communicate our DEI values regularly (e.g., through newsletters, social media, and club meetings) to keep awareness high. Success stories of diversity and inclusion in our club (such as diverse team achievements or coaches from underrepresented groups) will be highlighted to reinforce positive outcomes of our commitment.

KNSC is dedicated to **ongoing education and improvement**. We understand that building an inclusive culture is a continuous journey. The club is *dedicated to implementing any new policies released by Ontario Soccer or Canada Soccer* in the realm of diversity and inclusion. We are also committed to **further educating our coaches and staff** on how to create a welcoming environment so that *everyone feels welcome*. Through regular training and education, we aim to ensure that all members of KNSC not only understand the principles of diversity, equity, and inclusion but also have the tools to put them into practice every day.

Reporting and Complaint Mechanisms

KNSC takes all complaints and concerns regarding discrimination, harassment, or non-inclusive behavior very seriously. We encourage members to report any incidents or violations of this DEI Policy so that they can be addressed promptly and effectively. We ensure that **multiple channels** are available for reporting, and that individuals can do so without fear of reprisal.

Reporting an Incident: If a player, parent, coach, volunteer, or any club member experiences or witnesses behavior that they believe violates the DEI Policy (such as discriminatory comments, exclusion of a participant, harassment, etc.), they should report it as soon as possible. Reports can be made to:

- A **Coach or Team Manager:** especially if the issue is at a team level. Coaches are instructed to escalate the report to club management.
- The **Club's DEI Officer or Ethics Officer:** KNSC will designate a club official (or committee) responsible for handling complaints related to harassment or discrimination. The contact information (email and/or phone) for this official will be communicated to all members. *For example, members may email a confidential report to a specific club email address.* We have a dedicated confidential email for reporting such issues (e.g., [**protected email**]) similar to other clubs inviting reports to a designated address.
- A **Board Member or Club Administrator:** If someone is not comfortable reporting to a coach or the DEI Officer, or if those individuals may be involved in the incident, the person may contact a member of the KNSC Board of Directors directly.
- **Anonymous Reporting:** We will provide a mechanism for anonymous reporting (such as a web form or drop-box) for those who wish to report an incident without revealing their identity. We understand some may fear retaliation or may be uncomfortable coming forward, so anonymous reports will also be investigated to the extent possible.

Handling of Complaints: When a complaint is received, KNSC commits to the following process:

- The complaint will be acknowledged and taken seriously. The person reporting will be assured that the club is commencing a review.
- An **impartial investigation** will be initiated promptly. This may involve interviews with the complainant, the alleged offender, and any witnesses, as well as a review of any relevant evidence (emails, messages, video if available, etc.). The investigation will be handled by either the DEI Officer, a designated committee, or an independent third party, depending on the severity and sensitivity of the case.
- **Confidentiality:** To protect all parties, the investigation will be kept as confidential as possible. Details of the complaint will only be shared with those who need to know in order to investigate and resolve the issue. Identities of those involved will be protected to the extent feasible while still allowing a fair investigation.
- **No Retaliation:** The club strictly prohibits retaliation against anyone who, in good faith, reports a concern or

participates in an investigation. Any act of retaliation will be treated as a serious violation of this policy. Those reporting incidents should feel safe and supported; retaliation itself could lead to disciplinary action.

- **Resolution and Follow-Up:** After the investigation, if a violation of the DEI Policy is found to have occurred, appropriate action will be taken (see Enforcement section below). Even if no definitive conclusion is reached, the club may implement measures to ensure the individuals can continue in a safe environment (for example, mediation, additional training, or adjustments to avoid contact between parties if appropriate). The outcome of the investigation will be communicated to the complainant and the respondent, within the bounds of privacy laws and confidentiality. We will also follow up after resolution to ensure there are no further issues and that no retaliation occurs.

KNSC may also encourage the use of **Ontario Soccer's formal complaint and discipline mechanisms** if the incident falls under Ontario Soccer's jurisdiction (for instance, discriminatory behavior at a sanctioned event by a member of another club). We will assist members in navigating those processes if needed. Additionally, if the nature of an incident potentially violates the Ontario Human Rights Code or other laws, we will inform the complainant of their right to seek further recourse (such as filing a complaint with the Ontario Human Rights Tribunal) and will cooperate with any external investigations.

Enforcement and Accountability

Ensuring adherence to this DEI Policy is critical. Violations of the policy will be met with appropriate disciplinary action. KNSC will respond to confirmed instances of discrimination or harassment firmly and fairly:

- **Minor Infractions:** For less severe or first-time incidents (e.g., an insensitive remark made without malice), the club may focus on **education and corrective action**. This could include a verbal warning and a requirement for the offender to complete a sensitivity or diversity training session. The goal is to correct the behavior and prevent future occurrences.
- **Serious or Repeat Infractions:** More serious incidents (e.g., harassment, use of racial/ethnic slurs, deliberate exclusion of a player because of a protected characteristic) or repeated minor incidents will result in stronger consequences. Disciplinary actions may include written warnings, suspension from certain activities or games, removal from a team, or **temporary suspension of club membership**. The length of suspensions will depend on the severity of the misconduct.
- **Severe Violations:** Any conduct that is egregious – such as sustained harassment, threats or violence, or blatant discriminatory actions – or any instance of retaliation against a complainant will be dealt with with the utmost seriousness. **Penalties can include expulsion from the club (termination of membership), barring from club facilities/events**, or, where appropriate, referral to Ontario Soccer or higher authorities for further disciplinary action. KNSC will also involve law enforcement if any behavior crosses into criminal conduct (e.g., hate crimes or threats of violence).
- **Cooperation with Governing Bodies:** KNSC will report incidents to Ontario Soccer or Canada Soccer as required by those bodies' policies (for example, as part of discipline reporting, or if guidance is needed on handling a situation). We will ensure our disciplinary measures are consistent with the sanctions guidelines provided by our governing bodies. The club acknowledges Canada Soccer's **zero-tolerance stance against all forms of discrimination in the game** and will enforce discipline in line with that stance.
- **Record-Keeping:** All incidents and actions taken will be documented and retained in a secure manner. This helps in tracking repeat issues and ensuring consistency in how policies are enforced. It also demonstrates accountability in the event we are asked by League1 Ontario or other authorities about our handling of incidents.

Everyone at KNSC, from leadership to players, is accountable to this policy. Club leaders (Board of Directors and Management) are responsible for ensuring the policy is implemented effectively, and they will lead by example. We will incorporate discussions of DEI in our regular meetings and include adherence to DEI principles as part of performance evaluations for staff and coaches.

Monitoring and Review

KNSC understands that maintaining an effective DEI Policy requires regular reflection and updates. The club commits to monitoring the effectiveness of this policy and making improvements over time:

- The Board of Directors (or a designated DEI Committee) will **review this policy annually** (or more frequently if needed) to ensure it remains current with best practices and aligned with any changes in Canada Soccer or Ontario Soccer guidelines.
- We will track the outcomes of our DEI initiatives – for example, participation rates of diverse groups, feedback from members about inclusivity, and the number and nature of any incidents reported – to identify areas for improvement.
- The club will seek **feedback from our membership**. Players, parents, coaches, and others may be surveyed or invited to provide input on their experience of the club's inclusivity. This feedback will inform policy updates or new initiatives.
- Any major changes to the policy or procedures will be communicated to all members in a timely manner. Education will be provided around new expectations if something is updated.
- KNSC will remain dedicated to the spirit of this policy in everything we do. By continuously monitoring and adapting, we aim to not just meet the standards, but to be a leader in diversity, equity, and inclusion within our soccer community.

In conclusion, the Kleinburg Nobleton Soccer Club believes that **soccer is for everyone** and that our strength comes from the diversity of our community. We are committed to equity in opportunity and to an inclusive culture where **every participant feels welcome and valued**. Through this DEI Policy, and the actions that flow from it, we will ensure that our club provides a positive, fair, and enriching soccer experience for all.

Citations



[Anti Racism Policy – Glasgow City FC](https://glasgowcityfc.co.uk/pages/anti-racism-policy)

<https://glasgowcityfc.co.uk/pages/anti-racism-policy>



[Anti Racism Policy – Glasgow City FC](https://glasgowcityfc.co.uk/pages/anti-racism-policy)

<https://glasgowcityfc.co.uk/pages/anti-racism-policy>



[Anti-Racism Access and Equity Committee Resources](https://www.ontariosoccer.net/page/show/6457085-anti-racism-access-and-equity-committee-resources)

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