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ACTION BULLETIN

Bulletin #: A2019-013
Date: Dec. 2, 2019
To: Ontario Soccer; District Membership, ORA, Associate Members
CC: Ontario Soccer Staff
From: Ontario Soccer Board of Directors
Subject: Rowan's Law Mandatory Implementation

The Province of Ontario, at the present time, is the only Province in Canada to enact Concussion Safety legislation throughout its sport system.

"Rowan's Law" (Concussion Safety) received Royal Assent on March 7, 2018, and Section 5 of the Act, proclaiming a "Rowan's Law Day" was the only section that came into effect at that time.

However, in 2019, the remaining parts of the Act and the regulation have now come into effect in the following phases;

Requirements for Sport Organizations

Ontario is a national leader in concussion management and prevention. Rowan's Law (Concussion Safety), 2018 makes it mandatory for sports organizations to:

1. Effective July 1, 2019, ensure that athletes under 26 years of age, parents of athletes under 18, Coaches, Team Trainers and Team Officials confirm every year that they have reviewed **Ontario's Concussion Awareness Resources**. The Concussion Awareness Resources can be accessed free of charge at the following [web location](#).

A **Confirmation Receipt** for review of Concussion Awareness Resources must be completed by each registered participant and managed by the community sport organization for athletes under 26 years of age, parents of athletes under 18, Coaches, Team Trainers and Team Officials before participating in their sport. The Confirmation Receipt Form [can be found here](#).



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2. Effective July 1, 2019, establish a **Concussion Code of Conduct** that sets out rules of behaviour to support concussion prevention. Each year, Athletes, Coaches and Team Trainers must review and sign off on their applicable Codes of Conduct.

Included with this Bulletin you will find **Code of Conduct Templates** that can be used or adopted within existing community sport organization codes of conduct.

3. Effective July 1, 2020, establish a **Removal-from-Sport and Return-to-Sport** protocol. Further information and sample templates will be made available [online here](#) when finalized by the Province of Ontario.

The purpose of Rowan's Law legislation is to promote culture change and make participation in amateur competitive sport safer. There are no enforcement or monitoring provisions in Rowan's Law.

It is up to entities and individuals to ensure that they comply with the laws of Ontario.

If an organization does not comply with the laws of Ontario, then the organization assumes any liability risk associated with non-compliance.

For a full review of the Rowan's Law provincial legislation, please click [here](#).


If you have any further questions, please contact [Johnny Misley](#).





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Appendix

Codes of Conduct Templates for Clubs and Academies

These are samples of Concussion Code of Conduct for athletes, parents/guardians and coaches and team trainers that can be used by any soccer organization in Ontario.

Note: Items marked with an asterisk * are mandatory by O.Reg. 161/19: General.





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Concussion Code of Conduct for Athletes and Parents/Guardians (for athletes under 18 year of age)

I will help prevent concussions by:

- Wearing the proper equipment for my sport and wearing it correctly.
- Developing my skills and strength so that I can participate to the best of my ability.
- Respecting the rules of my sport or activity.
- My commitment to fair play and respect for all* (respecting other athletes, coaches, team trainers and officials).

I will care for my health and safety by taking concussions seriously, and I understand that:

- A concussion is a brain injury that can have both short- and long-term effects.
- A blow to my head, face or neck, or a blow to the body that causes the brain to move around inside the skull may cause a concussion.
- I don't need to lose consciousness to have had a concussion.
- I have a commitment to concussion recognition and reporting, including self-reporting of possible concussion and reporting to a designated person when an individual suspects that another individual may have sustained a concussion.* (Meaning: If I think I might have a concussion I should stop participating in further training, practice or competition **immediately**, or tell an adult if I think another athlete has a concussion).
- Continuing to participate in further training, practice or competition with a possible concussion increases my risk of more severe, longer lasting symptoms, and increases my risk of other injuries.

I will not hide concussion symptoms. I will speak up for myself and others.


- I will not hide my symptoms. I will tell a coach, official, team trainer, parent or another adult I trust if I experience **any** symptoms of concussion.



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- If someone else tells me about concussion symptoms, or I see signs they might have a concussion, I will tell a coach, official, team trainer, parent or another adult I trust so they can help.
- I understand that if I have a suspected concussion, I will be removed from sport and that I will not be able to return to training, practice or competition until I undergo a medical assessment by a medical doctor or nurse practitioner and have been medically cleared to return to training, practice or competition.
- I have a commitment to sharing any pertinent information regarding incidents of removal from sport with the athlete's school and any other sport organization with which the athlete has registered* (Meaning: If I am diagnosed with a concussion, I understand that letting all of my other coaches and teachers know about my injury will help them support me while I recover.)

I will take the time I need to recover, because it is important for my health.

- I understand my commitment to supporting the return-to-sport process* (I will have to follow my sport organization's Return-to-Sport Protocol).
- I understand I will have to be medically cleared by a medical doctor or nurse practitioner before returning to training, practice or competition.
- I will respect my coaches, team trainers, parents, health-care professionals, and medical doctors and nurse practitioners, regarding my health and safety.

By signing here, I acknowledge that I have fully reviewed and commit to this Concussion Code of Conduct.

Athlete Name: _____ **Signature:** _____

Parent/Guardian Signature (of athletes who are under 18 years of age): _____


Date: _____

If your sport organization has adopted policies regarding (a) zero-tolerance (b) mandatory disqualification for illegal play that is considered high risk for causing concussions and (c) escalating consequences for violation of the Concussion Code of Conduct, please read and commit to the following section. If the following section does not apply to your sport organization, please disregard.



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I will help prevent concussions, through my:

- Commitment to zero-tolerance for prohibited play that is considered high risk for causing concussions*
- Acknowledgement of mandatory expulsion from competition for violating zero-tolerance for prohibited play that is considered high risk for causing concussions (Meaning: I will be disqualified/expelled from play if I violate the zero-tolerance policy). *
- Acknowledgement of the escalating consequences for those who repeatedly violate the Concussion Code of Conduct. *





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Concussion Code of Conduct for Coaches and Team Trainers

I can help prevent concussions through my:

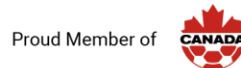
- Efforts to ensure that my athletes wear the proper equipment and wear it correctly.
- Efforts to help my athletes develop their skills and strength so they can participate to the best of their abilities.
- Respect for the rules of my sport or activity and efforts to ensure that my athletes do, too.
- Commitment to fair play and respect for all (respecting other coaches, team trainers, officials and all participants and ensuring my athletes respect others and play fair). *

I will care for the health and safety of all participants by taking concussions seriously. I understand that:

- A concussion is a brain injury that can have both short- and long-term effects.
- A blow to the head, face, or neck, or a blow to the body may cause the brain to move around inside the skull and result in a concussion.
- A person doesn't need to lose consciousness to have had a concussion.
- An athlete with a suspected concussion should stop participating in training, practice or competition **immediately**.
- I have a commitment to concussion recognition and reporting, including self-reporting of possible concussion and reporting to a designated person when an individual suspects that another individual may have sustained a concussion. *
- Continuing to participate in further training, practice or competition with a suspected concussion increases a person's risk of more severe, longer lasting symptoms, and increases their risk of other injuries or even death.



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I will create an environment where participants feel safe and comfortable speaking up. I will:

- Encourage athletes not to hide their symptoms, but to tell me, an official, parent or another adult they trust if they experience **any** symptoms of concussion after an impact.
- Lead by example. I will tell a fellow coach, official, team trainer and seek medical attention by a physician or nurse practitioner if I am experiencing any concussion symptoms.
- Understand and respect that any athlete with a suspected concussion must be removed from sport and not permitted to return until they undergo a medical assessment by a physician or nurse practitioner and have been medically cleared to return to training, practice or competition.
- *For coaches only:* Commit to providing opportunities before and after each training, practice and competition to enable athletes to discuss potential issues related to concussions. *

I will support all participants to take the time they need to recover.

- I understand my commitment to supporting the return-to-sport process. *
- I understand the athletes will have to be cleared by a physician or nurse practitioner before returning to sport.
- I will respect my fellow coaches, team trainers, parents, physicians and nurse practitioners and any decisions made with regards to the health and safety of my athletes.

By signing here, I acknowledge that I have fully reviewed and commit to this Concussion Code of Conduct.

Coach/Team Trainer Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

If your sport organization has adopted policies regarding (a) zero-tolerance (b) mandatory disqualification for illegal play that is considered high risk for causing concussions and (c)



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escalating consequences for violation of the Concussion Code of Conduct, please read and commit to the following section. If the following section does not apply to your sport organization, please disregard.

I will help prevent concussions, through my:

- Commitment to zero-tolerance for prohibited play that is considered high risk for causing concussions. *
- Acknowledgement of mandatory expulsion from competition for violating zero-tolerance for prohibited play that is considered high risk for causing concussions. *
- Acknowledgement of the escalating consequences for those who repeatedly violate the Concussion Code of Conduct. *

