



CODE OF ETHICS AND CONDUCT

Revised November 30, 2020

ONTARIO PROVINCIAL
FOOTBALL LEAGUE
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Code of Conduct

The Ontario Provincial Football League Code of Conduct is a set of behaviors for people within the organization; it reflects the ideals and values of the OPFL, as well as its commitment to uphold those values as part of what makes the OPFL what it is. It is therefore part of the OPFL Code of Conduct that can be applied to any particular situation, by asking the questions: “what is the best thing for the OPFL, and how do we avoid doing the wrong thing?”

As part of our “OPFL” philosophy, the OPFL believes its work is first and foremost in the interest of the member participant and the athlete. Our ethical rationale for promoting ethical conduct in sport is founded on the belief that sport is for the benefit of all, and that the pursuit of sporting excellence is a function of our collective pursuit of the human potential. The OPFL is a promoter of sport values and ethics (through football), and should lead by example as a League committed to the highest order of professionalism and member scrutiny. The OPFL membership whether paid staff or volunteers and regardless of their duties and responsibilities is called upon to conduct themselves with integrity, be fair and honest in our dealings with others, and treat others with respect and dignity. The following is the OPFL Code of Conduct:

- OPFL members and employees are responsible for their actions and accountable for the consequences of their actions or inactions.
- At all times, OPFL members and employees will act in a manner that encourages and maintains confidence among athletes, member organizations and the public, in the integrity of the OPFL and its people.
- The OPFL will conduct its relations with, and discharge its duties to, other organizations, clients, the public and media with ethics and fairness. All business dealings must be conducted in a fair and honest manner, both within the spirit and the letter of agreements, policies and legal requirements. All persons should be treated with respect, tact and courtesy in all dealings with the “OPFL”.
- All communications with members, clients, whether oral or written, must be conducted in a professional manner, and should be delivered in a timely, accurate and clear manner.
- OPFL members and employees must not be in a conflict of interest or permit any influence that could conflict with the best interest of the “OPFL” or prejudice the “OPFL” reputation. Disclosure in writing is required for any OPFL member or employee associated with, employed by, performing services for or with a financial interest in any other corporation, body or enterprise doing business with or seeking to do business with the OPFL.
- Confidentiality of personal and sensitive information must be respected. The OPFL will develop, implement, maintain and enforce reasonable policies and procedures to ensure confidentiality and safeguard confidential information. All methods of seeking and obtaining financial support for OPFL activities must be carried out in a manner consistent with maintaining membership and public confidence in, and respect for, the



“OPFL”, its authority on matters of ethics in sport and its independence from vested interests.

- The OPFL must use its resources (including human and material resources, funds, equipment and information) responsibly and in the best interests of all its members and the “OPFL”.
- Any complaint received concerning the OPFL must be handled professionally, promptly and courteously, with a written reply if requested, and a written record maintained.
- The OPFL must conduct its affairs in an open manner that welcomes scrutiny as a necessary and beneficial aspect of an effective ethics in sport organization and credible ethics in sport programs and policies. The OPFL supports transparency of information and will not withhold any information about itself and/or its activities unless there is justifiable reason to do so, such reason(s) being itself open to scrutiny.

Athlete-Centered Conduct

With respect to its relations with athletes, the OPFL will:

- Show respect and regard for the interests and goals of athletes;
- Act on the belief that the athlete as a person is more important than the sport;
- Demonstrate a responsiveness to individual needs and situations;
- Engage in practices that maintain and enhance the ethic of care for self and others;
- Carry out its activities in a manner, which demonstrates concern for the health, well-being, protection and enhancement of all athletes.
- Encourage and respect individual responsibility in developing ethical ideals through moral reflection, moral dialogue and moral practices in sport.

The OPFL should consistently demonstrate an ethic of care, where we are watchful for and sensitive to the needs of athletes as people and not just as performers of sport. Our conduct should therefore ensure that athletes have the best possible experience when dealing with the “OPFL”, as measured by their satisfaction and expressed confidence in the integrity of the OPFL and its member associations.



Code of Ethics

The Code of Ethics has been developed to protect and promote the best interests of the game. Its primary purpose is to clarify and distinguish ethical and approved professional practices from those which are detrimental. Its secondary purpose is to emphasize the purpose and value of football and to stress proper functions of coaches in relation to schools, players, and the public.

The ultimate success of the principles and standards of this Code depends on the football coaches.

Article 1 - Responsibilities to Players

1. In his relationships with players under his care, the coach should always be aware of the tremendous influence he wields. The coach should never place the value of a win above that of instilling the highest desirable ideals and character traits in his players. The safety and welfare of his players should always be uppermost in his mind, and they must never be sacrificed for any personal prestige or selfish glory.
2. In teaching the game of football, the coach must realize that there are certain rules designed to protect the player and provide common standards for determining a winner and loser. Any attempts to beat these rules, to take unfair advantage of an opponent, or to teach deliberate unsportsmanlike conduct, have no place in the game of football, nor has any coach guilty of such teaching the right to call himself a coach.
3. The diagnosis and treatment of injuries is a medical problem and should, under no circumstances, be considered a province of the coach. A coach's responsibility is to see that injured players are given prompt and competent medical attention and that the most minute detail of a physician's orders is carried out.
4. Under no circumstances should a coach authorize the use of drugs. Medic aids, stimulants, or drugs should be used only when authorized and supervised by a physician.
5. A player's future should not be jeopardized by any circumvention of eligibility rules.
6. In the educational setting, a coach should not make demands on his players that interfere with the player's opportunities for achieving academic success.
7. A player removed from a game suffering from a wound or laceration, where oozing of bleeding occurs, shall be given appropriate medical treatment. He may not return to the game without approval of medical personnel (i.e.: Trainer, M.D., any type of medical personnel).



8. If a player or official has any part of his uniform or equipment saturated with blood, he must have it changed or cleansed immediately. "Saturated" being defined as the amount of blood being sufficient to soak through the garment and onto the skin, or such that the blood would easily be transferred to another player.

Article 2 - Administrators' Responsibilities

1. Administrators should supervise their programs and personnel so as to maintain the principles, integrity, and dignity of the organization/institution which they represent.
2. Administrators should not exert pressure on members of their organization or coaches to give players consideration they do not deserve.
3. Administrators, in conjunction with their coaches, should set and follow the procedure which relate to the players, rules, officials, public relations, recruiting, game day, and other applicable responsibilities.
4. Administrators are ultimately responsible for all facets of their programs and the personnel operating within their sphere of influence.
5. Violations for any of the above will be dealt with by the OPFL Executive Council following the constitution and by-laws of the league on further penalties at their sole discretion.
6. OPFL has established a proper protocol and code of Conduct for all members within the OPFL. This protocol shall consist of the following; Communication & Meetings: Governors are to communicate with each other regarding their duties as outlined within the constitution with other association governors. Any appeals, disputes or constitutional matters are to be dealt with by the Governor of each club and the OPFL executive. Any meeting held without the authorization of the OPFL executive is not considered to be an OPFL meeting.
7. Any abuse of OPFL contact information, including phone numbers, e-mails, etc. and using them to spread rumours or false information, discredits any OPFL members, or undermines any member of the OPFL including the OPFL executive, or OPFL league, will not be tolerated in the OPFL. All members are to follow the proper protocols established with in the OPFL for communication or displeasure. Any violations may be dealt with by the OPFL executive with a fine or suspension

Article 3 - Rules of the Game

1. The Points of Emphasis which appear in the Amateur Football Rule Book shall be considered an integral part of this Code of Ethics and should be carefully read and observed.



2. Each coach should be acquainted thoroughly with the rules of the game. He is responsible for having the rules taught and interpreted for his players.
3. Both the letter and the spirit of the rules must be adhered to by the coaches.
4. To gain an advantage by circumvention or disregard for the rules brands that person unfit to be associated with football.
5. A coach is responsible for insuring that the players do not feign injuries, in order to gaining an advantage not intended by the rules. An injured player must be given full protection under the rules. The feigning of injury by an uninjured player for the purpose of gaining additional undeserved time for his team is dishonest, unethical, unsportsmanlike, and contrary to the spirit of the rules. Such tactics are a discredit to players and coaches and have no place in the actions of a person of integrity.
6. A coach is responsible for flagrant roughing tactics. He is responsible for illegal substitutions. He shall not permit faking of injuries in order to stop the clock. He shall not permit motion which has the intent of drawing an opponent offside.
7. A coach must remember always that IT IS NOT the purpose of football to hurt or injure an opponent by legal or illegal methods.
8. Habit formation is developed on the practice field. Where coaches permit, encourage or condone performance which is dangerous, disrespectful, or degrading to an opponent, they are derelict in their responsibility to teach fair play and good sportsmanship. This aspect of coaching must be attacked just as vigorously as the teaching of offence and defense, and to the players, it is far more important than all the technical aspects of the game combined. Any coach who fails to stress this point, or who permits, encourages, or defends the use of unsportsmanlike tactics shall be considered guilty of the most serious breach of football coaching ethics and subject to discipline by the Commissioner.

Article 4 – Officials

1. No competitive contest can be played satisfactorily without impartial, competent officials. Officials must have the respect and support of administrators, coaches and players. On- and off-the-record criticism of officials to players or to the public shall be considered unethical.
2. There should be a cooperative relationship between coaches, administrators and official's associations, with frequent interchange of ideas and suggestions. Coaches should, whenever possible, accept invitations to attend officials' rules meetings. Similarly, coaches should extend to officials an invitation to discuss rule interpretations with their squads and, on occasion, to officiate at scrimmages, for mutual benefits.



3. Good officiating promotes enjoyment of the game as well as protects the players. When an official accepts a game assignment, his responsibility is definite and well-defined. The protection and welfare of the players are paramount, and with this, there can be no compromise. Any official, who fails to promptly discharge his responsibility of penalizing for an infraction, is delinquent and unqualified to officiate.
4. On the day of a game, officials should be treated in a courteous manner; on their part, officials are expected to show courtesy and respect to players, coaches, and administrators. Conferences between administrators, coaches and officials shall always be conducted according to procedures established by the governing Conference or Officials' Association. In every respect, the Amateur Rule Book shall be followed in coach-official relationships, on the field, during and following a game. Any criticism which the coach or administrator may have to make concerning officiating, or any official's criticism of the public, teams, coaches or individual players, should be made in writing to the office which assigned the official to the game. For a coach to address, or permit anyone on his bench to address, uncomplimentary remarks to any official during the progress of a game, or to indulge in conduct which might incite players or spectators against the officials, is a violation of the rules of the game and must likewise be considered conduct unworthy of a member of the coaching profession.
5. It should be recognized that slow motion study of controversial decisions by officials is far different from on-the-spot decisions which must be made during the course of a game. To show critical plays to sports writers, sportscasters, alumni and the public, which may incite them to label officials as incompetent, must be considered unethical conduct.

Article 5 - Public Relations

1. Members of the news media should be treated with courtesy, honesty, and respect. Derogatory and misleading statements should be avoided. Direct questions should be answered honestly, or not at all. If good judgment indicates an honest answer would be prejudicial to the best interests of the game, ethical procedure demands that it not be answered. In such instances, "No comment" is justifiable.
2. Coaches and or association members should assume the responsibility of teaching their players how to conduct themselves in interviews in the best interests of football and the OPFL.
3. Coaches should not stress injuries, disciplinary measures, academic difficulties, eligibility problems, and similar personal matters. Disciplinary problems should be a "family affair" to be solved between the coach and players. Injuries are essentially the province of the team physician or trainer. No good purpose can be served by emphasizing such matters.
4. Coaches and administrators should avoid talking in public about unethical recruiting and use of illegal tactics.



5. Any statements that tend to portray football in any light other than being part of the educational process are detrimental to the future of the profession.
6. It shall be unethical for coaches and administrators to use alumni, booster, and quarterback club organizations in an attempt to defeat or obstruct institutional athletic controls, or to encourage violation of established rules. It shall be unethical for coaches and administrators to make demands, financial or otherwise, upon such groups which are not in keeping with the letter and spirit of existing controls, or in any other manner, misuse such strength and power in violation of accepted rules and regulations.
7. Solution of professional problems should be within the profession and not in the press.
8. Violations for any of the above will be dealt with by the OPFL Executive Council following the Constitution and By-laws of the league on further penalties at their sole discretion.

Article 6 - Recruiting

1. All institutional, conference, and national regulatory body rules pertaining to recruiting shall be observed strictly.
2. It is a breach of ethics to recruit a player enrolled in another program (or to recruit a prospective athlete who has avowed his intention to enroll in another program) for the purpose of participating in regularly organized practice.
3. In discussing the advantages of his organization/institution, the coach must confine his statements to an honest and forthright presentation of the facts. He shall refrain from making derogatory statements about other organizations/institutions and their officials.
4. It is unethical for any coach to make statements to any prospective athlete which cannot be fulfilled.
5. Whenever placing a recruitment or registration ad, the team placing the advertisement must have its team's territories clearly defined and understood.
6. Violations for any of the above will be dealt with by the OPFL Executive Council following the constitution and by-laws of the league with further penalties at their sole discretion.

Article 7 - Game Day and Other Responsibilities

1. It is vitally important that a coach's or other member of a team's organization actions and behaviour, at all times, bring credit to himself, his institution/organization, and the game of football.
2. During a game, a coach should be as inconspicuous as possible. Coaches are encouraged to demonstrate a friendly and kindly attitude toward their players.



3. All players and game day bench personnel must shake hands with the opposing team at the end of each game.
4. Helmets must be worn and never carried by all players when shaking hands at the end of each game.
5. In the interests of enjoyment and growth of the game, administrators and coaches should encourage the type of fan support which is conducive to producing an environment of good sportsmanship and healthy competition.