



IFSC SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Approved February 2023

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

1. POLICY STATEMENT .....	3
2. DEFINITION OF HARASSMENT AND ABUSE .....	3
3. SCOPE OF APPLICATION .....	3
4. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES .....	4
5. IFSC SAFEGUARDING OFFICER & IFSC EVENT SAFEGUARDING SUPERVISOR .....	5
6. REPORTS TO IFSC SAFEGUARDING OFFICER.....	5
7. FORMAL COMPLAINT BEFORE DISCIPLINARY COMMISSION .....	6
8. DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURE .....	6
9. CONFIDENTIALITY .....	6
10. PREVENTION OF HARASSMENT AND ABUSE .....	6



## 1. Policy Statement

- 1.1. The welfare of all individuals involved with IFSC, whether they are an athlete or not, is paramount, and they have the right to be treated with respect and participate in a non-violent and safe environment.
- 1.2. To this end, IFSC is fully committed to creating and preserving an environment free of any harassment and abuse, with particular attention to minors.
- 1.3. All forms of harassment and abuse constitute a direct violation of the IFSC Code of Ethics and will not be tolerated.

## 2. Definition of Harassment and Abuse

- 2.1. Harassment and abuse can take five main forms, which may be carried out in isolation or in combination:

**Psychological abuse** – Any unwelcome act including confinement, isolation, verbal assault, humiliation, intimidation, infantilisation, or any other treatment which may diminish the sense of identity, dignity, and self-worth or result in significant emotional distress.

**Physical abuse** – Any deliberate and unwelcome act (such as but not limited to punching, beating, kicking, biting, burning or use of unwarranted force) that causes physical trauma or injury. Such act may also consist of forced or inappropriate physical activity (for example age- or physique-inappropriate training loads; when injured or in pain), forced alcohol consumption, or forced doping practices.

**Sexual harassment** – Any unwanted and unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature, whether verbal, non-verbal or physical. Sexual harassment may 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** - The failure of a coach or another person with a duty of care towards the athlete or non-athlete to provide a minimum level of care, which results in causing harm, allowing harm to be caused, or creating an imminent danger of harm.

- 2.2. Harassment and abuse can be based on any grounds including race, religion, colour, creed, ethnic origin, physical attributes, gender, sexual orientation, age, disability, socio-economic status, and athletic ability. It may include a one-off incident or a series of incidents, it may be in person, on the phone, online, on social media, or by other written and/or electronic means, it may be deliberate, unsolicited, and coercive.
- 2.3. 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.

## 3. Scope of Application

- 3.1. The IFSC Safeguarding Policy applies to all individuals involved with IFSC, including:
  - (a) Athletes;
  - (b) Coaches, medical personnel, and athlete entourage;
  - (c) IFSC staff and consultants;
  - (d) IFSC Executive Board members
  - (e) Members of IFSC Commissions and Judicial Bodies



- (f) All persons participating in IFSC activities, including delegates and representatives of Continental Councils and of national federations members of IFSC (“Member Federations”), accredited persons, organisers, subcontractors, and volunteers.

IFSC activities encompass institutional events, including but not limited to as Climbing Summits and General Assemblies, and IFSC competitions.

- 3.2. The above individuals shall hereinafter be jointly referred to as “Participants”.
- 3.3. The IFSC Safeguarding Policy applies to harassment and abuse which may occur between Participants during IFSC activities and events, and in any form: in person, by phone, conducted online, or distributed through tangible or electronic means. The IFSC Safeguarding Policy also applies to harassment and abuse between Participants outside IFSC activities and events, where such harassment and abuse impacts the IFSC work and sport environment.

#### 4. Roles and Responsibilities

- 4.1. IFSC is responsible for:
  - (a) Implementing the IFSC Safeguarding Policy;
  - (b) Raising awareness of this Policy and the procedure for reporting an incident of harassment and abuse, across all Participants;
  - (c) Ensuring that reports of harassment and abuse are managed in a timely, fair, and confidential manner;
  - (d) Providing appropriate support to concerned Participants of an alleged incident of harassment or abuse;
  - (e) Imposing appropriate disciplinary measures where an incident of harassment and abuse is proven;
  - (f) Ensuring that there is a safeguarding plan and reporting procedure in place at all IFSC events;
  - (g) Updating the Policy and related procedures from time to time.
- 4.2. Member Federations are each responsible for:
  - (a) Defining and implementing their own safeguarding policies and procedures, complying with national law and coherent with the IFSC Safeguarding Policy;
  - (b) Ensuring all individuals involved with the Member Federation are aware of and understand both the Member Federation’s safeguarding policies and procedures and the IFSC Safeguarding Policy;
  - (c) Managing reports of alleged incidents of harassment and abuse relating to individuals involved with the Member Federation;
  - (d) Informing IFSC of any formal disciplinary sanctions relating to harassment and abuse imposed by the Member Federation.
- 4.3. Participants are responsible for:
  - (a) Taking action to safeguard others against any instances of harassment and abuse in Sport Climbing;
  - (b) Reporting to the IFSC Safeguarding Officer or appropriate designated person where they have reason to believe that another Participant has experienced or is experiencing harassment and abuse;
  - (c) Notifying IFSC of any formal disciplinary sanctions relating to harassment and abuse that they have received.
- 4.4. Every member of the Sport Climbing community has a personal responsibility to ensure that the sport is free from harassment and abuse. All incidents of harassment and abuse must be reported, regardless of the offender’s identity.



## 5. IFSC Safeguarding Officer & IFSC Event Safeguarding Supervisor

- 5.1. The IFSC Executive Board shall appoint an external, independent, and competent individual to serve as IFSC Safeguarding Officer. In case the position is vacant, it may temporarily be assigned to a member of the IFSC staff. In addition, for individual IFSC competitions, the IFSC Executive Board shall appoint one person to act as IFSC Event Safeguarding Supervisor onsite. The position of IFSC Event Safeguarding Supervisor may be assigned to a member of staff of IFSC or of the local event organiser, or to a volunteer chosen among members of Commissions or independent/external individuals with pertinent training.
- 5.2. The IFSC Safeguarding Officer and the IFSC Event Safeguarding Supervisors shall operate in a neutral, independent, and unbiased capacity.
- 5.3. The IFSC Safeguarding Officer's role is to receive and investigate reports within IFSC jurisdiction, assist in informal resolution of disputes where appropriate, advise on the steps to be taken in case of formal written complaints, and maintain comprehensive records. In carrying out his/her duties under this policy, the IFSC Safeguarding Officer shall be directly responsible to the IFSC General Director and the IFSC Executive Board.
- 5.4. The IFSC Event Safeguarding Supervisors' role is to receive written and verbal reports onsite at IFSC competitions, determine whether incidents fall within IFSC jurisdiction, conduct preliminary inquiries into the facts, and report all his/her activities and findings to the IFSC Safeguarding Officer.
- 5.5. The IFSC shall ensure that the IFSC Safeguarding Officer receives appropriate training and support for fulfilling his/her duties under this policy.

## 6. Reports to IFSC Safeguarding Officer

- 6.1. Any Participant who experiences or is a witness to harassment and abuse is encouraged to immediately report the incident. A parent or guardian may submit a report on behalf of a minor.
- 6.2. Reports of witnessed or experienced incidents of harassment and abuse may be submitted:
  - (a) By email, at [safeguarding@ifsc-climbing.org](mailto:safeguarding@ifsc-climbing.org);
  - (b) Through the 'Abuse and Harassment Report Form', found online in the 'Safeguarding' section on the IFSC website, [www.ifsc-climbing.org](http://www.ifsc-climbing.org);
  - (c) By letter, clearly labelled "Confidential – to be opened only by the IFSC Safeguarding Officer", sent to the following address:

IFSC – International Federation of Sport Climbing,  
Corso Vinzaglio 12, 10121 Torino, Italy;
  - (d) At competitions, to the appointed IFSC Event Safeguarding Supervisor, who shall conduct preliminary inquiries and refer to the IFSC Safeguarding Officer.

Reports shall be read only by the IFSC Safeguarding Officer and, if submitted at competitions, by the appointed IFSC Event Safeguarding Supervisor. All information contained in reports shall be handled in a strictly confidential manner.

- 6.3. After assessing the report and conducting the necessary inquiries, the IFSC Safeguarding Officer, as the case may be, shall inform the person reporting of the options available:
  - (a) Where appropriate, mediation, where the IFSC Safeguarding Officer will deal directly with the victim and the individual allegedly responsible for the harassment and abuse in order to find a suitable solution. If either or both the victim and the individual allegedly responsible are minors, at their request a parent or guardian may be present;

- (b) The right for the victim (or a parent or guardian of a minor) and for the persons stated at 7.2(b), (c), (d), and (e) to file a formal written complaint before the IFSC Disciplinary Commission, where mediation is not appropriate, not possible, or has failed to produce a suitable solution. The IFSC Safeguarding Officer shall also provide the requirements for the formal complaint specified under Article 7;
- (c) Referral to law enforcement authorities of the country where the incident took place, if the incident breaks the law of such country;
- (d) Where the incident falls outside of IFSC jurisdiction, referral to the appropriate body.

## 7. Formal Complaint before Disciplinary Commission

- 7.1. If the IFSC Safeguarding Officer determines that the incident falls within IFSC jurisdiction, according to Article 6.3(b) a formal complaint may be filed before the IFSC Disciplinary Commission.
- 7.2. Author of the complaint (the “Complainant”):
  - (a) Any individual who is personally the victim of harassment and abuse (or the parent or guardian of a minor);
  - (b) The members of the IFSC Executive Board;
  - (c) The presidents of the Member Federations;
  - (d) Any witness to an incident of harassment and abuse, if the victim of such incident is a minor;
  - (e) The IFSC Safeguarding Officer, if the case is deemed serious enough and only if no other person under (a), (b), (c), or (d) has already filed a formal complaint.
- 7.3. Form of the complaint:

The complaint must be addressed to the IFSC Disciplinary Commission in English, in written form, within 60 days following the incident or the date of its discovery. The complaint may be filed by email, at [disciplinary@ifsc-climbing.org](mailto:disciplinary@ifsc-climbing.org).
- 7.4. The complaint must include:
  - (a) The full name of the victim and the nationality, address, and role of the Complainant (if complaint not filed by victim);
  - (b) The full name, nationality, address (if known), and role of the individual against whom the complaint is being made (the “Respondent”);
  - (c) A description of the facts of the alleged harassment and abuse; and
  - (d) The signature of the Complainant.
- 7.5. The complaint may, moreover, be accompanied by documents, including photos.
- 7.6. Supplementary or new information may be communicated by the Complainant at the discretion of the Disciplinary Commission.

## 8. Disciplinary Procedure

- 8.1. The procedure laid out in the IFSC Disciplinary and Appeals Rules applies.

## 9. Confidentiality

- 9.1. In order to protect the parties, the IFSC shall not disclose to outside parties the name of victims, Complainants, persons accused of abuse and harassment, Respondents, nor the circumstances giving rise to a complaint, unless such disclosure is required by a disciplinary, legal or other remedial process.



## 10. Prevention of Harassment and Abuse

- 10.1. The IFSC shall develop measures to prevent abuse and harassment to protect the welfare of the entire Sport Climbing community. These measures may include:
- (a) Coordinating with Member Federations regarding individuals who have been disciplined for harassment and abuse in the past;
  - (b) Establish and update an educational programme to raise awareness, inform and engage the community in the fight against harassment and abuse.