

CODE OF CONDUCT

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Code of Conduct sets out the ethical principles, behavioural standards, and integrity requirements applicable to all persons and entities involved in World Climbing activities. It serves as a foundational instrument to protect the integrity, credibility, and reputation of World Climbing and to ensure conduct consistent with the values and principles of the Olympic and Paralympic Movements.

In principle, persons bound shall refrain from any conduct that may reasonably be considered to undermine the integrity, credibility, or reputation of World Climbing or the Olympic and Paralympic Movement.

The Code is based on the core values of integrity, respect, fairness, transparency, inclusion, and safeguarding. It reflects internationally recognised standards of good governance and ethical conduct and aligns with the baseline expectations established by the International Olympic Committee, the International Paralympic Committee, and the broader Olympic Movement.

The Code applies to a wide range of stakeholders, including elected and appointed officials, staff, athletes, International Technical Officials, commissions, continental bodies, National Federation representatives, contractors, and any other entities and individuals involved in World Climbing activities. Its application extends to conduct connected to World Climbing activities, whether occurring in person or online and irrespective of geographical location. National Federations are encouraged to adopt the Code or formally reference it within their own ethical and disciplinary frameworks in order to promote consistency and shared standards across the sport.

The Code establishes clear rules of conduct addressing general ethical behaviour, respect for human rights and non-discrimination, political neutrality, confidentiality and the protection of whistleblowers, safeguarding and wellbeing, and the integrity of competitions.

It explicitly prohibits competition manipulation, betting-related misconduct, and the misuse of inside information, and imposes a duty to report and cooperate in relation to any suspected breach.

Specific provisions govern the conduct of individuals holding elected or appointed positions within World Climbing governance structures. These provisions address voting independence, conflicts of interest, gifts and hospitality, and the prohibition of bribery, corruption, and undue influence, with the objective of ensuring impartial decision-making and preserving institutional trust.

Finally, the Code confirms its binding nature and clarifies that any breach may result in disciplinary consequences. While procedural and sanctioning mechanisms are regulated elsewhere, the Code establishes a clear link between its provisions and the applicable disciplinary framework under the World Climbing Statutes, Disciplinary Rules, and the mandates of the competent bodies. All measures arising from the application of this Code are governed by the principles of legality, proportionality, due process, and the right to be heard.

SECTION 1 – PRINCIPLES AND VALUES

1. Guiding Values

All entities bound by this Code shall uphold and promote the following values:

- 1.1. Integrity: acting honestly, ethically, and responsibly.
- 1.2. Respect: for individuals and human dignity.
- 1.3. Fairness: impartiality, sporting justice, and equal treatment.
- 1.4. Transparency: openness and accountability.
- 1.5. Inclusion: commitment to creating equitable, diverse, and accessible environments.
- 1.6. Safeguarding: ensuring the physical, mental, and emotional wellbeing of all participants, especially minors and vulnerable persons.

SECTION 2 – DEFINITIONS AND SCOPE

2. Definitions

For the purpose of this Code:

- 2.1. World Climbing: the world governing body of Climbing and Para Climbing recognised by the IOC and IPC, and member of ASOIF.
- 2.2. World Climbing Activities ('activities'): all meetings, events, competitions, gatherings, and actions held under World Climbing or organised by World Climbing.
- 2.3. Officials (ITOs): the International Technical Officials certified by World Climbing.
- 2.4. Entities subject to World Climbing Statutes and Regulations: Athletes, National Federations, their representative (General Assembly delegates, Team Officials, Coaches, anyone entrusted to represent the National Federation in any capacity); the Executive Board, the Secretary General, Commissions, Continental Councils, ITOs; any individual involved in World Climbing activities. Definitions listed in the Statutes and other applicable Regulations apply, by extension, to this Code of Conduct.

3. Persons Bound by the Code

This Code applies to:

- 3.1. Entities subject to World Climbing Statutes and Regulations
- 3.2. World Climbing Staff
- 3.3. Contractors and Consultants in relation to the contract stipulated by the parties
- 3.4. Local Organising Committees to the extent applicable
- 3.5. National Federations are encouraged to adopt this Code in full or formally reference it within their own ethical and disciplinary frameworks.

4. Applicability in Time and Space

- 4.1. The Code applies to conduct connected to World Climbing Activities, in person or online, regardless of geographical location.
- 4.2. The standard limitation period to initiate an inquiry is ten (10) years, except for safeguarding matters involving minors, for which no limitation applies.
- 4.3. Any alleged breach of the Code must go through a process of by which it is established whether it was committed deliberately or negligently, whether the alleged breach constitutes an act or an attempted act, and whether parties acted as participant, accomplice, or instigator.

SECTION 3 – ETHICS AND INTEGRITY FRAMEWORK

This section establishes World Climbing's ethics and integrity framework by defining the roles and institutional arrangements responsible for the promotion, oversight, and safeguarding of ethical standards within the Federation, in accordance with the Statutes and applicable regulations.

5. The Ethics Commission

- 5.1. In accordance with Article 14.5 of the Statutes, World Climbing shall establish an Ethics Commission as an independent body responsible for safeguarding ethical standards and integrity within the Federation.
- 5.2. The Ethics Commission acts independently from World Climbing's executive and administrative structures in the exercise of their mandate.
- 5.3. The composition, appointment, procedures and working methods of the Ethics Commission are defined in the relevant Terms of Reference approved by the General Assembly.
- 5.4. Where appropriate, the Ethics Commission may coordinate with other competent bodies of World Climbing in accordance with applicable regulations, while preserving its independence.

6. The Ethics Officer

- 6.1. The Executive Board shall designate an Ethics Officer to support the implementation of this Code of Conduct and the functioning of the Ethics Commission. The appointment remains subject to review by the Executive Board, in particular in light of any future adjustments to the ethics and disciplinary framework.
- 6.2. The Ethics Officer shall perform coordinative and administrative functions, including in particular:
 - 6.2.1. Act as contact person for ethics-related matters and reports;
 - 6.2.2. Support the Ethics Commission in handling and administering cases;
 - 6.2.3. ensuring proper flow of information, documentation, and procedural timelines.
 - 6.2.4. promoting awareness of ethical standards within World Climbing.
- 6.3. The Ethics Officer shall not have decision-making, investigative, or adjudicative powers, which remain exclusively within the competence of the Ethics and Disciplinary Commissions.
- 6.4. Taking into account World Climbing's organisational structure and resources, the Ethics Officer may be a member of staff assigned by the Executive Board to this function.
- 6.5. When the Ethics Officer is a staff member:
 - 6.5.1. They shall act under the authority and instructions of the Ethics Commission when performing ethics-related functions;
 - 6.5.2. They shall be functionally independent from World Climbing executive level in relation to ethics matters;
 - 6.5.3. They shall be protected from undue influence, retaliation, or conflict of interest in the exercise of their duties.
- 6.6. Where a conflict of interest arises or may reasonably be perceived, the Ethics Officer shall immediately disclose it and withdraw from the matter, and the Ethics Commission shall determine appropriate alternative arrangements.
- 6.7. The Ethics Commission may issue internal guidelines further detailing the working arrangements with the Ethics Officer;

SECTION 4 – RULES OF CONDUCT

7. General Conduct

Persons bound by this Code shall:

- 7.1. Abide by the obligations, limitations, and responsibilities arising from their position.
- 7.2. Act with integrity, honesty, dignity, and impartiality.
- 7.3. Avoid conduct that harms or risks harming the reputation of World Climbing.
- 7.4. Not use their position for personal gain or private interest.
- 7.5. Fully cooperate with investigations.
- 7.6. Report suspected breaches immediately.

8. Non-Discrimination and Human Rights

Discrimination based on race, nationality, skin colour, culture, religion, language, gender (including pregnancy, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation), disability, social origin, age, political preference, or any status protected by international human rights law is strictly prohibited.

9. Neutrality

When acting on behalf of World Climbing or in situations where their affiliation may be perceived, persons bound shall maintain political neutrality in accordance with World Climbing Statutes and Olympic principles.

10. Confidentiality and Protection of Whistleblowers

- 10.1. Confidential information may not be disclosed unless required by law or by the proper execution of this Code.
- 10.2. Information shall not be divulged for personal gain or benefit, nor be undertaken in bad faith to damage the reputation of World Climbing as an institution, including entities subject to the Statutes and Regulations of World Climbing.
- 10.3. Good faith reporting of misconduct is protected. Retaliation against whistleblowers is prohibited.
- 10.4. Confidentiality obligations continue after the end of any mandate, role, or contractual relationship with World Climbing.

11. Safeguarding and Wellbeing

- 11.1. All persons bound shall protect the physical, psychological, and emotional wellbeing of others.
- 11.2. Any form of harassment, abuse, neglect, or exploitation – especially involving minors – is strictly prohibited and shall be met with disciplinary action.
- 11.3. The World Climbing Safeguarding Policy applies to all safeguarding matters.

12. Integrity of Competitions

World Climbing is committed to safeguarding the integrity, unpredictability, and fairness of all competitions conducted under its authority. Accordingly:

- 12.1. Any form of competition manipulation, inside information, or betting-related misconduct connected to World Climbing Activities is strictly prohibited.
- 12.2. Persons bound by this Code shall not:
 - 12.2.1. Participate in, facilitate, or promote betting on World Climbing competitions where such participation may compromise the integrity of the competition;
 - 12.2.2. Misuse, disclose, or enable the use of non-public or inside information for betting, unfair competition, or any other improper purpose.
- 12.3. Any approach, request, invitation, or situation that may reasonably be perceived as an attempt to manipulate a competition must be reported immediately through the appropriate World Climbing reporting mechanism.
- 12.4. Attempts, aid, abetment, or deliberate failure to report acts related to competition manipulation shall be treated as breaches of this Code, regardless of whether the manipulation was successful.
- 12.5. Persons bound by this Code shall fully cooperate with any integrity-related inquiry or preventive measure adopted by World Climbing or by competent bodies recognised by the Olympic or Paralympic Movement.

SECTION 5 – CONDUCT OF OFFICE

The provisions in this Section govern the behaviour of individuals holding elected or appointed positions within World Climbing governance structures. In particular, these provisions apply to:

- Members of the Executive Board, including the Secretary General.
- Members of Continental Councils Boards.
- Members of World Climbing Commissions.
- Members of the Ethics and Disciplinary Commissions.
- Delegates and candidates participating in the World Climbing General Assembly.
- Any person exercising a decision-making, representative, or supervisory function within World Climbing activities.

These provisions apply in the performance of their functions, including situations where their role or affiliation may reasonably be perceived as connected to World Climbing.

13. Voting

- 13.1. Voting shall be free, independent, and without coercion.
- 13.2. Instructions to vote in a predetermined manner are prohibited.
- 13.3. Where proxy voting is permitted under the Statutes, the granting or holding of a proxy shall not affect the principle of free and independent voting. Any form of instruction, pressure, or prior agreement on how a vote is to be cast remains prohibited.

14. Conflicts of Interest

A conflict of interest exists when personal interests may influence or appear to influence the performance of duties. In this regard:

- 14.1. All persons bound shall avoid such situations and disclose potential conflicts immediately.
- 14.2. Where a conflict of interest exists or may reasonably be perceived, the person concerned shall abstain from discussion, decision-making, and voting on the matter.
- 14.3. A periodical Declaration of Interests is mandatory.
- 14.4. Failure to disclose may constitute a breach of this Code.

15. Gifts and Hospitality

- 15.1. Gifts may only be accepted if:
 - 15.1.1. They are symbolic or of trivial value (\leq 150 EUR), or
 - 15.1.2. They reflect customary local hospitality.
- 15.2. All accepted gifts must be declared and recorded in the Gift Register.
- 15.3. Cash gifts are prohibited in all circumstances.
- 15.4. Gifts intended to influence decision-making are strictly forbidden.

16. Bribery, Corruption, and Undue Influence

No person shall directly or indirectly offer, request, or accept any benefit to influence:

- 16.1. Governance decisions.
- 16.2. Competition outcomes.
- 16.3. Appointments or selections.
- 16.4. Event bidding or hosting procedures.

SECTION 6 – CONSEQUENCES OF BREACHES AND APPLICABLE SANCTIONS

The provisions in this Section are aimed at clarifying the binding nature of this Code of Conduct and to establish the link between breaches of the Code and the disciplinary consequences that may follow. They are intended to ensure legal certainty, institutional coherence, and alignment with the World Climbing Statutes and Regulations, while avoiding duplication of procedural or sanctioning rules set out elsewhere.

17. Binding Nature

Compliance with this Code of Conduct is a condition of participation in, and involvement with, World Climbing activities.

18. Consequences of Breach

Any breach of this Code, including attempts, complicity, or failure to comply with reporting and cooperation obligations, may give rise to disciplinary action.

19. Applicable Framework

Disciplinary measures and sanctions shall be determined and imposed in accordance with:

- 19.1. The World Climbing Statutes.
- 19.2. The applicable Disciplinary Rules.
- 19.3. The Terms of Reference of the competent Ethics and Disciplinary Commissions.
- 19.4. Any other relevant World Climbing regulations in force at the time of the breach.

20. Autonomy of Proceedings

The application of this Code and any related disciplinary measures is without prejudice to:

- 20.1. Separate safeguarding, integrity, anti-doping, or manipulation of competition proceedings.
- 20.2. Contractual, civil, or criminal proceedings that may arise under applicable law.

21. Principles Governing Sanctions

Any sanction imposed by the competent bodies shall respect the principles of legality, proportionality, due process, and the right to be heard.