

ASCENT VOLLEYBALL CLUB

COACHES CODE OF CONDUCT

Effective Date: August 2026

Approved By: Board of Directors / Governing Body

Review Date: Annually

1. OUR COMMITMENT

At Ascent Volleyball Club, coaches carry a responsibility that extends far beyond teaching volleyball.

A coach has the opportunity to influence an athlete's confidence, character, relationships, work ethic, and understanding of what it means to pursue excellence.

We therefore expect Ascent coaches to conduct themselves with **integrity, professionalism, humility, competence, and care.**

Our coaches are expected to develop the **whole athlete**—character, physical literacy, technical skill, tactical understanding, mental resilience, and leadership.

A coach's behaviour is one of the most powerful expressions of our Club culture.

We do not simply teach athletes how to play volleyball. We model how to live, lead, compete, and treat others.

2. THE ASCENT COACHING STANDARD

Every Ascent coach commits to five core values:

GROWTH

I am a lifelong learner.

I will:

- Pursue continual improvement as a coach.
- Seek feedback and professional development.
- Remain open to new evidence, ideas, and perspectives.
- Reflect honestly on my coaching.

- Encourage athletes to develop a growth mindset.

EXCELLENCE

I prepare intentionally and coach with purpose.

I will:

- Plan meaningful training sessions.
- Maintain high standards.
- Coach with attention to detail.
- Pursue evidence-informed practice.
- Hold myself and my athletes to appropriate standards.
- Never confuse excellence with perfection.

ACCOUNTABILITY

I take responsibility for the environment I create.

I will:

- Be prepared and punctual.
- Follow Club policies and procedures.
- Take responsibility for my decisions.
- Admit mistakes.
- Communicate appropriately.
- Address problems rather than ignoring them.

RESPECT

I treat every person with dignity.

I will:

- Respect athletes, parents, officials, opponents, staff, and fellow coaches.
- Recognize individual differences.
- Listen before judging.
- Protect athlete dignity.
- Never use humiliation as a coaching tool.

COURAGE

I have the courage to do what is right.

I will:

- Address inappropriate behaviour.
- Speak up when an athlete may be at risk.

- Make difficult decisions when necessary.
 - Admit when I do not know something.
 - Put athlete welfare ahead of personal ego or competitive success.
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3. ATHLETE-FIRST COACHING

Ascent is a development-first organization.

Coaches must place the long-term development and well-being of athletes ahead of personal achievement, reputation, or short-term competitive results.

Coaches will:

- Develop athletes according to their age, stage, and individual needs.
- Consider the whole athlete rather than focusing exclusively on performance.
- Avoid sacrificing long-term development for short-term results.
- Create appropriate opportunities for learning and challenge.
- Encourage athletes to take ownership of their development.
- Recognize that athletes develop at different rates.
- Avoid comparing athletes in ways that undermine confidence or team cohesion.

Winning is important. It is not the sole purpose of our program.

4. COACHING THE WHOLE PERSON

Ascent coaches are expected to understand that athletes are people before they are volleyball players.

Coaches will intentionally develop:

- Character;
- Physical literacy;
- Technical skill;
- Tactical understanding;
- Mental skills;
- Resilience;
- Leadership;
- Communication;
- Responsibility; and
- Healthy team relationships.

Coaches should seek to leave athletes with skills and habits that remain valuable long after their volleyball careers.

5. ATHLETE SAFETY AND WELL-BEING

The physical and psychological safety of athletes is a fundamental responsibility of every coach.

Coaches will:

- Follow applicable safeguarding and safe-sport requirements.
- Follow Club safety procedures.
- Take injuries and health concerns seriously.
- Never knowingly require an athlete to participate when doing so would present an unreasonable safety risk.
- Communicate appropriately with athletes about injuries and training concerns.
- Respect athlete boundaries.
- Report safety concerns through appropriate channels.
- Take reasonable steps to prevent bullying, harassment, discrimination, hazing, and intimidation.

Competitive success must never justify compromising athlete safety.

6. PROFESSIONAL BOUNDARIES

Coaches must maintain appropriate professional boundaries with athletes at all times.

Coaches will:

- Maintain an appropriate coach-athlete relationship.
- Avoid behaviour that could reasonably be interpreted as inappropriate, exploitative, or overly personal.
- Use appropriate communication channels.
- Avoid unnecessary one-on-one private interactions where safer alternatives are reasonably available.
- Follow Club requirements regarding transportation, communication, travel, accommodations, and supervision.
- Respect athlete privacy and confidentiality.

Coaches must never use their authority to obtain personal, financial, emotional, or other benefits from an athlete.

7. COMMUNICATION WITH ATHLETES

Coaches should communicate in ways that are:

Clear.

Respectful.

Age-appropriate.
Constructive.
Purposeful.

Coaches will:

- Explain expectations clearly.
- Provide meaningful feedback.
- Correct behaviour without humiliating athletes.
- Encourage athletes to ask questions.
- Listen to athletes' concerns.
- Avoid sarcasm, ridicule, or personal attacks.
- Distinguish between correcting behaviour and attacking character.

We correct behaviour. We do not attack identity.

8. COACHING FEEDBACK

Feedback should help athletes understand:

1. What they are doing;
2. What needs improvement; and
3. How they can improve it.

Coaches will avoid:

- Public humiliation;
- Personal insults;
- Threats;
- Intimidation;
- Name-calling;
- Excessive yelling directed at an individual;
- Comments intended to shame an athlete;
- Attacks on an athlete's intelligence, character, appearance, or worth.

High standards and high expectations are encouraged.

Humiliation is not.

9. FAIRNESS AND ATHLETE SELECTION

Coaches must make athlete-related decisions fairly and according to established Club processes.

This includes decisions regarding:

- Team selection;
- Team placement;
- Playing opportunities;
- Athlete development;
- Leadership roles;
- Awards;
- Tournament participation; and
- Other competitive or developmental opportunities.

Coaches must not provide preferential treatment because of:

- Family relationships;
- Friendships;
- Financial relationships;
- Personal loyalty;
- External influence;
- Social status; or
- Other irrelevant considerations.

Where a coach has a conflict of interest, the coach must disclose it in accordance with the Ascent Conflict of Interest Policy.

10. PLAYING TIME

Coaches should communicate their playing-time philosophy clearly to athletes and families.

Playing time may reasonably reflect factors such as:

- Training performance;
- Skill development;
- Tactical requirements;
- Attendance;
- Preparation;
- Athlete readiness;
- Team needs; and
- Competitive circumstances.

Coaches must never use playing time as a personal reward or punishment unrelated to legitimate coaching considerations.

Coaches must also recognize that an athlete's value to the team is not determined solely by court time.

11. TEAM CULTURE

Coaches are responsible for intentionally creating a healthy team environment.

Coaches will:

- Build trust.
- Encourage positive teammate relationships.
- Address bullying and exclusion.
- Encourage athletes to support one another.
- Celebrate improvement.
- Teach athletes how to handle adversity.
- Model emotional regulation.
- Create an environment where athletes can make mistakes while learning.

Coaches should actively prevent a culture of:

- Fear;
 - Favouritism;
 - Humiliation;
 - Excessive comparison;
 - Cliques;
 - Bullying; or
 - Winning-at-all-costs behaviour.
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12. COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS AND FAMILIES

Parents are partners in the development process.

Coaches will:

- Communicate expectations clearly.
- Provide appropriate information about team logistics and development.
- Treat parents with professionalism and respect.
- Maintain appropriate boundaries.
- Direct concerns through established Club processes.
- Protect athlete confidentiality.

Coaches should not discuss confidential information about one athlete with another athlete's parent.

Coaches should also avoid discussing athlete selection, playing time, or other sensitive matters in emotionally charged environments immediately following competition.

13. SOCIAL MEDIA AND DIGITAL COMMUNICATION

Coaches represent Ascent both online and offline.

Coaches will:

- Use appropriate communication channels.
- Maintain professional boundaries in digital communication.
- Protect athlete privacy.
- Never share confidential information.
- Never post inappropriate content involving athletes.
- Obtain required consent before sharing athlete images or information.
- Avoid public criticism of athletes, parents, officials, opponents, or fellow coaches.

Coaches must assume that digital communication may be saved, shared, or viewed outside its original context.

14. CONFIDENTIALITY

Coaches may have access to sensitive information about athletes and families.

Confidential information may include:

- Personal information;
- Athlete evaluations;
- Injuries or health information;
- Family circumstances;
- Team selection;
- Performance data;
- Behavioural concerns;
- Financial information; and
- Other non-public Club information.

Coaches must protect confidential information and only share it with individuals who have a legitimate need to know.

Confidential information must never be used for personal advantage.

15. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Coaches must disclose actual, potential, or perceived conflicts of interest.

Examples include:

- Coaching their own child;
- Close personal relationships with athletes;
- Outside coaching relationships;
- Financial relationships with athletes or families;
- Recommending businesses from which they personally benefit;
- Participating in athlete selection involving a close family member;
- Recruiting athletes for another organization;
- Outside employment or relationships that interfere with responsibilities to Ascent.

Conflicts must be managed according to the **Ascent Conflict of Interest Policy**.

16. PROFESSIONALISM

Ascent coaches are expected to conduct themselves professionally.

Coaches will:

- Arrive prepared and on time.
- Dress appropriately for their coaching role.
- Follow Club policies.
- Maintain appropriate certifications and qualifications.
- Continue professional development.
- Communicate professionally.
- Treat facilities and equipment responsibly.
- Represent Ascent positively at competitions and events.

Coaches are expected to model the standards they ask of athletes.

17. RESPECT FOR OFFICIALS AND OPPONENTS

Coaches must model sportsmanship.

Coaches will:

- Respect officials.
- Communicate disagreements appropriately.
- Avoid abusive or threatening behaviour.
- Avoid publicly humiliating officials or opponents.
- Teach athletes to compete fiercely while maintaining respect.
- Accept that officials will sometimes make mistakes.

A coach's frustration must never become an excuse for inappropriate behaviour.

18. USE OF AUTHORITY

Coaches hold significant influence over young athletes.

That authority must be exercised responsibly.

Coaches must never use their position to:

- Intimidate;
- Manipulate;
- Humiliate;
- Exploit;
- Threaten;
- Obtain personal benefits;
- Create inappropriate dependency; or
- Retaliate against an athlete or family for raising a legitimate concern.

A coach's authority exists to **serve athlete development**, not to serve the coach's ego.

19. PROHIBITED CONDUCT

The following conduct is inconsistent with the standards of Ascent Volleyball Club:

- Bullying or harassment;
- Discrimination;
- Hazing or initiation activities;
- Physical abuse or aggression;
- Sexual misconduct or inappropriate sexual behaviour;
- Threats or intimidation;
- Verbal abuse;
- Humiliation or degrading treatment;
- Retaliation;
- Deliberate discrimination in athlete opportunities;
- Falsification of records or information;
- Misuse of confidential information;
- Misuse of Club funds or resources;
- Accepting inappropriate financial benefits;
- Providing preferential treatment for personal benefit;
- Conduct that creates an unsafe environment;
- Coaching while impaired;
- Serious or repeated violations of Club policies; or
- Any conduct that materially damages the safety, integrity, or reputation of Ascent Volleyball Club.

Serious matters may be referred to the appropriate governing, sport, legal, or regulatory authority.

20. REPORTING CONCERNS

Coaches have an affirmative responsibility to report concerns rather than ignore them.

A coach must report concerns relating to:

- Athlete safety;
- Abuse or suspected abuse;
- Harassment;
- Discrimination;
- Serious bullying;
- Significant misconduct;
- Safeguarding concerns;
- Conflicts of interest; or
- Other conduct that may place athletes or the Club at risk.

Concerns should be reported through the appropriate Ascent reporting process and, where required, to the appropriate external authority.

A coach will not be penalized for making a legitimate good-faith report.

21. ACCOUNTABILITY

Ascent believes in developing coaches as well as athletes.

When a coach does not meet the standards of this Code, the Club may consider:

- The seriousness of the conduct;
- The impact on athletes or others;
- Whether the conduct was intentional;
- Whether there is a pattern of behaviour;
- The coach's willingness to take responsibility;
- Relevant circumstances; and
- Applicable Club, Volleyball BC, Volleyball Canada, and legal requirements.

Possible responses may include:

- Coaching feedback or education;
- Corrective action;
- Professional development;
- Written warning;

- Supervision or monitoring;
- Removal from a particular responsibility;
- Suspension;
- Termination of a coaching relationship; or
- Other appropriate action.

Serious misconduct may result in immediate suspension or removal pending further review.

22. THE ASCENT COACH

An Ascent coach understands that athletes will remember more than the drills we teach.

They will remember:

- How we treated them when they struggled.
- Whether we believed in them.
- Whether we listened.
- How we responded when things went wrong.
- Whether we modelled the standards we demanded.
- Whether we made them feel valued.
- Whether we helped them become more confident, resilient, and responsible.

Therefore, our coaches commit to being the kind of people we want our athletes to become.

We develop athletes.

We build character.

We pursue excellence.

We serve the athlete.

We lead by example.

COACH ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I have read and understand the Ascent Volleyball Club Coaches Code of Conduct.

I understand that coaching at Ascent is both a privilege and a responsibility. I agree to uphold the standards outlined in this Code and to represent Ascent Volleyball Club with integrity, professionalism, humility, and care.

Coach Name: _____

Coach Signature: _____

Date: _____

ASCENT VOLLEYBALL CLUB

Developing athletes. Building character. Pursuing excellence.