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I. Definitions

The following terms have these meanings in this Policy:

- “CAS” refers to Canada Artistic Swimming;
- “Coach” means any person who instructs figures or routines on a regular basis;
- “Complaint” means any report of a potential, suspected or actual breach of the Conduct Policy that is formalized in writing and is signed either by the complainant or by a Person in Leadership at SSO, if SSO is bringing forward the Complaint on its own or on the complainant’s behalf;
- “Confidential Information” means information known to the SSO Participant by virtue of his or her connection to SSO, whether or not marked “confidential”;
- “Family Member” includes a spouse, partner, natural or adoptive parent, grandparent, child or step-child, sibling, aunt, uncle, nephew or niece, the parents or close relatives of a spouse or partner, people who are in an intimate relationship and people who permanently reside together or are financially dependent on each other;
- “Including” means including but not limited to;
- “Interested SSO Participants” means SSO Participants with a conflict of interest;
- “Member” means the Regional Training Centre, Ontario and any Competitive, Recreational, Scholastic, University synchronized swimming club or Trillium awards program provider;
- “Minor athletes” refers to athletes under 18 years of age;
- “OHSA” refers to the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*, R.S.O. 1990, c. O.1;
- “Officials” means all judges including practice judges, referees and scorers;
- “Parents” refers to parents or guardians;
- “Person in Leadership” means the Executive Director or any SSO board member;
- “President” refers to the President of SSO;
- “Registrant” means any club or individual that has fulfilled the requirements of registration as required by SSO and has paid any associated registration fees to SSO. SSO uses the Registrant categories and definitions established by CAS. A complete list of Registrant categories can be found in the *CAS Registration Policy*;
- “Related Party” includes a Family Member, Coach or Club Manager or a private corporation controlled by any of these individuals;
- “SSO” refers to Synchro Swim Ontario;
- “SSO Activity” means all SSO business and activities over which SSO has jurisdiction;
- “SSO Participant” means all persons engaged in any paid or volunteer capacity with SSO or otherwise under the jurisdiction of SSO;

- “*Club Manager*” refers to all persons with a direct or indirect financial interest in an SSO Member; and
- “*Vulnerable person*” refers to persons who, because of age, disability, or other circumstances, whether temporary or permanent are in a position of dependence on others or are otherwise at a greater risk than the general population of being harmed by a person in a position of authority or trust relative to them including children, youth and people with physical, developmental, or other disabilities.

II. Application

This Policy applies to all SSO Participants, which include all persons engaged in any paid or volunteer capacity with SSO or otherwise under the jurisdiction of SSO. SSO Participants include:

- All SSO Members or Registrants;
- SSO directors, officers, committee members and volunteers;
- SSO employees and persons under contract with SSO;
- All athletes eligible for selection to, or forming part of, any team participating in competitions or events over which SSO has jurisdiction; and
- All persons working with those teams or athletes, including coaches, medical and paramedical personnel and other support persons.

This Policy applies at all times, wherever the SSO Activity takes place, which includes the SSO offices as well as external locations in Canada and abroad and includes all activities over which SSO has jurisdiction. SSO Activity includes:

- Meetings of the SSO board of directors and all SSO committee meetings;
- SSO Annual Meetings, Special Meetings or SSO hosted conferences or clinics;
- All activities related to the Regional Training Centre (RTC), Ontario;
- Participation in national or international competitions including related training and organized group travel;
- All SSO hosted meets; and
- All SSO hosted selection and assessment processes and regular training or practice time, whether inside or outside Canada.

III. Policy and Purpose

SSO Participants (as defined in Section I.) are expected to conduct themselves in all matters involving or impacting SSO, and where they may be seen to be representing SSO, with integrity and in a manner that is consistent with SSO values and the highest standards of behaviour upon which SSO’s image and reputation rests. To this end, SSO Participants will:

- Acquaint themselves with SSO’s mission, vision, values and policies and behave accordingly;
- Adhere to all federal, provincial, municipal and host country laws;
- Not participate in, condone, or engage in dishonesty, fraud, deceit, misrepresentation or illegal activities;
- Not knowingly disseminate false or misleading information about SSO or an SSO Member or Participant;
- Act, when appropriate, to correct or prevent practices that are unjust, discriminatory or otherwise in contravention of this Policy;
- Cooperate with internal or external investigations of concerns of possible misconduct under this Policy by providing honest, accurate, complete and timely information;
- Act in a responsible manner in relation to the media and content of personal websites and information posted on social media sites including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube;
- Provide a healthy and safe work and sport environment for the athlete and for themselves;
- Complete police records check and vulnerable sector screening;
- Complete the Respect in Sport Training Program as required by SSO; and
- Comply with SSO’s policies and rules.

The purpose of this Conduct Policy is to foster a positive, safe and respectful work and sport environment where:

- SSO values and expected standards of behaviour are understood, communicated and lived by all SSO Participants;
- There is adherence to all applicable laws, regardless of where the SSO Activity (as defined in Section I.) takes place; and
- The conduct of SSO Participants is ethical, transparent and fosters confidence in the integrity of SSO.

The purpose of this Policy is also:

- To define certain behaviour that is not permitted so that it is known to SSO Participants and avoided;
- To ensure the decisions and actions of SSO Participants are consistent with SSO’s vision and values.

IV. SSO Commitment to Non-retaliation

SSO Participants are expected to raise any concerns about behaviour, to report any misconduct and to work together to ensure a positive, safe and respectful work and sport environment. There

will be no retaliation for speaking up and making a truthful report of actual or possible misconduct, for participating in an investigation, or for exercising our legal rights.

It is a violation of this Policy if an SSO Participant knows of misconduct but takes no action to intervene on behalf of the athlete, employee, volunteer or other SSO Participant. Failure to report such misconduct may result in disciplinary action.

V. Behaviour Expectations and Standards

A. Anti-Doping

CAS has adopted the Canadian Anti-Doping Program. As a Provincial Sport Organization registered with CAS, SSO and its Members adhere to Canada's anti-doping rules. SSO strictly prohibits the use of restricted drugs or performance-enhancing drugs and methods. SSO is also opposed to the use of nutritional supplements and discourages their use by athletes.

All SSO Participants have a responsibility to:

- Respect any penalty enacted pursuant to a breach of the Canadian Anti-Doping Program, whether imposed by SSO or any other sport organization; and
- Refrain from associating with any person for the purpose of coaching, training, competition, instruction, administration, management, athletic development, or supervision of the sport, who has incurred an anti-doping rule violation and is serving a sanction involving a period of ineligibility imposed pursuant to the Canadian Anti-Doping Program or the World Anti-Doping Code and recognized by the Canadian Centre for Ethics in Sport.

B. Confidentiality

During the course of working or volunteering with SSO, individuals will have access to Confidential Information (as defined in Section I.). Confidential Information includes:

- Personal information about SSO Participants as defined in the SSO *Privacy Policy*;
- Information that is not known or available to the SSO Participant on a non-confidential basis prior to its disclosure to the SSO Participant including financial information, strategic plans, intellectual property, and information related to the programs, business or affairs of SSO or any SSO Member or SSO Participant; and
- Information that is not known or available to the general public other than as a result of disclosure by the SSO Participant.

Every SSO Participant has a duty to take reasonable steps to secure Confidential Information and to not disclose such Confidential Information, including once the SSO Participant ceases to work, provide services, or volunteer for SSO. An SSO Participant must not use information that is gained

due to his or her relationship with SSO for personal profit, or in order to further any personal, private or public interest. See also the SSO *Confidentiality* and *Privacy* policies.

Any intentional or negligent disclosure of Confidential Information to persons who the SSO Participant knew, or ought to have known, should not have not received the Confidential Information, or misuse, may result in sanctions under this Policy.

C. Conflict of Interest

All SSO Participants are obligated to act in the best interests of SSO and to avoid conflicts of interest. SSO Participants must avoid situations where their personal interests or the personal interests of their Related Parties (as defined in Section I.) could interfere or may conflict, directly or indirectly, with their obligations to SSO.

Even if an SSO Participant does not have an actual conflict of interest, if other people perceive one, they may still be concerned that the SSO Participant cannot act properly. For this reason, it is important to avoid the appearance of a conflict, as well as an actual one. Being seen or thought to be in a conflict of interest can damage the reputation of the SSO Participant, and the reputation of SSO.

Conflicts of interest may arise in situations involving:

- An interest, either real or perceived, that benefits the SSO Participant or a Related Party including where:
 - A pecuniary interest is derived;
 - Preferential treatment is given;
 - There is interference in the decision-making process; or
 - Personal advantage of any kind may be derived;
- Outside organizations with which the SSO Participant has an official governing responsibility, or which employ the SSO Participant or a Related Party;
- The SSO Participant having a financial interest in the outside organization; or
- Real or perceived potential to compromise the best interests of SSO.

1. Managing Conflicts of Interest

This Policy does not identify or prohibit conflicts of interest but provides a basis to manage such situations as they arise. Conflicts of interest are commonplace and cannot always be avoided.

If an SSO Participant finds him or herself in a conflict of interest or a situation where he or she believes that others may perceive them to be in a position of conflict, the SSO Participant

must declare the conflict immediately so that action can be taken to resolve the situation. This is the best way for interested SSO Participants to protect themselves and their reputation for honesty, fairness and objectivity.

a. Declaring a Conflict of Interest

SSO Participants can take one of these steps to declare a conflict of interest:

- Verbally report the conflict of interest to the Executive Director or President or to the directors or committee members at a board of directors or committee meeting;
- Disclose the conflict of interest **in** writing by sending a letter to the Executive Director or President; or
- In the case of officials, disclose the conflict of interest in writing by sending a letter to the Chair of the Ontario Officials Committee.

b. Managing Conflicts in Decision-making

Decisions or transactions that involve a real or perceived conflict of interest that have been disclosed by the SSO Participant may be considered and decided upon provided that:

- The nature and extent of the conflict of interest has been disclosed fully to the body that is considering or making the decision, and this disclosure and how it was managed is recorded in the minutes;
- The interested SSO Participant is not included in the determination of quorum for the proposed decision or transaction; and
- The interested SSO Participant abstains from voting on the proposed decision or transaction.

Minor conflicts of interest can be managed simply by disclosing them. If the Executive Director or the President or the other directors or committee members at a board of directors or committee meeting agree unanimously that the conflict is minor, the interested SSO Participant can continue to participate in the decision;

More serious conflicts will require the interested SSO Participant to temporarily recuse him or herself from meetings and to not participate in any formal discussion on the matter giving rise to the conflict of interest. The interested SSO Participant must not attempt to learn about, provide information or otherwise influence the discussion or voting on a decision or transaction, either formally at a board or committee meeting or informally through private contact, communication or discussion, except as provided below:

- On the unanimous request of the body that is considering or making the decision, the interested SSO Participant may present information or respond to questions relating to the decision or transaction.

To avoid the appearance that SSO is giving interested SSO Participants an advantage, the body that is considering or making the decision must:

- Ensure that alternate bids or estimates have been obtained; and
- Determine by a majority vote that the transaction is fair and reasonable and in SSO's best interest.

In situations where SSO Participant's objectivity and ability to carry out his or her duties and responsibilities with SSO are hindered by ongoing conflicts of interest, the SSO Participant should offer to resign from their position.

c. Recognizing When Others are in Conflict

Where an SSO Participant believes that another SSO Participant has an actual or perceived conflict of interest that has not been declared, he or she has a responsibility to inform the Executive Director or the President or the directors or committee members at a board of directors or committee meeting, as appropriate, of the potential conflict of interest.

2. Benefits, Entertainment and Gifts

SSO Participants must not solicit or accept benefits, entertainment or gifts (collectively "Gifts") in exchange for or as a condition of the exercise of their duties, or as an inducement for performing an act associated with their duties or responsibilities with SSO. Similarly, SSO Participants must not give away Gifts on behalf of SSO in exchange for, or as a condition of, any benefit for SSO or the SSO Participant.

It is the responsibility of the SSO Participant to ensure that a gift, whether received or to be given, is proper. If in doubt, the SSO Participant should consult with their immediate supervisor or a Person in Leadership (as defined in Section I.).

3. Outside Business Activity

An SSO employee or person under contract with SSO may undertake an outside business activity if there is no conflict of interest and if the satisfactory performance of the employee or contractor's job functions with SSO is not prejudiced in any way. Such activities include an outside business interest, directorship or outside employment. In addition, the following rules apply:

- The SSO employee or contractor should not engage in any activity likely to compromise SSO's reputation;
- The SSO employee or contractor should not conduct outside business on SSO time or use SSO information, equipment or facilities to conduct an outside business interest. This includes soliciting other SSO Participants to participate in an outside business activity; and
- Before taking on or continuing an outside business interest or committing to a job outside SSO, this should be discussed with the Executive Director or President to be sure these activities do not create a conflict or the appearance of a conflict.

- SSO may restrict employees from being affiliated with any SSO Member during the term of their employment. Any decision on whether there is a conflict of interest rests solely with SSO. Where a conflict of interest is deemed to exist, the employee will resolve the conflict by stopping the activity giving rise to the conflict.

4. Officials

Officials will not be selected for events or competitions where they have a conflict of interest. The following categories of people are deemed to have a conflict of interest:

- A Family Member of a competitor (as defined in Section I.);
- A current Coach of a competitor (as defined in Section I.) or a Family Member of a Coach of a competitor; and
- A Club Manager of a competitor (as defined in Section I.) or a Family Member of a Club Manager of a competitor.

5. Board and Committee Members

In addition to section (C.) above, SSO board and committee members must not allow their loyalty to SSO to be compromised by their relationship to or involvement in another organization.

SSO board and committee members must acquaint themselves with the SSO By-laws and sign any related certification.

6. Preferential Treatment

SSO Participants must not act in their official roles with SSO to assist organizations or persons in their dealings with SSO, if this may result in, or potentially appear to result in, preferential treatment to that organization or person.

7. Violations of This Policy

Any failure by SSO Participants to disclose actual or possible conflicts of interest may result in sanctions under this Policy.

D. Equity and Inclusion

SSO is committed to equity, diversity and inclusion in all of its activities. All SSO Participants share a responsibility to provide a sport and work environment that fosters these values and will ensure that they are key considerations when setting policies and developing, updating or delivering their programs. See also the SSO *Equity and Inclusion Policy*.

E. Discrimination, Harassment and Violence

All SSO Participants are expected to support a work and sport environment that fosters respect and promotes everyone's dignity and self-esteem. SSO recognizes that discrimination, harassment, bullying and violence can poison the work and sport environment, not only for the group targeted, but for many other SSO Participants. All SSO Participants must recognize that it is the impact of the behaviour on a recipient that is paramount, not the intent of the individual who engages in the perceived offending behaviour. SSO is committed to creating and maintaining a work and sport environment that is free from discrimination, harassment, sexual harassment, bullying and violence, and in which all persons are treated fairly and with respect. SSO encourages the reporting of all incidents of discrimination, harassment, bullying and violence, regardless of who the offender may be.

1. Discrimination

Discrimination means any action, behaviour or attitude that negatively affects the employment, performance or volunteer activities of an individual, where such actions, behaviour or attitude is based on a prohibited ground of discrimination under applicable human rights law, including race, colour, religion, sexual orientation, disability or age. Discrimination can take place without any intent to do harm and can be based on a person's real or perceived characteristics.

This policy also applies to any other ground of discrimination prohibited by applicable law.

Examples of discrimination include:

- Making stereotypical assumptions including making someone more or less worthy as a person on the basis of race, colour, religion, sexual orientation, disability, age, body type, athletic ability or another personal characteristic; or
- Imposing burdens or withholding or limiting access to opportunities, benefits and advantages available to others, in a way that cannot be justified.

2. Harassment

Harassment is a form of discrimination, and refers to conduct, comment or display that is known, or ought reasonably to be known, to be unwelcome and where the wrongful conduct may be linked to things like the person's race, colour, religion, sexual orientation, disability, age or body type. Harassment includes bullying and can take many forms but often involves conduct, comment or display that is insulting, intimidating, humiliating, hurtful, demeaning, belittling, malicious, degrading, or otherwise causes offence, discomfort, or personal humiliation or embarrassment to a person or group of persons. One incident could be enough to constitute harassment.

Harassment does not include:

- Interpersonal conflict or disagreement; or
- The proper exercise of performance evaluation, appropriate managerial direction, delegation, performance management or attendance management.

Specific categories of Harassment include:

a. Personal Harassment

Personal harassment is wrongful conduct directed toward an individual that the perpetrator knew, or ought reasonably to have known, would be unwelcome. This behaviour is not necessarily linked to the prohibited grounds of discrimination.

Examples of personal harassment include:

- Belittling jokes, insults, name-calling, inappropriate teasing, taunting or condescension that undermines self-esteem, diminishes performance or creates a hostile sport or work environment;
- Written or verbal abuse, threats or outbursts;
- Practical jokes that cause awkwardness or embarrassment, endanger a person's safety or negatively affect performance;
- Ignoring someone for extended periods of time or routinely or arbitrarily excluding them from practice;
- Any form of hazing; and
- The display or distribution of visual or audio material that is offensive, or that one ought to know is offensive in the circumstances.

b. Bullying

Bullying is unwanted verbal, physical or social behaviour directed to harming, intimidating, humiliating or controlling inappropriately another person. Bullying usually involves repeated incidents or a pattern of behaviour and a real or perceived power imbalance.

Examples of bullying include:

- Name-calling, inappropriate teasing, or spreading rumours, gossip or innuendo;
- Excluding or isolating someone socially, or embarrassing someone in public;
- Intimidating a person or physically abusing or threatening abuse;
- Withholding necessary information or purposefully giving the wrong information;
- Damaging, destroying or stealing personal belongings; and

- Using the internet, social media or text messaging to intimidate, put-down, spread rumours or make fun of someone.

c. Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is engaging in comments or behaviour of a sexual nature such as unwelcome sexual invitations or requests, unwanted physical contact such as touching or kissing, or innuendo or taunting about a person's body type, physical appearance or sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression where comment or behaviour is known, or ought reasonably to be known, to be unwelcome. Sexual harassment is also making sexual invitations or requests where the person making the invitation or request is in a position to confer, grant or deny a benefit or advancement and the person knows or ought reasonably to know that the invitation or request is unwelcome.

3. Violence

Violence is any actual, attempted or threatened conduct of a person that causes or is likely to cause physical or psychological harm, injury or illness or that gives a person reason to believe that he or she or another person is at risk of physical or psychological harm, injury or illness. SSO is committed to the prevention of violence and to providing a safe and respectful work and sport environment. SSO will not tolerate any type of violent behaviour within SSO offices or at SSO Activities.

a. Domestic violence

Domestic violence is defined in the OHSA as an act of abuse between an individual and a current or former intimate partner, between an individual and a child who resides with the individual, or between an individual and an adult who resides with the individual and who is related to the individual by blood, marriage, foster care or adoption, whether the abuse is physical, sexual, emotional or psychological, and may include an act of coercion, stalking, harassment or financial control, or a threat or attempt to do one of the above mentioned acts.

Should SSO become aware, or ought reasonably to be aware, that domestic violence that would likely expose a worker to physical injury may occur in the SSO office or at SSO Activities, SSO will take every precaution reasonable in the circumstances for the protection of the worker.

F. Drugs, Alcohol, Cannabis, Tobacco and E-smoking Products

SSO Participants must never provide, promote, condone or ignore substance abuse, the non-medical use of drugs or the use of performance enhancing drugs or methods and, in the case of minors, alcohol, cannabis, tobacco or e-smoking products.

SSO Participants will refrain from consumption of alcohol, cannabis, tobacco or e-smoking products while engaged in SSO Activity including SSO hosted meets or events where minors are

present. SSO Participants will exercise moderation when consuming alcohol products in adult-oriented social situations associated with SSO events.

G. Intimate or Sexual Relationships

SSO Participants must not engage in an inappropriate, intimate or sexual relationship with an individual when in a position of power, trust or authority over the individual, even if all parties are consenting adults.

H. Social Media

SC Participants are expected to act in a responsible manner in relation to the content of personal websites and information communicated and shared on blogs and over social media sites. See also the *SSO Social Media Policy*.

SSO Participants will:

- Acquaint themselves with SSO’s mission, vision, values and policies and behave accordingly;
- Protect their privacy and take care to understand the social media site’s privacy settings and terms of service;
- Take reasonable steps to secure Confidential Information and to not disclose such information;
- Maintain a clear distinction between personal and professional social media use including having two separate accounts for these purposes, as appropriate;
- Ensure that all content is appropriate for viewing by minor athletes;
- Refrain from posting images or content related to drugs, alcohol, cannabis or tobacco use; and
- Keep their posts positive and not engage in bullying or negative or critical conversations online.

VI. Specific Behaviour Expectations and Standards

In addition to Sections (III.), (IV.) and (V.) above, there are certain behaviour expectations and standards that apply to specific categories of SSO Participants, as follows:

A. Athletes

Athletes engaged in SSO Activity shall:

- Strive for personal and team achievement through complete, consistent and sincere effort;
- Show respect for themselves and for all others;

- Contribute to a positive team culture by providing positive and constructive comments to teammates that motivate and encourage continued effort;
- Recognize that any bullying behaviour will not be tolerated and let their coach or a Person in Leadership know immediately if they have witnessed bullying behaviour or have been the victim of bullying;
- Immediately report to their coach any health or medical issue that may prevent or limit their ability to train, travel or compete and, in the case of carded athletes, their ability to fulfill the carding requirements;
- Only participate in competitions for which they are eligible to compete;
- Arrive for each practice, competition, selections or other SSO Activity on time, with all appropriate gear, well-nourished and prepared to the best of their ability;
- Conduct themselves in a sportsmanlike manner, whether as competitors or spectators, and not tolerate anyone among them who does not;
- Never consume alcohol, cannabis, tobacco or e-smoking products as a minor or while competing;
- Where applicable, adhere to the CAS or SSO Athlete Agreement, its requirements and expectations; and
- Comply with SSO's rules and requirements regarding clothing, equipment, training, travel, competition and curfew.

B. Board and Committee Members

SSO directors, officers and committee members shall:

- Be responsible first and foremost to the welfare of SSO and function primarily as a member of the board or committee, not as a member of any particular constituency;
- Conduct themselves openly, professionally, lawfully and in good faith in a way that is aligned with and enforces SSO's values and ethical standards;
- Exercise due diligence in holding their fiduciary responsibility to SSO Participants;
- Promote an appropriate culture that emphasizes the fair handling of conflicts of interest;
- Ensure that all directors, officers and committee members are given sufficient opportunity to express opinions, and that all opinions are given due consideration and weight;
- Respect the decisions of the majority and resign if unable to do so;
- Commit the time to attend meetings and to be diligent in their preparation for and participation in discussions;
- Have a thorough knowledge and understanding of all SSO's governing by-laws, policies and rules; and

- Promote a culture that values complaints and their effective resolution.

C. Coaches and Club Managers

Coaches and Club Managers engaged in SSO Activity shall:

- Demonstrate responsible leadership and adhere to the NCCP Code of Ethics;
- Act in the best interest of the athlete's development as a whole person;
- Ensure a safe environment by selecting activities and establishing controls that are suitable for the age, experience, ability and fitness level of the involved athletes, and educating athletes as to their responsibilities in contributing to a safe environment;
- Work cooperatively with sport medical professionals in the diagnosis, treatment and management of athletes' medical and psychological treatments;
- Never encourage or permit an athlete to return to play prematurely or without the clearance of a medical professional following a serious injury;
- Accept and promote athletes' personal goals and refer athletes to other coaches and sports specialists as appropriate and as opportunities arise;
- Never withhold information or take any action that could influence inappropriately athlete decision-making about participation in national or provincial team or other training programs;
- Support the coaching staff of national or provincial team or other training programs, should an athlete qualify for participation in one of these programs;
- Not use their position as a national or provincial team coach to solicit athletes (or the Parents of minor athletes) unless first receiving approval from the coaches who are responsible for the athlete;
- Provide athletes and the Parents of minor athletes with the information required to be involved in the decisions that affect the athlete;
- Exemplify conduct they wish their athletes to adopt in dress and behaviour;
- Maintain professional boundaries with athletes and refrain from interacting with minor athletes on social media other than through a distinct professional account;
- Ensure all online dialogue and interactions with minor athletes are for synchro-related purposes only;
- Ensure their athletes understand that discrimination, harassment, bullying and violence will not be tolerated, and create a culture of disclosure and reporting at the athlete level;
- Use inoffensive language and refrain from yelling at athletes in a manner that serves no productive training or motivational purpose;
- Not criticize other coaches or SSO or SSO Members and Participants publicly and interact in a professional manner; and

- Comply with SSO’s rules and requirements regarding dress code.

D. Officials

Officials engaged in SSO Activity shall:

- Accept an assignment to officiate at a competition or event only if they intend to honour that commitment, and let the appropriate person know as soon as possible if, for any reason, they are unable to attend;
- Conduct themselves openly, professionally, impartially and in good faith in all officiating activities;
- Avoid endorsing or posting information about an athlete, coach or other SSO Participant that may suggest a preferential relationship or give the appearance of a conflict of interest;
- Declare a conflict of interest where applicable, and refrain from officiating in situations where the perception of a conflict of interest may be present;
- Make independent judgements;
- Commit to understanding and practicing their role as judge, referee, scorer or other official, and act appropriately within that role;
- Maintain technical knowledge of artistic swimming and all current rules and rule changes;
- Be accountable for decisions made while officiating;
- Share technical knowledge and experience of artistic swimming with athletes, parents, coaches, meet managers, volunteers, SSO employees and other officials to enhance the development of the sport;
- Not criticize other officials or SSO and SSO Participants publicly and interact in a professional manner; and
- Comply with SSO’s rules and requirements regarding dress code.

E. Parents and Spectators

Parents or spectators engaged in SSO Activity shall:

- Never ridicule an athlete for making a mistake during a performance or practice and provide positive comments that motivate and encourage all athletes’ continued effort;
- Respect the decisions and judgments of officials and encourage athletes to do the same;
- Respect and show appreciation to all competitors and to the coaches, officials, meet managers, volunteers and other SSO Participants who give their time to the sport of artistic swimming;
- Refrain from the use of bad language, and not interfere with events or harass competitors, coaches, officials, meet managers, volunteers or other parents or spectators.

F. Persons in Leadership

Persons in Leadership shall:

- Promote awareness and understanding of SSO values and the Conduct Policy;
- Consider equity, diversity and inclusion when setting policies and developing, updating or delivering SSO programs;
- Act as a role model through their behaviour, action and words and encourage and motivate other SSO Participants to do the same;
- Build trust of SSO employees, athletes and other SSO Participants by listening to and understanding their interests and needs;
- Instill an atmosphere of collaboration;
- Maintain an environment where everyone feels comfortable asking questions and raising concerns;
- Assist people to make a complaint, if needed;
- Ensure that any possible or actual misconduct is investigated promptly and thoroughly, as appropriate; and
- Impose appropriate disciplinary or corrective measures when misconduct has been substantiated, regardless of the position or authority of the offender.

G. Members

Members registered with SSO shall:

- Adhere to all SSO's governing by-laws, policies and rules and, where necessary, amend their own rules to comply with those of SSO;
- Recognize that their websites, blogs and social media accounts are seen as extensions of SSO and must reflect SSO's mission, vision and values;
- Ensure that all athletes and coaches participating in SSO sanctioned competitions and events are registered and in good standing;
- Ensure that all coaches and other individuals participating in SSO Activity have completed their police records check and vulnerable sector screening as required by SSO;
- Promote a culture that values complaints and their effective resolution;
- Ensure that any possible or actual misconduct is investigated promptly and thoroughly, as appropriate;
- Advise the Executive Director immediately of any situation where a complainant has publicized a complaint in the media;

- Impose appropriate disciplinary or corrective measures when misconduct has been substantiated, regardless of the position or authority of the offender; and
- Provide the Executive Director with a copy of a report on the outcome of any investigation by the Member into harassment or violence.

VII. Complaint Process

A. Organizational Commitment

All SSO Participants will cooperate with internal or external investigations of concerns of possible misconduct under this Policy by providing honest, accurate, complete and timely information.

SSO expects all employees, Persons in Leadership and Members to be committed to fair, effective and efficient complaint handling.

B. Accessibility

SSO will ensure that information about how and where Complaints may be made is well publicized, including on the SSO website. SSO expects employees and Persons in Leadership to understand SSO's complaint handling procedures and to assist people who wish to make a Complaint, including pursuing an informal resolution if appropriate.

C. Confidentiality

SSO recognizes that it may be extremely difficult for a person to come forward with a Complaint, and also that it may be devastating for a person to be accused wrongly of misconduct. SSO will endeavor to keep all Complaints under this Policy confidential, except where disclosure is required by law or is in the best interests of the public.

None of the parties to a Complaint will disclose confidential information about the Complaint to any person not involved in the proceedings.

D. Representation by a Responsible Adult

If the complainant is a minor athlete or other vulnerable person, a Complaint may be brought forward by a parent or other responsible adult who may act on their behalf and be present during the Complaint process.

E. Anonymous Complaints

SSO will accept anonymous Complaints if there is a compelling reason to do so and will carry out a confidential investigation of the issues raised where there is enough information provided.

F. Right to Withdraw from Further Action

A complainant has the right to withdraw from any further action in connection with a Complaint at any stage, even though SSO might continue to investigate a Complaint of a serious nature.

G. Responding to Complaints

1. Informal Resolution

SSO encourages individuals to first attempt to resolve issues under this Conduct Policy informally, whenever possible. Options for informal resolution include speaking to the person and informing the individual that the conduct was inappropriate and contrary to this Policy and asking for it to stop or requesting assistance from a supervisor or any Person in Leadership at SSO.

If this approach fails to resolve the issue, or if the circumstances are such that an informal resolution is not possible or appropriate, the formal process outlined below should be used.

2. Respect in Sport Resource Line

SSO Participants who have completed the Respect in Sport Group Activity Leader Training Program have the opportunity to access the Respect in Sport resource line. This 24/7 confidential and anonymous resource line provides advice on responding to inappropriate behaviour and is designed to assist in determining the most appropriate course of action to take. The Respect in Sport Resource Line may be accessed at: <https://synchro-canada.respectgroupinc.com>.

3. Initial Reporting

SSO expects SSO Participants to raise any concerns about behaviour and to report any misconduct. To this end, a report of a potential, suspected or actual breach of this Policy may be made verbally or in writing to any Person in Leadership at SSO. A Person in Leadership includes the Executive Director or any SSO board member.

Once a report has been received, the Person in Leadership to whom the report was made will inform the Executive Director and President (if the Executive Director or President did not receive the report) of the report, unless they are the subject of the report or have a material personal interest in the matter.

4. Formalizing a Complaint

In order for a report to be investigated and adjudicated, it must be formalized in writing with a brief overview of the matter sent by email to the Executive Director, at which point it will be considered a Complaint. A Complaint must be signed either by the complainant or by a Person in Leadership, if SSO is bringing forward the Complaint on its own or on the complainant's behalf.

The overview of the Complaint should include details of the alleged misconduct, including dates, times, locations, a description of action, account of dialogue, the name of the perpetrator(s) and any witnesses or names of other individuals who may have other relevant information. The

Executive Director will assist the complainant in preparing a written, formal complaint if required. Once a Complaint has been received, the Executive Director will inform the President of the Complaint. The Executive Director will acknowledge receipt of the Complaint to the complainant.

The parties to a Complaint are SSO, the respondent and the complainant, if any.

Depending on the nature of the Complaint, the Executive Director may investigate personally, involve the Human Resources Committee or appoint an independent third-party investigator or external mediator. The Executive Director will always appoint an independent third-party investigator in situations where the complainant has publicized the complaint in the media, more than one person has alleged harassment, or the allegations are of a serious nature (e.g., an ongoing pattern of harassment, sexual harassment or violence).

5. Initial Screening

The Executive Director has the following responsibilities:

- To determine whether the complaint is trivial, frivolous or vexatious; and
- To determine whether the complaint falls under the jurisdiction of this Policy.

If the complaint is dismissed based on the grounds referred to above, the Executive Director will inform the President. The Executive Director will advise the complainant of the decision to dismiss the complaint in writing and of his or her right to appeal the decision.

6. Harassment and Violence

SSO will ensure an investigation is conducted into all allegations of harassment or violence, whether the SSO Participant has made an initial verbal or written report, a formal Complaint or SSO is otherwise aware of an incident(s) (e.g., if an SSO employee witnessed it or learned about it from another SSO Participant). SSO has a legal responsibility to maintain a harassment-free work and sport environment that goes beyond the circumstances of the individual Complaint. If the complainant chooses not to pursue a Complaint, the Executive Director in consultation with the President must determine if the alleged harassment is serious enough to warrant an investigation by SSO.

7. Objectivity

No Person in Leadership who is the subject of a Complaint, or who has a material personal interest in the matter, shall participate in the complaint process once it has been formalized (other than as a complainant, witness or respondent, as applicable). To this end, if the Executive Director is involved in the Complaint, the President will lead the complaint process. The Executive Director or President may assign the matter to any other Person in Leadership if required.

8. Interim Measures

The Executive Director may impose interim measures pending the investigation and disposition of a Complaint where the Executive Director is of the view that such measures are in the best interest of the complainant, respondent or SSO.

9. Internal Resolution

The Executive Director may choose to investigate the Complaint personally or to appoint a panel of three persons of the Executive Director's choosing to hear the Complaint. The Executive Director will serve as the Chair of the panel. The Executive Director or the panel may obtain independent advice, as appropriate.

The Executive Director will advise the respondent of the Complaint and will provide the respondent with a copy of the written Complaint and of this Policy. The respondent will be given an opportunity to submit a written response to the allegations within a reasonable period of time, but in no event fewer than 24 hours and no more than one week.

The Executive Director may request a hearing, which may be in-person or by telephone or electronic means. The Executive Director may request that other individuals participate and give evidence at a hearing. These decisions are at the sole discretion of the Executive Director and may not be appealed.

The Executive Director will determine how the hearing should proceed, provided that:

- The complainant and respondent are given reasonable written notice of the format of the hearing including the day, time and, in the case of an in-person hearing, place of the hearing;
- Timelines for written statements are prescribed and copies of any written documents are provided to the complainant and respondent in advance of the hearing;
- The complainant and respondent may be accompanied by a representative including legal counsel at their own expense; and
- The decision on whether misconduct has been substantiated will be by a majority vote.

If the respondent declines to submit a written response or to participate in a hearing, the hearing will proceed, and a written investigation report will nonetheless be issued.

10. Access to an Independent Third-party Investigator

The Executive Director may choose to appoint an independent third-party investigator to help in the resolution of a Complaint. This decision may be taken at any point in the complaint process where it is appropriate and where such an approach would be beneficial to all parties. SSO will assume all expenses associated with retaining an independent third-party investigator.

The Executive Director may consult with the investigator during the course of the investigation, may review the investigation report in draft and may provide additional terms of reference to, or request clarification from, the investigator, provided that none of the involvement is for the purpose of influencing the findings, or will compromise the independence of the investigator.

11. Mediation

If the Executive Director determines mediation could be a successful alternative to the more formal complaint process, the Executive Director may suggest mediation and if the complainant and respondent are willing to enter into mediation, the Executive Director will select and provide at SSO's expense, a mediator to mediate the matter.

H. Decision

The Executive Director will be responsible for determining whether misconduct has been substantiated in light of the findings of fact contained in the investigation report and for deciding what disciplinary or corrective action is appropriate. The Executive Director will inform the President of this decision who will, in turn, inform the SSO board of directors.

The complainant and respondent will be advised of the Executive Director's decision within a reasonable period of time, but in no event more than two weeks following the conclusion of an investigation. A summary of the written investigation report will be shared with the parties, but the full report will be considered confidential and will not be shared with anyone other than the President. The Executive Director will advise the complainant and the respondent of their right to appeal the decision.

I. Disciplinary Action

SSO Participants against whom a Complaint is substantiated

In all cases, the Executive Director will draft and retain a Complaint report which, together with investigation report, will become part of the respondent's permanent record.

Where the Executive Director determines that a Complaint is vexatious, retaliatory or frivolous, it may impose disciplinary action of the nature referred to above against the complainant.

Enforcement of any disciplinary or corrective action is the responsibility of the SSO board of directors. Failure to comply with disciplinary measures will result in automatic suspension from all SSO Activity until such time as the measures have been complied with.

VIII. Appeals

A. Organizational Commitment

SSO recognizes the right of any SSO Participant to appeal a decision of SSO that he or she considers unfair or unjust and provides for an appeal process that is intended to be fair, timely and affordable.

B. Scope of Appeal

Any SSO Member who is affected by a decision of the SSO board, of any Committee of the board or individual who has been delegated to make decisions on behalf of SSO or its board has the right to appeal that decision provided there are sufficient grounds for the appeal as set out below. This Appeal Policy will not apply to decisions relating to:

- Employment;
- Infractions for doping offences, which are handled in accordance with the Canadian Anti-doping Program;
- The rules of the sport as set out in the SSO Rulebook;
- Team selection criteria;
- Disputes arising during competitions, which have their own appeal procedures; or
- Commercial matters or labour disputes for which another appeal process already exists under the applicable law or contract.

C. Grounds for Appeal

A disciplinary decision under this Policy may be appealed on the following grounds only:

- The decision under appeal was made without authority or jurisdiction;
- The investigation was conducted in an unfair or biased manner;
- Substantial new evidence has become available after the decision;
- The disciplinary or corrective action imposed was excessive or inappropriate; or
- A complainant may appeal a decision by the Executive Director not to deal with a Complaint.

D. Confidentiality

None of the parties to an appeal will disclose confidential information about the appeal to any person not involved in the proceedings.

E. Objectivity

No Person in Leadership who is the subject of a Complaint, or who has a material personal interest in the matter, shall participate in the appeal process (other than as an appellant or interested party, as applicable). To this end, if the Executive Director is involved in the appeal, the President will lead the appeal process. The Executive Director or President may assign the matter to any other Person in Leadership if required.

F. Representation by a Responsible Adult

If the appellant is a minor athlete or other vulnerable person, an appeal may be brought forward by a parent or other responsible adult who may act on their behalf and be present during the appeal process.

G. Appeal Process

1. Notice of Appeal

A notice of appeal of a decision under this Policy must be made in writing to the Executive Director within fourteen days of the appellant receiving notice of the Executive Director's decision and any disciplinary or corrective action and must state the grounds for the appeal and specific reasons for the appeal as well as any evidence that supports the grounds for the appeal.

The parties to an Appeal are SSO, the appellant, the respondent and any interested parties.

A copy of the notice of appeal will be provided immediately to the President, the respondent and to every person entitled to participate as an interested party in the appeal. Respondent refers to the body or individual whose decision is being appealed. Interested parties include individuals who can be directly affected by an appeal decision.

Any individual wishing to initiate an appeal beyond the fourteen-day period must provide a written request stating reasons for an exemption to this requirement. The decision to allow or not allow an appeal outside the fourteen-day period is at the discretion of the Executive Director in consultation with the President and may not be appealed.

2. Appointment of Appeal Committee

An appeal under this Policy will be heard and determined by an Appeal Committee appointed by the Executive Director as soon as feasible, but in no event later than thirty days from the date of the notice of appeal referred to above. The Appeal Committee will consist of a single Adjudicator to hear the appeal. This individual may be an SSO Participant or an external appointee.

In extraordinary circumstances and at the discretion of the Executive Director in consultation with the President, a panel of three persons may be appointed to hear the appeal. In this event, the Executive Director will appoint one of the panel's members to serve as the Chair. None of the persons hearing the appeal may have been previously involved in the matter, have a significant relationship with any of the parties to the appeal or otherwise have a real or perceived conflict of interest.

3. Initial Screening

The Appeal Committee has the following responsibilities:

- To determine whether the notice of appeal was submitted in a timely manner;
- To determine whether the appeal falls under the jurisdiction of this Policy;

- To determine whether the appeal is trivial, frivolous or vexatious; and
- To decide whether there are sufficient grounds for the appeal.

If the appeal is denied based on the grounds referred to above, the Appeal Committee will advise the appellant in writing of the reasons for the decision. This decision may not be appealed.

4. Procedure for Appeal Hearing

The Appeal Committee may request a hearing, which may be in-person or by telephone or electronic means. The Appeal Committee may request that other individuals participate and give evidence at a hearing. These decisions are at the sole discretion of the Appeal Committee and may not be appealed.

The Appeal Committee will determine how the hearing should proceed, provided that:

- The appellant(s), respondent and any interested parties are given reasonable written notice of the format of the appeal including the day, time and, in the case of an in-person hearing, place of the hearing;
- Timelines for written statements are prescribed and copies of any written documents are provided to the Appeal Committee and to all other parties in advance of the hearing;
- Any of the parties may be accompanied by a representative including legal counsel at their own expense; and
- The decision will be by a majority vote as applicable.

The following persons may appear before the Appeal Committee at its hearing and make representations in the appeal:

- The appellant(s);
- The respondent;
- Any interested parties; and
- Any other person invited by the Appeal Committee to make representations or permitted to attend.

If a party to the appeal declines to submit a written response or to participate in a hearing, the hearing will proceed, and a decision will nonetheless be issued.

The appellant bears the onus of proof and must demonstrate, on a balance of probabilities, that the respondent has made a procedural error as described in the Grounds for Appeal.

In fulfilling its duties, the Appeal Committee may obtain independent advice.

H. Appeal Decision

The Appeal Committee's deliberations shall take place *in camera*. No other person shall be present during the deliberations.

The Appeal Committee, by a majority of votes cast, may:

- Reject the appeal and confirm the decision being appealed;
- Uphold the appeal and refer the matter back to the Executive Director for further investigation and a new decision; or
- Uphold the appeal and vary the decision.

The Appeal Committee will provide written reasons for its decision. A copy of the written reasons will be provided to the Executive Director, the President, the appellant, respondent and to any interested parties in the appeal. In extraordinary circumstances, the Appeal Committee may issue an oral decision or a summary written decision, with reasons to follow within a reasonable delay.

I. Liability Disclaimer

Except in cases of willful misconduct, the Appeal Committee will bear no liability for any act or omission in connection with the resolution of a dispute under this Policy. Members of the Appeal Committee cannot be called as witnesses during an appeal or before any court of competent jurisdiction, including with respect to costs.

No action or proceeding may be brought against SSO or SSO Participants in respect of a dispute, unless SSO is failing or refusing to comply with the provisions set out in this Policy on complaint resolution or the appeals process.