

Athlete Protection Guidelines

Definitions

1. The following terms have these meanings in these Guidelines:
 - a. “Person in Authority” – An individual who holds a position of authority within the NBBA including, but not limited to, coaches, managers, support personnel, chaperones, and directors
 - b. “Vulnerable Participants” – Includes minors and vulnerable adults (people who, because of age, disability or other circumstance, are in a position of dependence on others or are otherwise at a greater risk than the general population of being harmed by people in positions of trust or authority)

Purpose

2. These athlete protection guidelines describe how Persons in Authority can maintain a safe sport environment for athletes.

Interactions between Persons in Authority and Athletes – Rule of Two

3. For interactions between Persons and Authority and Athletes, the NBBA strongly recommends the ‘Rule of Two’ for all Persons in Authority who interact with athletes. The ‘Rule of Two’ is a directive that says that an athlete must never be alone one-on-one with an unrelated Person in Authority.
4. The NBBA recognizes that fully implementing the ‘Rule of Two’ may not always be possible. Consequently, at a minimum, interactions between Persons in Authority and Athletes must respect the following:
 - a. The training environment should be open and transparent so that all interactions between Persons in Authority and Athletes are observable
 - b. Private or one-on-one situations must be avoided unless they are open and observable by another adult or Athlete
 - c. Persons in Authority shall not invite or have an unrelated Vulnerable Participant (or Vulnerable Participants) in their home without the written permission and concurrent knowledge of the Vulnerable Participant's parent or guardian
 - d. Vulnerable Participants must not be in any situation where they are alone with an unrelated Person in Authority without another screened adult or Athlete present unless prior written permission is obtained from the Vulnerable Participant’s parent or guardian

Practices and Competitions

5. For practices and competitions, the NBBA recommends:
 - a. A Person in Authority should never be alone with a Vulnerable Participant prior to or following a competition or practice unless the Person in Authority is the Vulnerable Participant’s parent or guardian
 - b. If the Vulnerable Participant is the first Athlete to arrive, the Athlete’s parent should remain until another Athlete or Person in Authority arrives

- c. If a Vulnerable Participant would potentially be alone with a Person in Authority following a competition or practice, the Person in Authority should ask another Person in Authority (or a parent or guardian of another Athlete) to stay until all of the Athletes have been picked up. If an adult is unavailable, another Athlete, who is preferably not a Vulnerable Participant, should be present in order to avoid the Person in Authority being alone with a Vulnerable Participant
- d. Persons in Authority giving instructions, demonstrating skills, or facilitating drills or lessons to an individual Athlete should always do so within earshot and eyesight of another Person in Authority
- e. Persons in Authority and Athletes should take steps to achieve transparency and accountability in their interactions. For example, a Person in Authority and an Athlete who know they will be away from other Participants for a lengthy period of time must inform another Person in Authority where they are going and when they are expected to return. Persons in Authority should always be reachable by phone or text message

Communications

- 6. For communication between Persons in Authority and Athletes, the NBBA recommends:
 - a. Group messages, group emails or team pages are to be used as the regular method of communication between Persons in Authority and athletes
 - b. Persons in Authority may only send personal texts, direct messages on social media or emails to individual athletes when necessary and only for the purpose of communicating information related to team issues and activities (e.g., non-personal information)
 - c. Electronic communication between Persons in Authority and Athletes that is personal in nature should be avoided. If such communication occurs, it must be recorded and available for review by another Person in Authority and/or by the Athlete's parent/guardian (when the Athlete is a Vulnerable Participant)
 - d. Parents and guardians may request that their child not be contacted by Persons in Authority using any form of electronic communication and/or to request that certain information about their child may not be distributed in any form of electronic communications
 - e. All communication between Persons in Authority and athletes must be between the hours of 6:00am and midnight unless extenuating circumstances exist
 - f. Communication concerning drugs or alcohol use (unless regarding its prohibition) is not permitted
 - g. Persons in Authority are not permitted to ask athletes to keep a secret for them
 - h. A Person in Authority should not become overly-involved in an athlete's personal life

Travel

- 7. For travel involving Persons in Authority and Athletes, the NBBA recommends:
 - a. Teams or groups of Athlete shall always have at least two Persons in Authority with them
 - b. For mixed gender teams or groups of Athletes, there should be one Person in Authority from each gender
 - c. Screened parents or other volunteers will be available in situations when two Persons in Authority cannot be present

- d. No Person in Authority may drive a vehicle alone with an Athlete unless the Person in Authority is the Athlete's parent or guardian
- e. A Person in Authority may not share a room or be alone in a hotel room with an athlete unless the Person in Authority is the athlete's parent or guardian
- f. Room or bed checks during overnight stays must be done by two Persons in Authority
- g. For overnight travel when athletes share a hotel room, roommates will be age-appropriate (e.g., within 2 years of age) and of the same gender identity

Locker Room / Changing Area / Meeting Room

- 8. For locker rooms, changing areas and other closed meeting spaces, the NBBA recommends:
 - a. Interactions between a Person in Authority and an individual athlete should not occur in any room where there is a reasonable expectation of privacy such as the locker room, meeting room, restroom, or changing area. A second Person in Authority should be present for any necessary interaction in any such room
 - b. If Persons in Authority are not present in the locker room or changing area, or if they are not permitted to be present, they should still be available outside the locker room or changing area and be able to enter the room or area if required

Physical Contact

- 9. The NBBA understands that some physical contact between Persons in Authority and athletes may be necessary for various reasons including, but not limited to, teaching a skill or tending to an injury. For physical contact, the NBBA recommends:
 - a. Unless it is not possible because of serious injury or other circumstance, a Person in Authority should always clarify with an athlete where and why any touch will occur. The Person in Authority must make clear that they are requesting to touch the athlete and not requiring the physical contact
 - b. Infrequent, non-intentional physical contact, particularly contact that arises out of an error or a misjudgment on the part of the athlete during a training session, is permitted
 - c. Making amends, such as an apology or explanation, is encouraged to further help educate athletes on the difference between appropriate and inappropriate contact
 - d. Hugs lasting longer than 5 seconds, cuddling, physical horseplay, and physical contact initiated by the Person in Authority is not permitted. The NBBA is aware that some younger athletes may initiate hugging or other physical contact with a Person in Authority for various reasons (e.g., such as crying after a poor performance), but this physical contact should always be limited.