



Code of Conduct

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Introduction

This Code of Conduct applies to anyone active in fencing in Ireland. It addresses the minimum levels of behaviour, conduct, and good practice procedures. Outlines within the code of conduct, are the following relevant roles:

- Fencers
- Coaches
- Supporters
- Parents/Guardians
- Referees
- Clubs & Club Members

This Code of Conduct is in keeping with Fencing Ireland's commitment to fostering and maintaining a community in Irish fencing characterised by sportsmanship, respect, fairness, and integrity among all fencers, coaches, athletes, officials, parents/guardians, and supporters. In line with this commitment, Fencing Ireland and the Irish fencing community will not accept abuse in any form.

This Code of Conduct covers the behaviour of anyone involved in fencing in Ireland before, during, and after competitions or training are conducted, no matter the sporting environment. All behaviours are covered, conduct whether in person, in writing, or using any form of electronic and social media communication channels.

Fencers, Coaches, Supporters, Parents/Guardians, Referees, Clubs and other personnel should recognise the pivotal role that each and many others, play in the development of sport, and should always support one another when fulfilling their roles.

Enforcement

Fencing Ireland reserves the right to take any steps deemed necessary to ensure the application of this code of conduct, including but not limited to such measures as issuing a caution, monetary fines, expulsion from events, suspension from attending events/training, and suspension or cancellation of membership.

Clubs might also have policies under which they might apply similar penalties.

Incidents of alleged criminal behaviour or suspected criminal behaviour will be reported to the relevant authorities.

Everyone in Irish fencing is entitled to

- Be treated fairly by everyone.
- Feel safe and secure.
- Have a voice in the decisions that affect you.
- Be listened to.
- Be believed.
- Be treated with dignity and respect.
- Train and compete at a level that is suitable for your age and ability.
- Say no to something which makes you feel uncomfortable.
- Make complaints and have them dealt with.
- Get help when you need it.
- Confidentiality.

Conduct expected of those involved in Irish fencing

Everyone

Should always

- Adopt the code of conduct as the basic level of agreement between Fencing Ireland, the clubs, the participants, the coaches, referee/officials, parents/ guardians and supporters and others who may be involved in the sport.
- Ensure that the sport is played and conducted in accordance with disciplined and sporting behaviour and acknowledge that it is not sufficient to rely solely upon the referees/officials to uphold the code of conduct.
- Promote the responsibility and accountability for their conduct in accordance with the policies, procedures and further codes of conduct in the sport.
- Respect fellow participants, members, officials, volunteers and opponents regardless of gender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, age, disability, race, religion, and membership of the Traveller community.
- Follow all relevant Fencing Ireland policies and procedures, including anti-doping policies.
- Respect the decisions of all referees/officials, Committees and Councils.
- Maintain, demonstrate and promote the highest standards of respect.
- Demonstrate a positive attitude to the sport and activities.
- Listen to coaches, referees, and officials.
- Actively discourage participants from abusing referees, officials, members, or opponents.
- Promote the reputation of fencing and take all steps to prevent it from being brought into disrepute.
- Respect the rights, dignity and worth of every person.
- Act as good role models.
- Implement, support, and promote the code of conduct.
- Maintain, demonstrate and promote the highest standards of integrity.
- Promote the highest standards of personal conduct.
- Comply with the policies and procedures within Irish fencing, including the policies of Fencing Ireland and, where relevant, clubs or other bodies.
- Promote and support fair play.
- Show appreciation to volunteers, coaches, clubs, and officials.
- Cooperate with any investigation in respect of an alleged breach of the code of conduct.

Must never

- Shout, argue, abuse physically or verbally referees/officials, at any time.
- Shout, argue, abuse physically or verbally participants, supporters, parents guardians, or any other participant at any time.

- Use violence towards participants, coaches, officials, opponents, or supporters.
- Use foul, provocative or otherwise unacceptable language or racial and/or sectarian or homophobic references towards a participant, an opponent, coach, referee, official, or supporter by words, deeds, or gestures.
- Use any other forms of abuse.
- Abuse, threaten or intimidate a referee/official/participant/volunteer, on or off the sporting environment.
- Do anything which is likely to intimidate, offend, insult, humiliate or discriminate against any other person on the ground of their gender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, age, disability, race, religion, and membership of the Traveller community.
- Use social media to abuse participants, opponents, coaches, referees/officials, volunteers or other individuals.
- Use social media or social media apps for the distribution of offensive content, to taunt, bully or racially abuse others.
- Use social media to implicate or undermine participants, opponents, coaches, referees/officials, volunteers or other individuals.
- Enter the piste area, before, during or after a match, unless authorised to do so.
- Undertake any other unsporting like behaviour.
- Publish or cause to be published criticism of the way any other club/organisation/committee handled or resolved any dispute or disciplinary matter resulting from a breach of the code of conduct or rules of the sport.
- Engage in any type of harassment, including verbal, physical, sexual or any other type of harassment.

Fencers

Should always

- Act in accordance with the rules of fencing.
- Encourage and applaud good performances and effort from clubmates and opponents alike, regardless of the result.
- Thank opponents and officials at the end.
- Show respect to your opponents. Without them there would be no sport or competitions.

Must never

- Shout at or argue with their coach, participants or opponents.
- Use unfair or bullying tactics to gain advantage or isolate other participants.
- Behave or act in any way that infringes the rules of the sport or that seeks to gain an unfair advantage.
- Aggressively challenge a referee's or other official's decision or integrity.

Coaches

Should always

- Ensure that all activities are inclusive and allow all players to participate in an enjoyable way.
- Instil a positive attitude towards sport in all participants.
- Involve parents/guardians and other club members in a culture of promotion of best practice.
- Act with integrity and objectivity in sport.
- Encourage fair play and ensure safety is paramount in sport.
- Put welfare of participants first.
- Be qualified and up to date with the latest rules, coaching knowledge and skills.
- Avail of assessments, participate in continuous professional development when required and other supports to maintain and improve performance.
- Coaches working with under 18's must:
 - undertake agreed Garda Vetting and maintain up to date child safeguarding training as specified and required by Fencing Ireland and Sport Ireland guidance. Coaches should always act in accordance with the guidance provided in that training.
 - Plan and run age-appropriate sessions.
 - Avoid the use of alcohol at all times whilst responsible for young people e.g. training sessions, events and on trips with young fencers.
- Demonstrate appropriate good behaviour by not using foul language, and by not engaging in abusive language or deeds or by harassing participants, supporters, coaches, or referees/officials.

Must never

- Ridicule or scold a fencer for making a mistake during the sport or competition.
- Aggressively challenge a referee's or other official's decision or integrity.

Parents/guardians

Should always

- Act as good role models by always behaving in accordance with the standards of behaviour set out in this code of conduct, and
- Actively encourage their children to act in accordance with those same standards of behaviour.
- Encourage and applaud good performances and effort from clubmates and opponents alike, regardless of the result.
- Teach their child that giving their best is as important as winning.

Must never

- Ridicule or scold their child or anyone else for making a mistake during the sport or competition.
- Berate your own child or any other child for their standard of play.

Spectators

Should always

- Encourage and applaud good performances and effort from those who you are supporting and their opponents alike, regardless of the result.
- Listen to coaches, referees, and officials – follow the rules of fencing and the

Referees

Should always

- Act with the utmost integrity and impartiality when refereeing.
- Promote Fair Play and encourage all participants and fellow officials to always play by the rules of the sport.
- Communicate decisions to participants in an effective and constructive manner in consideration of the age groups taking part.
- Deal with dissent firmly and fairly.
- Remain positive when dealing with participants and/or coaches, parents/guardians, and supporters.
- Work as a team with other referee/officials when required.
- Maintain composure regardless of the circumstances.
- Report breaches of the code of conduct to the Directoire Technique and/or Fencing Ireland.

Clubs & Club Members

Should always

- Encourage and facilitate their members, coaches, staff, and officials to act in accordance with the code of conduct.
- Ensure that all activities are inclusive and allow all players to participate in an enjoyable way.
- Involve parents/guardians and other club members in a culture of promotion of best practice.
- Ensure safe induction and supervision of volunteers/employees.
- Cooperate with any investigation in respect of an alleged breach of the code of conduct.
- Understand and implement the complaints and disciplinary procedures of their sport.
- Manage disciplinary matters appropriately.
- Avoid the use of alcohol at all times whilst responsible for young people e.g. training sessions, events and on trips with young fencers.
- Report misconduct of participants or supporters' conscious of the fact that such matters may be followed up in accordance with rules set by a club or organisation.
- Ensure complaints including rumours are not ignored and are dealt with appropriately, following the relevant procedures.
- Report incidents/accidents to the relevant persons.

- Report incidents/accidents to the parents or guardians (if a child under the age of 18 is involved).
- Keep and store securely all documentation in a confidential manner with respect to meetings, correspondence, and minutes of committee meetings.

Set up, maintain, revise, and implement policies and procedures in the best interests of participants and taking into consideration the best interest of the club/committee and/or Fencing Ireland.