

Milton Youth Volleyball Club Conflict of Interest Policy

1. Purpose

Milton Youth Volleyball Club ("Milton Edge") is committed to conducting its activities with integrity, fairness, transparency and accountability.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- identify circumstances that may give rise to an actual, potential or perceived conflict of interest;
- establish expectations for the disclosure of conflicts;
- provide a fair process for managing conflicts when they arise; and
- ensure that individuals acting on behalf of Milton Edge make decisions in the best interests of the Club and its participants.

Conflicts of interest may arise in community sport organizations because individuals often have multiple roles and relationships within the organization. The existence of a conflict or potential conflict does not necessarily constitute misconduct. What is important is that conflicts are identified, disclosed and appropriately managed.

2. Scope and Application

This policy applies to all individuals acting on behalf of Milton Edge, including:

- members of the Board of Directors;
- officers;
- coaches and assistant coaches;
- employees and contractors;
- team managers;
- committee members;
- volunteers;
- individuals responsible for Club or team finances;
- individuals involved in athlete or coach selection; and
- other individuals authorized to make or influence decisions on behalf of Milton Edge.

For the purposes of this policy, these individuals are referred to as "Representatives."

3. Definitions

For the purposes of this policy:

Conflict of Interest means a situation in which a Representative's decision-making or actions on behalf of Milton Edge are influenced, or could reasonably be perceived to be influenced, by personal, family, financial, business, professional or other private interests.

Actual Conflict of Interest means a conflict that currently exists between a Representative's responsibilities to Milton Edge and their private interests.

Potential Conflict of Interest means circumstances that could reasonably develop into an actual conflict.

Perceived Conflict of Interest means circumstances in which a reasonable and informed person could reasonably believe that a Representative's judgment or actions may be influenced by a private interest.

Family Member includes a spouse or partner, parent, child, sibling, grandparent, grandchild, in-law or another person with whom the Representative has a comparable close family relationship.

4. General Obligations

Representatives are expected to act honestly, in good faith and in the best interests of Milton Edge when carrying out their responsibilities.

Representatives will:

- avoid placing personal interests ahead of the interests of the Club when acting on behalf of Milton Edge;
- disclose actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest;
- not provide improper preferential treatment to family members, friends, business associates or others;
- not use their position with Milton Edge for improper personal or financial benefit;
- not use confidential Club information for personal advantage;
- not use Club property or resources for unauthorized personal purposes;
- not accept gifts, payments or benefits that could reasonably be expected to influence a Club decision; and
- comply with any measures established by Milton Edge to manage a disclosed conflict.

5. Multiple Roles and Family Relationships

Milton Edge recognizes that community sport organizations rely significantly on the involvement of parents, family members and volunteers and that individuals may hold more than one role within the Club.

The existence of a family relationship or overlapping Club role does not, on its own, constitute a conflict of interest.

For example:

- a parent may coach a team on which their child participates;
- a coach may also serve as a director, volunteer or committee member;
- a director may have a child participating in the Club; and
- family members may serve in different volunteer or coaching roles.

Where a specific matter directly affects the personal, family or financial interests of a Representative, however, the Representative must consider whether the circumstances create an actual, potential or perceived conflict and disclose the matter where appropriate.

The Club will determine what measures, if any, are necessary to manage the conflict.

6. Coaches and Family Members

Milton Edge permits parents and guardians to coach teams on which their own children participate.

Coaches are expected to:

- treat athletes fairly and respectfully;
- apply team standards consistently;
- make coaching decisions based on legitimate volleyball, athlete-development and team considerations;
- avoid preferential treatment based on family or personal relationships; and
- comply with applicable Milton Edge, Ontario Volleyball Association and Volleyball Canada policies.

Routine coaching decisions, including playing time, positions, substitutions, line-ups, practice assignments, athlete feedback and tactical decisions remain the responsibility of the coaching staff.

A disagreement with a coaching decision does not, by itself, constitute evidence of a conflict of interest.

7. Board and Committee Decisions

Directors and committee members must disclose any actual, potential or perceived conflict of interest relating to a matter being considered by the Board or committee.

Where a material conflict exists, the individual may be required to:

- refrain from attempting to influence the decision;
- abstain from voting;
- withdraw from some or all of the discussion; or
- take another measure considered appropriate by the remaining non-conflicted decision-makers.

A conflict will normally be assessed in relation to the particular matter being considered.

The fact that a decision affects a broad group that includes a Representative or their family does not necessarily create a conflict.

For example, a director who is also a coach would not ordinarily be considered conflicted solely because the Board is considering a policy or matter that applies generally to all Club coaches.

Similarly, a director whose child participates in the Club would not ordinarily be considered conflicted solely because the Board is considering a matter that applies generally to Club athletes or families.

A conflict is more likely to arise where the decision concerns a direct and material personal or financial interest that is distinct from the interests of other similarly situated Club members.

8. Financial Interests and Transactions

Representatives must disclose any direct or indirect material financial interest that they or a Family Member have in a proposed transaction involving Milton Edge.

This includes situations where Milton Edge is considering purchasing goods or services from:

- a Representative;
- a business owned or operated by a Representative;
- a Family Member of a Representative; or
- a business in which a Representative or Family Member has a material financial interest.

A related-party transaction is not automatically prohibited.

Where Milton Edge determines that such a transaction is in the best interests of the Club:

- the relationship or interest must be disclosed;
- the interested Representative must not improperly influence the decision;
- the terms should be reasonable and consistent with market conditions;
- alternative providers or comparative pricing should be considered where appropriate; and
- the decision should be appropriately documented.

The interested Representative must not vote on approval of a transaction from which they or their Family Member will receive a direct material financial benefit.

9. Employment and Compensation

Milton Edge may employ, contract with or compensate individuals who also hold another role within the Club where there is a legitimate organizational need and the arrangement is consistent with applicable law, Club bylaws and policies.

No Representative may be the sole decision-maker responsible for determining or approving their own compensation.

Where a decision concerns the individual compensation, employment or contractual arrangement of a Representative or their Family Member, the relationship must be disclosed and the conflicted Representative must not vote on the matter.

Compensation decisions should take into consideration factors such as:

- qualifications and experience;
- scope of responsibilities;
- expected hours or workload;
- comparable compensation for similar work;
- the Club's financial resources; and
- the best interests of Milton Edge.

10. Gifts and Benefits

Representatives must not solicit or accept gifts, payments, services, discounts or other personal benefits where doing so could reasonably be expected to influence, or appear to influence, their duties or decisions on behalf of Milton Edge.

Nominal gifts or customary expressions of appreciation may be accepted provided they are reasonable and do not create an obligation or expectation of preferential treatment.

Cash or cash-equivalent gifts intended to influence a Club decision must not be accepted.

11. Confidential Information and Club Resources

Representatives must not use confidential information obtained through their involvement with Milton Edge for improper personal, financial or business advantage.

Club funds, property, equipment, contact information, intellectual property, logos, facilities and other resources must be used for authorized Club purposes.

12. Disclosure of a Conflict

A Representative who believes they may have an actual, potential or perceived conflict of interest must disclose the relevant circumstances as soon as reasonably possible.

Where practical, disclosure should occur before discussion or a decision takes place.

A conflict involving a Board member should be disclosed to the President or Board.

A conflict involving the President should be disclosed to another non-conflicted member of the Board.

Other Representatives should disclose a conflict to the President, appropriate Board member or Club administrator.

Disclosure of a potential conflict does not constitute an admission of wrongdoing.

13. Determining Whether a Conflict Exists

Where there is uncertainty as to whether a conflict exists, the relevant circumstances will be reviewed by the non-conflicted members of the Board or another appropriate individual designated by the Board.

In determining whether a conflict exists and how it should be managed, consideration may be given to:

- the nature of the personal or private interest;
- the Representative's role in the decision;
- whether the Representative or Family Member receives a direct or unique benefit;
- whether the same interest is shared by a broader group of Club members;
- whether another qualified decision-maker is reasonably available;
- the significance of the decision; and
- whether a reasonable and informed person could question the impartiality of the decision.

14. Managing a Conflict of Interest

Where Milton Edge determines that a conflict exists, one or more measures may be implemented, including:

- disclosure of the conflict to relevant decision-makers;
- abstention from voting;
- withdrawal from discussion;
- assignment of the decision to another Representative;
- use of an independent evaluator or decision-maker;
- restriction of access to confidential information concerning the matter;
- temporary removal of particular decision-making authority; or
- another reasonable measure appropriate to the circumstances.

Measures used to manage a conflict should be proportionate to the nature and significance of the conflict.

Where possible, restrictions should apply to the specific matter giving rise to the conflict rather than unnecessarily preventing the Representative from performing unrelated Club responsibilities.

15. Documentation

Where a director or committee member discloses a material conflict regarding a matter before the Board or committee, the disclosure should be recorded in the meeting minutes.

Where applicable, the minutes should indicate:

- that the conflict was disclosed;
- whether the individual participated in the discussion;
- whether the individual abstained from voting; and
- the decision made by the eligible decision-makers.

Unnecessary confidential or personal details do not need to be recorded in the minutes.

16. Reporting a Conflict of Interest Concern

A Club member or Representative who reasonably believes that an undisclosed conflict of interest exists may raise the concern with Milton Edge.

Concerns should be directed to Club administration, the President or another appropriate member of the Board.

Where the concern relates to the President, it should be directed to another member of the Board.

The concern should identify, where reasonably possible:

- the individual involved;
- the specific decision or activity affected;
- the nature of the alleged conflict; and
- relevant supporting information.

Concerns will be reviewed fairly and as confidentially as reasonably possible.

The existence of a family relationship or overlapping role alone is not sufficient to establish that this policy has been breached. The circumstances of the particular decision or action will be considered.

17. Failure to Disclose or Manage a Conflict

Failure to disclose or appropriately manage a conflict of interest may result in corrective or disciplinary action.

Depending on the circumstances, Milton Edge may:

- require disclosure;
- require the individual to withdraw from the affected decision;
- reconsider a decision where reasonably possible;
- restrict particular decision-making responsibilities;
- remove an individual from a committee or specific responsibility;
- refer the matter for consideration under Milton Edge's Discipline and Complaints Policy; or
- take other appropriate action consistent with the Club's bylaws and policies.

Any response will be proportionate to the nature and seriousness of the circumstances.

18. No Retaliation

Milton Edge will not tolerate retaliation against an individual who, in good faith, discloses a potential conflict of interest or raises a reasonable concern under this policy.

This provision does not prevent Milton Edge from addressing complaints that are knowingly false, malicious or made in bad faith.

19. Confidentiality

Information concerning an alleged or disclosed conflict of interest will be shared only with individuals who reasonably require the information to assess, manage or resolve the matter, subject to Milton Edge's legal, governance and reporting obligations.

20. Relationship to Other Policies

This policy should be read together with Milton Youth Volleyball Club's other applicable policies, including its:

- Code of Conduct and Ethics;
- Discipline and Complaints Policy;
- Financial Policy;
- Safe Sport policies; and
- other applicable Ontario Volleyball Association and Volleyball Canada policies.

Where conduct giving rise to a conflict-of-interest concern may also constitute misconduct under another policy, Milton Edge may address the matter under the policy or process most appropriate to the circumstances.

Nothing in this policy limits any obligation arising under Milton Edge's bylaws, applicable legislation or the policies of the Ontario Volleyball Association or Volleyball Canada.

21. Policy Review

The Milton Youth Volleyball Club's Board of Directors will review this policy periodically and may amend it as required to reflect changes in Club operations, governance requirements, applicable legislation or Ontario Volleyball Association and Volleyball Canada policies.