

# Canadian Safe Sport Program (CSSP) Rules: Explanatory Document and Summary of Changes

## Background

On May 2, 2024, the Honourable Carla Qualtrough, former Minister of Sport and Physical Activity, provided an update on the Office of the Sport Integrity Commissioner (OSIC) and the Abuse-Free Sport Program. It stated that the administration of the Universal Code of Conduct to Prevent and Address Maltreatment in Sport (UCCMS) will move from the Sport Dispute Resolution Centre of Canada (SDRCC) to the Canadian Centre for Ethics in Sport (CCES) as of April 1, 2025. Access the Minister's announcement at [www.cces.ca/ministerstatement](http://www.cces.ca/ministerstatement).

As an independent organization with a vision of fair, safe, accessible, and inclusive sport, the CCES is pleased to assume the responsibility for administering the UCCMS and is committed to building upon the program and enhancing it going forward. The CCES has been reviewing the program and considering ways to improve and revise its operations once it assumes responsibility.

## Consultation with the Sport Community

The CCES has engaged in extensive consultation with the sport community. This entailed a survey of current program signatories and participants, and over 60 meetings with survivors, athletes, national sport organizations (NSOs), multi-sport organizations (MSOs), subject matter experts, and Sport Canada. Common themes from the consultations included the importance of a trauma-informed approach, establishing standards of delivery, and transparent communication processes.

Using information from consultations, the CCES developed a first draft of the comprehensive document that sets out the procedural rules that support the independent administration of the UCCMS, called the **Canadian Safe Sport Program (CSSP) Rules**. As part of the process, athlete groups were consulted, and draft zero of the CSSP Rules was reviewed by several subject matter experts, including a former Ontario Superior Court judge, researchers who specialize in racial justice and sport, disability, human rights and social justice, current OSIC staff and OSIC advisory groups, as well as Sport Canada.

The first draft was released to the sport community during the period of October 16 - November 22, 2024. The CCES invited comments and initial thoughts from the sport community. There was an incredible level of engagement with close to 300 people participating in 10 consultation opportunities, both virtual and in-person. We received constructive feedback, with hundreds of comments taken into consideration for the second draft.

The second draft was released to the sport community during the period of December 16 – 20, 2024. We received close to 200 comments on the document with generally minor edits or suggestions for improvement. Below is a summary of key changes from the second version that have been implemented into the final CSSP

Rules. There are no new substantive changes to the steps in the program process. Most changes were implemented to provide additional clarity.

### Summary of Changes from Draft Version 2 to the Final CSSP Rules

Concept	Notes
<b>Definitions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Canadian Safe Sport Program Process (CSSP Process)</i> definition added</li> <li>• <i>Consent Form</i> definition updated</li> <li>• <i>Support Person</i> definition updated</li> </ul>
<b>Rule 1.1 – Purpose</b>	Wording was added for transparency to confirm the CCES's ability to develop policies and procedures to implement the CSSP Rules.
<b>Rule 2.1 – Commitments</b>	Updated 2.1.1d) to read "Understands and acknowledges the uniqueness of every individual with a disability" and edited 2.1.1g) for greater clarity.
<b>Rule 3.1 – Scope of Application</b>	<p><i>Participant</i> is further defined, and a footnote was added to clarify that <i>Participants</i> do not include any ombudsperson, independent third-party safe sport complaint manager or individuals responsible for administering or managing safe sport complaints on behalf of a <i>Sport Organization</i>, when such individuals are serving in their official capacities.</p> <p>A footnote was also added to "national team program" clarifying that it shall include all levels of a <i>Sport Organization's</i> national team including, without limitation, a senior national team, national training squads, a national development team and a junior national team.</p> <p>A footnote was also added to "National Athlete Pool" clarifying that this is the pool of Athletes jointly identified by the CCES and the <i>Sport Organization</i> in accordance with the criteria set out in the Canadian Anti-Doping Program, as amended from time to time.</p> <p>Additionally, wording and a footnote are added to allow the CCES to retain discretion on a <i>Sport Organization's Participants</i>.</p>
<b>Rule 3.2 – Application to Other Individuals at Events</b>	Wording is updated to give the CCES discretion to approve the inclusion of individuals as <i>Participants</i> if their participation or involvement with the <i>Sport Organization</i> is at the national level and designated in the <i>Sport Organization's Adoption Contract</i> . Any such individuals will agree (or otherwise consent) to the application of the UCCMS and CSSP Rules as part of the event registration process.
<b>Rule 3.4 – Application to Conduct that Predates the CSSP and the UCCMS</b>	Wording was added to include conduct prohibited by applicable provincial or federal law(s).
<b>Rule 5.2 – Where the CCES Will Not Assume Jurisdiction</b>	Language clarified with no change in meaning.

<b>Rule 6 – Reports</b>	Throughout this rule, the word “submit” was changed to “made” and 6.3 and 6.6 have been edited slightly for clarity and for consistent wording with the UCCMS.
<b>Rule 9.4 – No Retaliation</b>	Added for clarity that a breach of confidentiality or retaliation may be investigated by the CCES under Rule 20 as a violation of the CSSP Rules and/or UCCMS Section 5.14.
<b>Rule 9.5 – Compliance with Privacy Legislation</b>	Wording has been updated to make reference to the CSSP Privacy Policy, in which it is made clear that the CCES will comply with applicable privacy and data protection laws.
<b>Rule 9.6.5 – Confidentiality Obligations of Parties and Witnesses in a CSSP Process</b>	Wording was updated to clarify that following the conclusion of the reporting process, nothing in this rule prevents a <i>Reporting Person</i> , <i>Impacted Person</i> , <i>Respondent</i> or witness from speaking about their own experience of the reported incident(s), participating in the <i>CSSP Process</i> or the outcome and any sanction. Wording was added to include if any person or entity misrepresents a <i>CSSP Process</i> , the underlying facts, or the outcome of a matter, the CCES may publicly correct the record.
<b>Rule 12.4 – Effective Immediately</b>	This rule was removed since the following rule speaks to it. Except where the CCES determines that <i>Provisional Measures</i> must be issued immediately to meet the protective and safety goals set out in Rule 12.2, the CCES will provide notice in writing to the <i>Respondent</i> setting out the <i>Provisional Measures</i> that the CCES is considering imposing, and the basis for those measures.
<b>Rule 12.8 – Violation of Provisional Measures</b>	Added wording to clarify that a violation of a <i>Provisional Measure</i> may also be an aggravating factor in the determination of sanction.
<b>Rule 13.3 – Acceptance of Violation and Sanction</b>	Sentence added to clarify that if a <i>Respondent</i> accepts some, but not all, of the allegations contained in a <i>Report</i> , the CCES may continue to investigate the remaining allegations.
<b>Rule 13.4.4 – Where Mediation is Unsuccessful</b>	New rule added to clarify that if a mediation is unsuccessful, the CCES will continue to process the <i>Report</i> under Rule 13, including, where appropriate, investigating the <i>Report</i> under Rules 14 and 15.
<b>Rule 15.4 – Notice of Decision and Documents Provided to the Parties During the CSSP Process are Confidential</b>	Added wording to clarify that in addition to the <i>Notice of Decision</i> being confidential, and any documents provided to the parties in the course of the <i>CSSP Process</i> (e.g., witness summaries, investigation report, copies of evidence) are also confidential.
<b>Rule 16.4 – Grounds to Review a Finding of Fact or Violation</b>	Added language clarifying that an error of law must have a “material impact on the outcome.” Removed the list of examples of errors of law.
<b>Rule 18.2 – Prior History Relevant to Provisional</b>	Added language that will allow, in appropriate cases, the CCES to consider prior history as relevant to whether the alleged conduct occurred.

<i>Measures, Remedial Resolution and Sanction</i>	
<b>Rule 22.2.1</b> – Reciprocal Recognition and Enforcement	Added wording to include professional regulatory bodies.
<b>Rule 23.3.3</b> – Deemed Receipt	Clarification has been provided in Rule 23.3.3d) to include EST/EDT and to address urgent circumstances.
<b>Other</b>	For greater clarity, “CSSP” has been changed to “CSSP Rules” throughout the document as appropriate. Rule numbering has been updated throughout to reflect new, moved, or removed sections.

**Additional notes:**

- Comprehensive education is an essential component of the CSSP. All individuals who are subject to the rules will be required to complete [online education](#).
- The CSSP Rules will be in effect as of April 1, 2025.
- Comments from the Canadian sport community are welcome at any time. You are invited to submit feedback to the CCES by email to [safesport@cces.ca](mailto:safesport@cces.ca). Please include reference to specific rules in your feedback.
- For more information on the Canadian Safe Sport Program, please email [safesport@cces.ca](mailto:safesport@cces.ca) or visit the [safe sport program webpage](#).