

# BRIAR WOODS CREW CLUB – “Safe Sport” Policy - 2021

In compliance with membership in US Rowing, Briar Woods Rowing Inc. and with the help of the United States Olympic Committee and US rowing, has adopted the following Safe Sport policies as they relate specifically to Briar Woods Rowing Inc. run activities. Such activities include Briar Woods Rowing Inc. sanctioned and owned events and any domestic training and competitions and all activities associated with these events. Rowing is a lifelong activity where our athletes engage to have fun and spend time with friends. Rowing also encourages a healthy lifestyle and builds self-confidence.

Our athletes often do better off the field than those who do not participate in rowing. They learn goal setting, teamwork and time management skills. Athletes are less likely to use cigarettes, drugs and alcohol; they have higher graduation rates and are more likely to attend college.

To ensure a positive and enjoyable environment for all participants, Briar Woods Rowing Inc. establishes these policies and expectations to minimize misconduct, including child physical and sexual abuse. Here we identify six primary types of misconduct.

- Bullying
- Harassment
- Hazing
- Emotional Misconduct
- Physical Misconduct
- Sexual Misconduct, including Child Sexual Abuse

All forms of misconduct are intolerable and in direct conflict with the Olympic ideals and those of US Rowing and Briar Woods Rowing Inc. Misconduct may damage an athlete’s psychological well-being; athletes who have been mistreated experience social embarrassment, emotional turmoil, psychological scars, loss of self-esteem and negative impacts on family, friends and rowing. Misconduct often hurts an athlete’s competitive performance and may cause him or her to drop out of rowing entirely.

Briar Woods Rowing Inc. publishes this policy as a resource to guide the development, implementation and internal review of effective athlete safety and misconduct prevention strategies for rowing activities at Briar Woods Rowing Inc.

## **SECTION 1: TRAINING AND EDUCATION**

Our policies and procedures require staff members and/or volunteers to report abuse, misconduct and violations of Safety and Conduct. To do so, staff members (coaches, riggers, admin, etc.) and/or volunteers (volunteer coaches, parent chaperones, referees, and other volunteers) should have a basic understanding of recognizing signs of misconduct. Accordingly, staff members and/or volunteers complete an awareness training concerning misconduct in sport before performing services for Briar Woods Rowing Inc. Misconduct in sport includes:

- Bullying
- Harassment
- Hazing
- Emotional misconduct

- Physical misconduct, and
- Sexual misconduct, including child sexual abuse

Staff members and/or volunteers must successfully complete the training and the quiz after the test. US Rowing has partnered with the USOC to provide the training free of charge through:

<http://training.teamusa.org/store/details/1>.

Those staff members and/or volunteers who are required to take awareness training will take athlete awareness training every two (2) years, or no more than 30 day(s) before they have contact with athletes.

## **SECTION 2: APPLICANT SCREENING**

### **WRITTEN APPLICATIONS**

Each applicant for a position will complete an application form consisting of personal, identifying information and a general release with applicant's signature.

The written application will:

- Ask about previous work and volunteer experiences
- Ask questions intended to illicit information concerning high-risk behaviors
- Provide a written release for contacting personal references and performing a criminal background check, including an indemnification clause
- Ask open-ended questions that encourage broad answers
- Use disclosure statements to ask applicants about previous criminal arrests or convictions for sexual offenses, violence against youth and other violent criminal offenses or felonies

### **PERSONAL INTERVIEW**

Appropriate staff will interview applicants whose experience and credentials are considered a fit for available positions. During this interview, Briar Woods Rowing Inc. will ask questions to encourage discussion, clarify responses and expand on the applicant's answers to questions from the written application.

### **REFERENCES**

References of applicants will be contacted (either by phone or in writing) and asked specific questions regarding the applicant's professional experiences, demeanor and appropriateness for involvement with minor athletes and participants.

### **RELEASE**

Each applicant will also provide a signed release, consistent with federal, state and local laws regulating employment practices, that allows references to speak freely about the applicant's qualifications without fear of reprisal and authorizing Briar Woods Rowing Inc. to obtain information concerning an applicant's past employment, volunteer experience and information provided by the applicant during the screening process (i.e., written application and personal interview).



## **SECTION 3: ATHLETE PROTECTION POLICY**

In the event that any staff member or volunteer observes inappropriate behaviors, suspected physical or sexual abuse, or misconduct, it is the personal responsibility of each staff member and volunteer to immediately report his or her observations to an immediate supervisor, a Briar Woods Rowing Inc. Booster’s Officer or a Briar Woods Rowing Inc. Board Member. Briar Woods Rowing Inc. is committed to creating a safe and positive environment for athlete’s physical, emotional and social development and to ensuring that it promotes an environment free of misconduct.

Briar Woods Rowing Inc. recognizes that the process for training and motivating athletes will vary with each coach and athlete, but it is nevertheless important for everyone involved in the sport to support the use of motivational and training methods that avoid misconduct.

This Policy applies to staff members and volunteers, Briar Woods Rowing Inc. athletes and any participants. Staff members, volunteers, athletes and participants shall refrain from all forms of misconduct, which include: bullying, harassment, hazing, emotional misconduct, physical misconduct and sexual misconduct, including child sexual abuse.

Examples of misconduct include, but are not limited to: a pattern of verbal behaviors that attack an athlete personally, repeatedly and excessively yelling at participants that serve no motivational or training purpose, throwing sports equipment, water bottles or chairs, a pattern of ignoring an athlete for extended periods of time, contact or non-contact conduct that results in, or reasonably threaten to, cause physical harm to an athlete or other sport participants; or any act or conduct described as physical abuse or misconduct under federal or state law; behaviors that include teasing, ridiculing, intimidating, spreading rumors or making false statements, or using electronic communications, social media, or other technology to harass, frighten, intimidate or humiliate; coercing, requiring, forcing or willfully tolerating any humiliating, unwelcome or dangerous activity that serves as a condition joining the group or being accepted by a group’s members.

It is a violation of this Athlete Protection Policy if a staff member and/or volunteer knows of misconduct, but takes no action to intervene on behalf of the athlete, participant, staff member, or volunteer.

Although these policies are designed to reduce child sexual abuse and other misconduct, it can still occur. Staff members, volunteers and participants of Briar Woods Rowing Inc. shall follow the reporting procedures set forth in Briar Woods Rowing Reporting Policy. Briar Woods Rowing Inc. does not investigate suspicions or allegations of child physical or sexual abuse, or attempt to evaluate the credibility or validity of such allegations, as a condition of reporting suspicions or allegations to the appropriate law enforcement authorities.

### **TRAVEL**

Travel will be a standard aspect of our competitive season and Briar Woods Rowing Inc. has established policies to guide our travel, minimize one-on-one interactions and reduce the risk of misconduct. Adherence to these travel guidelines will increase athlete safety and improve the competitive experience while keeping travel a fun and enjoyable experience.

#### **LOCAL AND TEAM TRAVEL**

We distinguish between travel to training, practice and local competition (“local travel”), and team travel

involving a coordinated overnight stay (“team travel”).

### **Local Travel**

Local travel occurs when Briar Woods Rowing Inc. does not sponsor, coordinate, or arrange for travel. For local travel, athletes or their parents/guardians (for minor athletes) are responsible for making all travel arrangements. In these instances it is the responsibility of the athlete or their parents/guardians (for minor athletes) to ensure the person transporting the athlete maintains all safety and legal requirements, including, but not limited to, a valid driver’s license, proper insurance, well maintained vehicle, and compliance with all state laws.

Coaches, staff members and volunteers who are also an athlete’s guardian may provide shared transportation for any athlete(s). We encourage guardians to pick up their athlete first and drop off their athlete last in any shared or carpool travel arrangement. In an effort to minimize one-on-one interactions, Briar Woods Rowing Inc. staff members, coaches and/or volunteers, who are not also acting as a parent, should not drive alone with an unrelated athlete and should only drive with at least two other athletes or another adult.

### **Team Travel**

Team travel is overnight travel that occurs when Briar Woods Rowing Inc. sponsors, coordinates or arranges for travel so that our teams can compete locally, regionally, nationally or internationally. Because of the greater distances, coaches, staff, volunteers and chaperones will often travel with the athletes. However, no coach, staff member, or volunteer will engage in team travel without the proper safety requirements in place, including valid drivers’ licenses, proper insurance, well-maintained vehicles and compliance with all state laws. Briar Woods Rowing Inc. makes efforts to provide adequate supervision through coaches and other adult chaperones.

For team travel, hotels will be booked in advance by Briar Woods Rowing Inc. Athletes will share rooms, with 2-4 athletes assigned per room depending on accommodations. Briar Woods Rowing Inc. will also notify hotel management should any special arrangements be warranted. Meetings do not occur in hotel rooms, and we will reserve a separate space for adults and athletes to socialize.

We encourage family members who wish to stay in the team hotel to do so. If family members do not stay in the team hotel, we encourage all athletes to call parents and guardians regularly and allow for any unscheduled calls by either the athlete or parent/guardian.

### **MIXED-GENDER AND MIXED-AGE TRAVEL**

Briar Woods Rowing Inc. is made up of male and female athletes across various ages. Athletes will only share a room with other athletes of the same sex and age group. Athletes will also be grouped by age and sex for the purposes of assigning an appropriate chaperone. We will make every effort to provide these groups at least one chaperone of the same sex. However, we rely on parents to serve as chaperones and may be limited in providing this match.

Regardless of gender, a coach shall not share a hotel room or other sleeping arrangement with an athlete (unless the coach is the parent, guardian, sibling or spouse of that particular athlete). Where an adult is registered both as a coach and an athlete member of Briar Woods Rowing Inc., and is functioning primarily as a coach, he or she

may share sleeping arrangements with another registered coach.

### **COACH AND STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES**

When not practicing, training, competing, or preparing for competition, coaches and staff will monitor the activities of athletes, fellow coaches and staff during team travel. Coaches and staff will 1) prepare athletes for team travel and make athletes aware of all expectations. Supplemental information will be given to parents/guardians of athletes who are considered inexperienced travelers, new or relatively new to team travel, or who are under the age of 14; 2) familiarize themselves with all travel itineraries and schedules before the initiation of team travel; 3) conform to, and monitor for others' adherence, the Athlete Protection Policy and all policies during team travel; 4) encourage minor athletes to participate in regular, at least daily, scheduled communications with their parents/guardians; 5) help athletes be on time for all team commitments (as possible) 6) assist with team travel logistical needs (as possible); 7) support chaperones and/or participate in the monitoring of athletes for adherence to curfew restrictions set based on age and competition schedule as listed in travel itinerary; 8) ensure athletes are complying with hotel room restrictions based on gender or age bracket requirements; 9) make certain that athletes are not alone in a hotel room with any adult apart from a family member; this includes coaches, staff and chaperones; 10) not use drugs or alcohol in the presence of minors or be under the influence of alcohol or drugs while performing their coaching duties; 11) immediately report any concerns about physical or sexual abuse, misconduct, or policy violations; and, 12) notify parents before taking any disciplinary action against a minor athlete if the athlete is traveling without his or her parents.

### **CHAPERONE RESPONSIBILITIES**

Chaperones accompany team travel to ensure that the athletes, coaches, staff, and volunteers adhere to the Briar Woods Rowing Inc.'s policy guidelines. While these include the travel policy, it also includes all other relevant policies contained in Briar Woods Rowing Inc.'s Participant Safety Handbook.

If a chaperone has not undergone a criminal background check and Briar Woods Rowing Inc.'s awareness training, the chaperone will not be permitted to have any one-on-one interactions with athletes or other youth participants. If a chaperone has undergone a criminal background check and awareness training, he or she may have appropriate one-on-one interactions as outlined in Briar Woods Rowing Inc.'s Participant Safety Handbook.

Chaperones will monitor the activities of all coaches, staff members, volunteers and athletes during team travel. Specifically, chaperones will: 1) familiarize themselves with all travel itineraries and schedules before team travel; 2) monitor for adherences to Briar Woods Rowing Inc. policies during team travel; 3) encourage minor athletes to participate in regular, at least daily, scheduled communications with their parents/guardians; 4) help athletes be on time for all team commitments (as possible); 5) assist coaches, staff and other volunteers with team travel logistical needs (as possible); 6) monitor athletes for adherence to curfew restrictions set based on age and competition schedule as listed in travel itinerary; 7) ensure athletes comply with hotel room restrictions based on gender or age bracket requirements; 8) not use drugs or alcohol in the presence of minors or be under the influence of alcohol or drugs while performing their chaperone duties; 9) make certain that athletes are not alone in a hotel room with any adult apart from a family member; this includes coaches, staff and chaperones; 10) immediately report any concerns about

sexual and physical abuse, misconduct or policy violations to a Briar Woods Rowing Inc. Booster Officer or a member of Briar Woods Rowing Inc.’s Board of Directors.

## **SECTION 4: RESPONSE TO ABUSE, MISCONDUCT & POLICY VIOLATIONS**

### **REPORTING POLICY**

Every Briar Woods Rowing Inc. staff member and/or volunteer must report violations of safety and conduct policy and any suspicions or allegations of child physical or sexual abuse.

As a matter of policy, Briar Woods Rowing Inc. does not investigate suspicions or allegations of child physical or sexual abuse or attempt to evaluate the credibility or validity of such allegations as a condition for reporting to the appropriate law enforcement authorities.

Staff members and/or volunteers at Briar Woods Rowing Inc. are required to report suspicions or allegations of abuse by a colleague or co-worker. If they receive an allegation or observe misconduct or other inappropriate behavior that is not reportable to the appropriate law enforcement authorities, it is the responsibility of each staff member and/or volunteer to report their observations to their immediate supervisor, a Briar Woods Rowing Inc. Board member, and where applicable, appropriate law enforcement authorities.

Briar Woods Rowing Inc. also encourages member parents, athletes and other sport participants to communicate violations of Briar Woods Rowing Inc.’s policies and or allegations and suspicions of child physical and sexual abuse to a Briar Woods Rowing Inc. Booster Officer or member of the Briar Woods Rowing Inc. Board of Directors. When applicable, parents may also report to the appropriate law enforcement authorities.

### **REPORTING PROCEDURE**

Staff members and volunteers may report to any supervisor or Briar Woods Rowing Inc. Booster Officer with whom they are comfortable sharing their concerns. This would include any Briar Woods Rowing Inc. Board member. Briar Woods Rowing Inc. will take a report in the way that is most comfortable for the person initiating a report, including an anonymous, in-person, verbal or written report. Regardless of how you choose to report, it is helpful to Briar Woods Rowing Inc. for individuals to provide at a minimum 1) name of complainant; 2) type of misconduct alleged and; 3) name of the individual alleged to have committed the misconduct.

Individuals reporting misconduct may complete an Incident Report Form. Briar Woods Rowing Inc. will withhold the complainant’s name on request, to the extent permitted by law. A copy of Briar Woods Rowing Inc.’s Reporting can be found at the end of this policy document.

### **DISCIPLINARY RULES AND PROCEDURES**

While Briar Woods Rowing Inc. endeavors to provide support and guidance to participants on a day to day basis, it is also important for Briar Woods Rowing Inc. to have a formal procedure for disciplinary action to address alleged violations of its policies and other inappropriate behaviors, which is consistent with Briar Woods Rowing Inc.’s policies.

Briar Woods Rowing Inc. recognized that there are varying levels of misconduct. For example, physical and sexual misconduct are serious violations that may result in immediate dismissal. In contrast, a youth participant who tells a single sexually risqué joke constitutes less serious misconduct and depending on the circumstances,



might be dealt with more appropriately through dialogue and a verbal warning. In all cases, Briar Woods Rowing Inc.’s disciplinary procedures and actions will be proportionate, reasonable and applied fairly and equally. On receipt of an allegation, Briar Woods Rowing Inc. will determine in its discretion the appropriate steps to address the conduct based on several factors, including 1) the age of the complainant or victim, 2) the age of the accused and 3) the nature, scope, and extent of the allegations. Briar Woods Rowing Inc.’s disciplinary response will depend on the nature and seriousness of the incident. On receipt of a credible and specific allegation of child abuse or other serious misconduct, the Briar Woods Rowing Inc. may immediately suspend or terminate the accused individual to ensure participant safety.

Regardless of outcome, Briar Woods Rowing Inc. will support the complainant(s) and his or her right to express concerns in good faith. Briar Woods Rowing Inc. will not encourage or tolerate attempts to retaliate, punish or in any way harm any individual(s) who report(s) a concern in good faith. Such actions will be grounds for disciplinary action.

Briar Woods Rowing Inc.’s disciplinary response will depend on the nature and seriousness of the incident. If the accused individual is a minor, Briar Woods Rowing Inc. will contact his or her parents or guardians. Any individual who alleges misconduct under the Participant Safety Handbook that, upon review, is determined to be malicious, frivolous or made in bad faith will be a violation of our Participant Safety Handbook. Bad-faith allegations may also be subject to criminal or civil proceedings.

## **INVESTIGATION**

As appropriate, and at its discretion, Briar Woods Rowing Inc. may institute a formal investigation and hearing procedure to address serious allegations of misconduct (e.g., physical and sexual misconduct). However, Briar Woods Rowing Inc. anticipates that an investigation and hearing will be undertaken to address only the most serious allegations and patterns of behavior that warrant significant sanctions. **Accordingly, Briar Woods Rowing Inc. anticipates that this disciplinary procedure will be used rarely.**

If an investigation is conducted, the complainant, victim and accused individual shall have the right to: a) Receive written notice of the report or complaint, including a statement of allegations; b) Present relevant information to the investigator(s); c) Legal counsel, at his or her own expense.

## **HEARING**

In every case where a hearing is warranted pursuant to this Policy, an adjudication shall be conducted that shall in all cases comply with Briar Woods Rowing policies. The adjudication shall further conform to the provisions and principles set out hereafter. However, deviations in one or more of the procedural safeguards are permitted, provided the following conditions are satisfied:

- 1) The individual is informed of the allegations and evidence brought against him or her
- 2) The individual is given a reasonable opportunity to respond to the allegations brought forward
- 3) The individual may be represented by legal counsel at his or her expense
- 4) The panel member(s) who make the determination are free of conflicts of interests and render an unbiased decision
- 5) There is a right to appeal the panel’s decision

The accused individual will be notified of a specific date and time to ensure that he or she is available for the



hearing. The panel shall have the authority to set timelines and other rules regarding the proceeding and the conduct of the hearing, as it deems necessary. At the hearing, the accused individual will be to present any reasonable evidence or argument that he or she wishes the panel to consider. The panel may require or permit documentary evidence, such as the written report of any investigator or other fact-finder, before the hearing and that the names of any witnesses be disclosed before the hearing. The panel may also consider a local Briar Woods Rowing Inc.'s organization's employment determination as evidence to be considered.

If the complainant/alleged victim is a minor, the investigator's or other fact-finder's report may substitute for the minor witness' direct testimony, provided that the accused had an opportunity to present and respond to relevant information collected during the investigation and before the report was transmitted to the Review Panel. The Review Panel may proceed in the accused individual's absence if it cannot locate the individual or if the individual declines to attend the hearing.

The Panel has the discretion to impose sanctions on the individual if it finds based on a preponderance of the evidence that emotional, physical or sexual misconduct has occurred. The Panel will communicate its finding to the individual. The Panel may impose sanctions on the individual in its findings. Any sanctions imposed by the Panel against the individual must be proportionate and reasonable, relative to the content that is found to have occurred. The decision regarding the appropriate sanction shall be up to the panel deciding each complaint. In imposing a sanction, the Review Panel shall consider:

- 1) The legitimate interest of ORGANIZATION in providing a safe environment for its participants
- 2) The seriousness of the offense or act
- 3) The age of the accused individual and alleged victim when the offense or act occurred
- 4) Any information produced by the accused individual, or produced on behalf of the individual, in regard to the individual's rehabilitation and good conduct
- 5) The effect on the Briar Woods Rowing Inc.'s reputation
- 6) Whether the individual poses an ongoing concern for the safety of Briar Woods Rowing Inc.'s athletes and participants
- 7) Any other information, which in the determination of the Panel, bears on the appropriate sanction

Sanctions may range from a warning and a reprimand to suspension from sport involvement with the Briar Woods Rowing Inc. for a period of time. Suspensions from sport involvement with Briar Woods Rowing Inc. may be temporary or permanent. For the purposes of this Policy, a suspension from sport involvement shall mean that the individual may not participate in any capacity or in any role in the business, events or activities of Briar Woods Rowing Inc. or its affiliated members for the duration of the period of suspension.

The conduct of the hearing WILL be private. If the Panel determines that the individual has violated policy, it may publish its decision or a brief summary of its decision, unless the accused is a minor. However, if the individual appeals, the summary of the panel's decision will not be disclosed until an appellate decision has been made.

If an individual disagrees with the finding or sanction of the panel and wishes to appeal he or she may file an appeal with Briar Woods Rowing Inc. Board of Directors within 10 days of panel's finding. On appeal, the Board will address the merits of the decision, and not the process that was utilized. A decision rendered by the Briar Woods Rowing Inc. Board of Directors shall be final and binding on all parties.

## **MONITORING YOUR STRATEGY**

By monitoring the interactions among staff, volunteers, athletes, and other, Briar Woods Rowing Inc. works to prevent, recognize and respond to inappropriate and harmful behaviors as set forth in our

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Participant Safety Handbook, while reinforcing appropriate behaviors. Briar Woods Rowing Inc. utilizes multiple monitoring methods to observe how individuals are interacting, including without limitation (1) formal supervision, including regular evaluations; and (2) informal supervision, including regular and random observation (e.g., roving and checking interactions throughout practices), and (3) maintaining frequent contact with staff members, volunteer and athletes who interact off-site.

While Briar Woods Rowing Inc. has a formal reporting policy, staff members and volunteers should be prepared to respond immediately to inappropriate or harmful behavior, potential risk situations and potential boundary violations. Staff members and volunteers will redirect inappropriate behaviors to promote positive behaviors, confront inappropriate or harmful behaviors, and report behaviors if necessary.

**BRIAR WOODS ROWING Inc.**

**AUTHORIZATION**

\_\_\_\_\_  
BWR Inc. Officer Printed Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## Briar Woods Rowing Inc. – Incident Report Form

<b>Name and role of person completing this form:</b>
<b>Signature of person completing this form:</b>
<b>Date:</b>

### **Incident**

<b>Date and time of incident:</b>
<b>Name/s of person/s involved in the incident and their clubs/associations:</b>
<b>Description of incident:</b>

<b>Witnesses (include contact details):</b>
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**Reporting of the incident to club/association**

Incident Reported to:	Date:
How (this form, in person, email, phone):	

**Follow Up Action**

Description of actions to be taken:
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