

SECTION 8: SAFETY, MEDICAL & WELFARE RULES

1. Purpose

- 1.1. The purpose of this Rule is to safeguard the health, safety, medical welfare, and wellbeing of all participants within SAFSA activities.
- 1.2. This Rule establishes mandatory safety, medical, safeguarding, and anti-doping requirements applicable to all SAFSA events, training environments, and affiliated activities.

2. Scope of Application

- 2.1. This Rule applies to all athletes, coaches, officials, team staff, volunteers, administrators, and affiliated persons participating in SAFSA-sanctioned activities.
- 2.2. Compliance with this Rule is a condition of participation and affiliation with SAFSA.

3. Duty of Care

- 3.1. SAFSA, Provincial Associations, clubs, coaches, and officials owe a duty of care to provide a safe environment for all participants.
- 3.2. Safety and welfare considerations shall take precedence over competitive, performance, or commercial interests at all times.

4. Medical Fitness and Requirements

- 4.1. All athletes must be medically fit to participate in training and competition.
- 4.2. SAFSA reserves the right to require:
 - a) Proof of medical clearance;
 - b) Updated medical information forms; and
 - c) Disclosure of relevant pre-existing medical conditions.
- 4.3. Athletes, parents/guardians, and team officials remain responsible for ensuring that any medical condition is appropriately disclosed and managed.
- 4.4. No athlete may participate against medical advice.

5. Injury Management Protocols

- 5.1. Any injury sustained during a SAFSA activity must be reported immediately to the responsible coach and event officials.
- 5.2. An injured athlete shall be assessed and, where necessary, removed from participation without delay.
- 5.3. Return to skating following injury must be guided by appropriate medical advice.
- 5.4. Coaches and officials shall not permit an athlete to continue or return to participation if doing so may pose a risk to the athlete's health or safety.

6. Concussion Policy

- 6.1. SAFSA adopts a zero-tolerance approach to concussion mismanagement.
- 6.2. Any athlete suspected of sustaining a concussion shall:
 - 6.2.1. Be immediately removed from training or competition;
 - 6.2.2. Not return to skating on the same day; and
 - 6.2.3. Be referred for medical assessment by a qualified healthcare professional.
- 6.3. Return-to-skate following concussion requires written medical clearance.
- 6.4. Coaches, officials, and team staff may not override medical advice under any circumstances.

7. Emergency Procedures

- 7.1. All SAFSA events and organised training activities must have:
 - 7.1.1. A documented emergency response plan, which shall include the mandatory presence of appropriately trained First Aid personnel at all official practices and competitions, and which shall further require that all competition announcements and event communications clearly identify nearby medical facilities and emergency healthcare services, including contact details where reasonably practicable.
 - 7.1.2. Clearly identified emergency contacts; and
 - 7.1.3. Access to first aid equipment.
- 7.2. Coaches and officials must be aware of the nearest emergency medical facilities.
- 7.3. In life-threatening situations, emergency services shall be contacted immediately before any other action is taken.

8. First Aid Qualifications

- 8.1. All SAFSA-accredited coaches are required to hold a valid First Aid certification from a recognised provider.
- 8.2. Proof of First Aid certification must be maintained and made available upon request.
- 8.3. Failure to maintain valid certification may result in suspension of coaching accreditation.

9. Anti-Doping Regulations

- 9.1. SAFSA fully complies with the World Anti-Doping Code, ISU Anti-Doping Regulations, and applicable national anti-doping legislation.
- 9.2. All athletes are strictly liable for substances found in their bodies.
- 9.3. Athletes, coaches, and support personnel must cooperate fully with any testing, investigation, or education programme.
- 9.4. Any anti-doping violation shall be dealt with in accordance with applicable ISU and SAFSA disciplinary procedures.

10. Safeguarding Rules

- 10.1. SAFSA is committed to protecting children and vulnerable persons from abuse, harassment, bullying, discrimination, and exploitation.
- 10.2. All SAFSA members are bound by the [SAFSA Safeguarding Policy](#), which is incorporated into these Rules by reference.
- 10.3. Any safeguarding concern must be reported immediately in accordance with the Safeguarding Policy and applicable law.
- 10.4. Failure to report safeguarding concerns may constitute misconduct and result in disciplinary action.

11. Social Media Conduct

- 11.1. All members must comply with the [SAFSA Social Media Policy](#).
 - 11.1.1. Social media use must not:
 - a) Endanger athlete welfare;
 - b) Breach confidentiality;
 - c) Harass, bully, or intimidate;
 - d) Undermine safeguarding principles; or
 - e) Bring SAFSA into disrepute.
- 11.2. Breaches of the Social Media Policy may result in disciplinary action.

12. Responsibility of Coaches and Officials

- 12.1. Coaches and officials are responsible for:
 - a) Enforcing safety and welfare standards;
 - b) Monitoring athlete wellbeing;
 - c) Reporting injuries, safeguarding concerns, and misconduct; and
 - d) Ensuring compliance with this Rule and related policies.
- 12.2. Ignorance of safety, medical, or safeguarding obligations shall not be accepted as a defence.

13. Compliance and Sanctions

- 13.1. Non-compliance with this Rule constitutes a disciplinary offence.
- 13.2. Sanctions may include warnings, suspension, removal of accreditation, or further disciplinary action in terms of SAFSA Rules.

14. Authority and Review

- 14.1. This Rule is adopted by SAFSA Council and has full regulatory force.
- 14.2. This Rule shall be reviewed periodically to ensure alignment with best practice, ISU regulations, and national legislation.