



# STING FOOTBALL CLUB

OFFICIAL DOCUMENT

## Rule of Two Policy

### INTRODUCTION

The goal of the Rule of Two is to ensure all interactions and communications are open, observable, and justifiable. Its purpose is to protect participants (especially minors) and coaches in potentially vulnerable situations by ensuring that a coach is never alone with an athlete. There may be exceptions for emergency situations. The Rule of Two states that there will always be two screened and NCCP-trained or certified coaches with an athlete in situations where the athlete is potentially vulnerable. One-on-one interactions between a coach and an athlete, without another individual present, must be avoided in all circumstances except medical emergencies.

Edmonton Sting FC has pledged to the Responsible Coaching Movement created by Canada Soccer Association (CSA). Edmonton Sting FC pledges to complete background screening, Ethics Training and apply the Rule of Two for all staff and volunteers.

### STANDARDS

The Rule of Two states that optimally there always be two screened and NCCP - Trained or certified coaches with an athlete in situations where the athlete is potentially vulnerable. One-on-one interactions with a coach and an athlete, without another individual present, must be avoided in all circumstances except medical emergencies.

The following standards are expected at all times and for all interactions between staff and volunteers:

- Standard Majority of the time - Two screened and NCCP certified coaches present
- Acceptable Occasionally - One screened and NCCP certified coach with a screened "Person in Authority"
- Tolerable Sometimes - One screened and NCCP certified coach or Person in Authority with another adult, preferably a parent/guardian of an athlete
- Unacceptable Anytime (unless a medical emergency) - One screened and NCCP certified coach or Person in Authority.

'Screened' means a club coach who has had a back ground check accepted by the club  
'Person in Authority' means a club official (staff member, assistant coach, team manager, club director)

## GUIDELINES FOR COMMON SITUATIONS

### Locker Room / Changing Areas / Meeting Room

- Interactions between a Screened / Person in Authority and an individual athlete should not occur in any room where there is a reasonable expectation of privacy such as the locker room, meeting room, washroom, or changing area. A second Screened / Person in Authority should be present for all necessary interactions in any such room.
- Locker room or changing area should be supervised by two Screened / Persons in Authority of the same gender identity as the players whenever possible.
  - If a second Screened / Person in Authority is not available, the Screened / Person in Authority supervising the locker room or changing area should never be alone with an individual athlete.
  - A parent / guardian of a player present may be asked to be present.
- If a Screened / Persons in Authority are not present in the locker room or changing area, or if they are not permitted to be present (i.e alone), they should still be available outside the locker room or changing area and be able to enter the room or area if required; however, this would not be deemed to be a best practice

### Travel

- A Screened / Person in Authority may not be alone in a car with an athlete unless they are the athlete's parent/ guardian.
- A Screened / Person in Authority may not share a room or be alone in a hotel room with an athlete unless they are the athlete's parent or guardian.
- Room or bed checks during overnight stays must be done by two(2) Screened / Persons in Authority.

### Training / Competition Environment

- A Screened / Person in Authority should never be alone with an athlete prior to or following a game or practice, unless they are the athlete's parent or guardian.
- If the athlete is the first athlete to arrive, the athlete's parent/guardian should remain until another athlete or second Screened / Person in Authority arrives. If an athlete drives themselves, the athlete should wait for another athlete, or two(2) Screened / Person in Authority to arrive before going to the field.
- If an athlete would potentially be alone with a Screened / Person in Authority following a game or practice, the Screened / Person in Authority should ask another Screened / Person in Authority (or a parent/guardian of another athlete or another athlete in a senior environment) to stay until all the athletes have been picked up. If an adult is not available, then another athlete should be present in order to avoid the Screened / Person in Authority being alone with a single athlete.
- Screened / Persons in Authority giving instructions, demonstrating skills, or facilitating drills or lessons to an individual athlete should always be doing so within earshot and eyesight of another Screened / Person in Authority or player parent/guardian.

## GENDER IDENTITY

Screened and Persons in Authority who are interacting with athletes should be of the same gender identity as the athletes. The following guidelines are strongly recommended:

- For teams consisting of athletes of just one gender identity, a Screened / Person in Authority of the same gender identity should be available to participate or attend every interaction.
- For teams consisting of athletes of more than one gender identity (e.g., co-ed teams), a Screened / Person in Authority of each gender identity should be available to participate or attend every interaction.

## VIRTUAL SETTINGS

Applying the Rule of Two in a Virtual Setting:

The Rule of Two should continue to apply to all minor athletes in virtual environments (additionally, for those athletes under age 16, a parent or guardian should be present during the session where possible). It is recommended that the Rule of Two be applied to non-minor athletes, as well.

Rule of Two in a Virtual Setting Implementation Practices and Practical Tips:

- For every session, the Rule of Two requires two Screened / Person in Authority to be present. If only one Screened / Person in Authority is present, an additional adult (parent, guardian, volunteer, club administrator) is required – one-on-one sessions are prohibited.
- A clear statement of agenda, outcomes and expectations should be communicated – (i.e., sessions are not social engagements, and should be focused on training/coaching).
- Encourage parents / guardians to debrief with minor athletes about virtual training on a weekly basis.
- Parents/guardians should be fully informed beforehand about the activities undertaken during the sessions, as well as the process of the virtual session. e. It is recommended to record sessions where that capacity exists.
- Communication during each session should be in an open and observable environment (i.e., avoid bedrooms) in the athlete's home (athlete's parents'/guardians' home), and the coach must initiate the session from an appropriate location (i.e., avoid bedrooms or "overly personal"/unprofessional settings).
- Parents/guardians should be required to consent to virtual sessions prior to each session, if irregularly scheduled, or prior to the first session if there is a series of regularly scheduled sessions.
- One-on-one texting, emailing or online contact between coach and athlete is prohibited. Any texting, emailing or any other digital media contact should be limited to groups that includes at least 2 adults (Screened / Person in Authority, adults (parent, guardian, volunteer, club administrator), and limited to coaching (non-social) matters.

- Parents of minor athletes are to be invited and provided the opportunity to receive these texts/emails.
- Social media contact by a coach, team official, club staff or volunteer to an athlete, or vice versa is *prohibited* (examples sharing of memes, non-training video, links, inappropriate material etc.). Anyone receiving such a message is to report it to the Club designated person at [admin@edmontonsting.com](mailto:admin@edmontonsting.com).

