

# Varsity Derby League

## Code of Conduct



1. Varsity Derby League (VDL) provides the opportunity for members to participate in the challenging and exciting sport of roller derby. VDL aims to provide a safe, inclusive, positive and supportive environment, where members can meet new people and make friendships, learn and experience healthy sporting competition, strive and achieve personal goals, play roller derby, enjoy the sport and have fun doing it.
2. The purpose of VDL's Code of Conduct is to uphold VDL's obligation and duty of care for the emotional and social welfare of all its members. It will inform all VDL members of the expectations of the behaviour of individuals, their responsibilities to each other, to other derby leagues and the wider community.
3. The VDL Code of Conduct applies to all league members, including but not limited to, skaters, referees, officials, Non-Skating Officials (NSOs) and volunteers representing VDL. This document outlines the standard of behaviour and the conduct of its members at all VDL sanctioned events and/or other activities associated with VDL.
4. Disregard of VDL's Code of Conduct may result in a warning, suspension or termination of membership.
5. VDL values:
  - a. inclusiveness;
  - b. good sportsmanship;
  - c. positive body images; and
  - d. positive role models.

## Definitions

6. **Bullying** is when people repeatedly and intentionally use words or actions against someone or a group of people to cause distress and risk to their wellbeing.

Bullying is not the same as conflict between people (like having a fight) or disliking someone, even though people might bully each other because of conflict or dislike.

- Bullying behaviour may include:
  - unfair and excessive criticism;
  - publicly insulting people; and
  - undervaluing people's efforts or contributions:
    - i. at training,
    - ii. events, or
    - iii. as part of a committee.
7. **Duty of care** means that VDL has an obligation to intervene if the league or members have reason to believe that an individual is harming themselves or others.
  8. **External events** are events that are not run or organised by VDL, but VDL has a presence, such as, but not limited, to a merchandise table at a bout or tournament.
  9. **Fundraising** is an event run by VDL in order to raise funds for the league or its team(s).
  10. **Harassment** is unwelcome conduct that humiliates, offends or intimidates people and the conduct either can be reasonably considered to adversely affect the welfare of any VDL member.

11. **Impairment or Under the Influence** is when, due to the consumption of alcohol, drugs or for other reasons affecting judgment, an individual would not be considered able to legally operate a motor vehicle.
12. **League member** is a person that has paid league membership to VDL and is financial for a calendar year or part thereof as per the VDL by laws constituting a pro rata of membership fees, skate insurance premium and training fees.
13. **Non Skating Official (NSO)** is a financial member of VDL who does not skate at training sessions, bouts or tournaments and participates in non-skating activities. Skating Members can perform the roles of NSO at VDL Games and Scrim
14. **Procurement and transactions** is anything relating to the payment of membership fees, training fees, Insurance fees, or other official monies to the league, including but not limited purchases made on behalf of the VDL that have been officially sanctioned or given prior approval by VDL's Executive Committee.
15. **Participants** of Roller Derby include all registered leagues, skaters, coaches, first aid, referees, officials, administrators, volunteers, parents/carers of skaters, sponsor representatives, media, club supporters and members of the general public attending as spectators.
16. **Sanctioned event** is an event organised and run by VDL, including fundraising activities such as barbeques, Social events such as Roller Discos etc which has been endorsed by the Executive Committee.
17. **Sexual harassment** is unwanted conduct of a sexual nature. The unwanted nature of sexual harassment distinguishes it from behaviour that is welcome and mutual.

Sexual attention becomes sexual harassment if:

- The behaviour is persisted in, although a single incident of harassment can constitute sexual harassment; and/or
  - The recipient has made it clear that the behaviour is considered offensive; and/or
  - The perpetrator should have known that the behaviour is regarded as unacceptable.
18. **Social events** are any events outside of a VDL sanctioned event where a member or a volunteer of VDL may represent the league.
  19. **Stand Down Time** is a set time frame in which the person/s concerned may not participate in any VDL activities/events.
  20. **Volunteer on behalf of VDL** is a person(s) that is not a member of VDL but by their actions are representing the league, such as, but not limited to, a league member, Non-Skating Official (NSO) or referee from another league refereeing a VDL bout.

## Code of Conduct General Principles

21. Participants are encouraged and expected to:
22. Members shall supply current, correct and relevant personal and contact information for VDL records, and, in the event of any changes, shall notify the VDL Executive Committee of such changes at the earliest convenient opportunity.
23. Members shall treat all other Members and all associated with Roller Derby with respect and equality to create a welcoming and supportive environment for all.
24. Show positive acts of sportsmanship, discouraging all instances of foul or illegal play, or acts of violence, both on and off the track.
25. Demonstrate the greatest levels of respect, protecting the rights, dignity and worth of every person regardless of their age, gender, ability / disability, sexual orientation, cultural background or religion.
26. Lead by positive example, and condemn the use of recreational and performance enhancing drugs and doping practices; their use endangers the health of skaters and is contrary to the concept of fair play.
27. Celebrate the good news stories, and understand that cyber-bullying, which includes negative or demeaning comments, status posts, personal messages or emails, is deemed as a serious form of harassment.
28. All Members not participating in a particular bout and injured/unfit Members are encouraged to volunteer for Non-Skating Official (NSO) positions in a bout.
29. Members are expected to contribute as much as possible to the advancement of VDL and to participate in coaching, recruitment, fundraising and charity activities.
30. Members are encouraged to join one of the VDL Sub-Committees.
31. Members shall discuss questions, concerns and problems with the appropriate Member, Team Captain, Official or Executive Member openly and rationally with a view to swift resolution.
32. Any disagreements that cannot reach resolution shall be dealt with in accordance with the VDL's Constitution and Grievance Procedures.

## Code of Conduct – Executive

33. The Executive shall consider and involve, as much as possible, all Members in the planning, leadership, decision-making and evaluation processes related to VDL.
34. The Executive shall ensure that venues, equipment and facilities are safe and appropriate for all Members and spectators.
35. The Executive shall ensure that adequate supervision is provided by qualified and competent Coaches/Trainers capable of developing appropriate positive behaviour and skills techniques.
36. The Executive shall distribute and enforce the Code of Conduct regarding Members, Coaches/Trainers, Officials, spectators and the media.
37. The Executive shall encourage all Members to realise their full potential and athletic abilities.

## Code of Conduct – Skater

38. Be a good sport. Respect all good competition whether from your team / league skaters or the opposition and shake hands with, and thank the opposition skaters and officials after the game – win, lose or draw.
39. Participate for your own enjoyment and benefit.
40. Always respect the referees' decision.
41. Never become involved in acts of foul play.
42. Honour both the spirit and letter of the competition rules and live up to the highest ideals of ethics and sportsmanship; avoid gamesmanship, and respect the traditions of the game / competition.
43. Never engage in disrespectful conduct of any sort including profanity, sledging, obscene gestures, offensive remarks, trash- talking, taunting or other actions that are demeaning to other skaters, officials or supporters.
44. Care for and respect the facilities and equipment made available to you during training and competition.
45. Safeguard your health; don't use any illegal or unhealthy substances.
46. Recognize that many officials, coaches and referees are volunteers who give up their time to provide their services. Treat them with the utmost respect.

## Code of Conduct – Trainers, Coaches and Bench Crew

47. Actively discourage foul play and/or unsportsmanlike behaviour by skaters.
48. Seek to maximise the participation and enjoyment of all skaters regardless of ability; avoid the tendency to over-use talented skaters; treat all skaters as equals, regardless of their talent.
49. Show concern and caution towards all sick and injured skaters. Follow the advice of a medical practitioner and/or allied health professional to the letter when determining when an injured player is ready to recommence training or playing..
50. Teach skaters that an honest effort and competing to the best of their ability is as important as victory.
51. Maintain appropriate, professional relationships with skaters at all times.
52. Maintain a thorough knowledge of the Rules of your Sport and keep abreast of current coaching methods; maintain or improve your current accreditation level.
53. Always consider the health, safety and welfare of the skaters.
54. Teach young skaters to realise that there is a big gap between their play and the professional game; do not coach them as if they are professionals.
55. Ensure that your coaching reflects the level of the competition being played; do not be a win at all cost coach.
56. As coach, conduct yourself at all times in a manner, and in all situations, that shows leadership, respect for your discipline of skating and respect for all those that are involved in the sport – the skaters, officials, the spectators, the parents, the referees and the media.

## Referee/Official – Code of Conduct

57. Be impartial! Also, be consistent, objective and courteous.
58. Place the safety and welfare of the skaters above all else; be alert to minimise dangerous physical play, fair or foul, especially in junior competitions.
59. Accept responsibility for all actions taken.
60. Avoid any form of verbal contact with coaches, team officials, parents and spectators during play.

61. Avoid any situation which may lead to a conflict of interest, both on and off the track.
62. Maintain an appropriate level of fitness for the standard of game at which you are officiating.
63. Condemn all and every instance of unsportsmanlike, foul or unfair play.
64. Set a good example by the way you dress, speak and act towards skaters, coaches, officials, parents and spectators.
65. Show concern and caution towards sick and injured skaters.
66. Officiate to the age and/or experience of the skaters.

## Spectator/Parent – Code of Conduct

67. Condemn all violent or illegal acts, whether they are by skaters, coaches, officials, parents or spectators.
68. Respect the referee's decisions – don't complain or argue about decisions during or after a game.
69. Behave! Unsportsmanlike language, harassment or aggressive behaviour will not be tolerated.
70. Encourage skaters to play by the rules and to respect opposition skaters and officials.
71. Never ridicule or scorn a skater for making a mistake – respect their efforts.
72. Understand that sport is part of a total life experience, and the benefits of involvement go far beyond the final score of a game.
73. Participate in positive cheering that encourages the skaters in the team you are supporting; do not engage in any cheering that taunts or intimidates opponents, their fans or officials.
74. Remember that children participate in their sport for their own enjoyment, not yours!
75. At all times, follow the directions of the Event organizer and designated officials.
76. Never arrive at a Junior competition under the influence of alcohol, never bring alcohol to a competition and only drink alcohol if it is available, in a responsible manner in the designated licensed area.

## Code of Conduct – Summary of Offences

77. Note – Leagues are responsible for the conduct of their skaters, parents/carers of skaters, coaches, officials, referees and spectators.
78. No person(s) attending a game, function or event shall:
79. Use offensive or obscene language to any participant.
80. Enter the area of competition during the course of the game without the prior approval of the Event Organiser.
81. Excessively dispute the decision of a referee either during or after a game.
82. Assault or act with aggression to any person/s.
83. Behave in a way contrary to the Code of Conduct and/or the spirit of the game.
84. Behave in a way which disturbs the enjoyment of a game, function or event by any other person/s, or brings discredit to the home league or Roller Derby in general.
85. Act in such a way as to exhibit intolerance, by language or other conduct, to any person/s. *VDL has a comprehensive gender inclusiveness policy and promotes inclusion in all other areas. This includes age, gender, ability / disability, sexual orientation, cultural background or religion.*
86. Refuse to accept the reasonable direction of the Event Organiser, official of the league which that person is supporting, or official of the home league.
87. Breaches of the Code of Conduct may result in penalties, including but not limited to:
  - Suspension of a game and/or
  - Termination of a game (including potential forfeiture of competition points) and/or

- Monetary fines and/or
- Suspension of a participant on a temporary or permanent basis and/or
- Suspension of a league on a temporary or permanent basis.

## Training and Scrimmage

88. All appropriate protective equipment as per WFTDA Rules shall be in good working order, shall not pose a threat or risk to any other Member and be worn at all training sessions, scrimmages, and bouts.
89. Members shall be discouraged from wearing clothing to training, scrimmages or bouts that may be hazardous to the safety of other Members, spectators or themselves.
90. Members who arrive for training sessions, scrimmages or bouts under the influence of drugs or alcohol shall be deemed unfit to participate.
91. Members shall always consider the safety of themselves and those around them and skate in a manner that does not endanger other Members or themselves.
92. Members shall alert a Coach/Trainer, Executive Member or bout Official of any hazard to health and safety.
93. As much as practicable, Members shall fully participate at training sessions and bouts in an effort to learn new skills and be committed to improving themselves as athletes and team members.
94. Members are also encouraged to attend other non-VDL training arranged by or endorsed by VDL, such as boot camps and mixed scrimmages.
95. Members shall be willing to take direction and suggestions from Coaches/Trainers about skills and game rules.
96. It is the individual Member's responsibility to ensure that they are fit to participate at their qualified level.
97. Injured or inexperienced Members shall be given the opportunity to participate at whatever level they feel comfortable and the Official, Coach/Trainer considers appropriate and safe.
98. A Member that is injured or unfit shall comply with a Coach/Trainer or Official who may call for the Member's withdrawal from a training session or a bout.
99. Recourse for an injured or unfit Member that has been ordered to withdraw by a Coach/Trainer or Official from a training session or a bout, is to provide a certificate of fitness to participate from a registered medical practitioner or clearance from the attending first-aid personnel (if during an officially sanctioned bout).
100. Members shall never argue with a Coach/Trainer, Official or Member of any other Roller Derby team while representing VDL.

## Representing VDL

101. At any event attended or organised by VDL all Members shall be conscious of their actions and represent themselves in a way which does not negatively reflect on VDL.
102. Members shall not comment publically or otherwise get involved in any disputes between other Roller Derby leagues or individual Members.
103. No Member may represent themselves to the media as a spokesperson for VDL without permission of the Executive of VDL.
104. All Members will maintain confidentiality regarding VDL matters.
105. No Member shall disclose any information that has not been publicly broadcasted by VDL e.g. via a website, press releases, interviews.
106. VDL's social media pages are to promote a positive image of VDL. Any Member, whether under their real name, Derby Name or anonymously, found to be including content considered harassing, hostile, slanderous, or in any way negative will be subject to disciplinary action (see VDL Grievance Procedures).
107. No Member may use the VDL email address in any way that would reflect negatively on VDL.
108. VDL representatives on wider groups and committees such as, but not limited to, WFTDA, shall ensure they fairly represent the views of VDL and consult the Executive fully where any decision is to be made that will impact upon the operation of VDL.

## DISCIPLINE

109. Any Member found violating the Constitution, Bylaws or the Code of Conduct shall be referred to a Conflict Resolution Committee (CRC) convened by the Executive for deliberation and resolution.
110. The CRC shall be comprised of:
  - Members of the Executive as required by the President of their delegate
  - The Members Captain or Vice-Captain
  - The Vice President in the case of undrafted members in accordance with their responsibilities under section 9 of the constitution
  - A representative of the Welfare and Grievance committee as requested by the member.
111. Violations are classified in three categories:

### MINOR VIOLATIONS

112. Minor Violations include, but are not limited to:
  - Email/social media violations - posting inappropriate messages, etc.
  - Unsportsmanlike behaviour – displayed at practices, bouts, events, etc.
  - Participating in negative gossip
  - Negative representation of VDL
113. **First Minor Violation – Verbal Warning** If a first minor violation is confirmed, the CRC shall serve the offending Member with a verbal warning. Notice of the verbal warning shall be kept by the VDL executive and will stay on record for a period of three months, on condition no further violations are recorded.

114. **Second Minor Violation – Written Warning** If a second minor violation is confirmed, the CRC shall serve the offending Member with a written warning. This written warning shall be kept by the VDL executive and will stay on record for a period of five months, on condition no further violations are recorded.
115. **Third Minor Violation – Written Warning and Suspension** If a third minor violation is confirmed, the CRC shall serve the offending Member with a written warning and a suspension from all VDL and related activities for two weeks. This written warning shall be kept by the VDL executive for a period of 12 months, on condition no further violations are recorded.
116. **Subsequent Minor Violations – Written Warning and Suspension** If any subsequent minor violations are confirmed, these will be treated in the same manner as a Third Minor Violation, for up to a total of six minor violations in a period of 12 months.
117. **Seventh Minor Violation – Expulsion** With the seventh confirmed minor violation, the CRC shall serve the offending Member with a written notice of expulsion.

## MAJOR VIOLATIONS

118. Major violations include, but are not limited to:
- Any aggressive threatening comments or behaviour (including email/social media comments)
  - Physical or emotional harm
119. **First Major Violation – Suspension** If a first major violation is confirmed, the CRC shall serve the offending Member with a written warning and a suspension from all VDL and related activities for two weeks. This written warning and suspension warning shall be kept by the VDL executive for a period of 12 months, on condition no further violations are recorded.
120. **Second Major Violation – Suspension** If a second major violation is confirmed, the CRC shall serve the offending Member with a written warning and a suspension from all VDL and related activities for two months. This written warning and suspension shall be kept by the VDL executive permanently.
121. **Third Major Violation – Expulsion** If a third major violation is confirmed, the CRC shall serve the offending Member with a written notice of expulsion from VDL and all VDL and related activities. This written notice of expulsion shall be kept by the VDL executive permanently.

## GROUNDS FOR IMMEDIATE EXPULSION

122. Grounds for Immediate Expulsion include, but are not limited to:
- Any Member facing criminal charges related to violent crimes will be grounds for immediate suspension, with reinstatement or revocation of skater membership pending acquittal or conviction of crime.
  - Any Member threatening or committing instances of intentional physical violence against other skaters, Coaches/Trainers, Officials, the Executive or spectators.
  - Any Member who discloses confidential VDL information to outside sources.
  - Any Member caught embezzling VDL funds.
  - Any Member representing VDL skating while under the influence of alcohol, narcotics, or any illegal substances, or legal substances which are not prescribed to the skater.
  - Any Member committing sexual harassment
123. If the vote is in favour of expulsion, the Member shall be asked to relinquish any title or position held within VDL and shall not be allowed to attend any further VDL training sessions, bouts, meetings, events, etc.
124. An expelled Member shall return all VDL property or face criminal charges.
125. An expelled Member shall be liable for any and all fees due up to and including the time of expulsion, but shall forfeit any and all fees paid thus far without recourse of a refund.
126. VDL will not, under any circumstances, provide a testimonial or recommendation for an expelled Member.