# MEMBER CODE OF CONDUCT

**Waikato Touch Association Incorporated**

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| **Policy owner** | WTA Executive Committee |
| **Operational lead** | Operational Co-ordinator |
| **Status** | Approved |
| **Approved by** | WTA Executive Committee |
| **Effective date** | 19 August 2026 |
| **Review cycle** | At least every two years |
| **Related documents** | Safety, Wellbeing and Integrity Policy; Representative Programme Policy; Complaints and Disciplinary Procedure; Child and Vulnerable Persons Protection Policy; Photography and Image Policy |

**Shared responsibility:** Everyone involved with WTA contributes to a safe, inclusive, respectful and enjoyable Touch environment. Participation in a WTA activity means agreeing to follow this Code.

## 1. Purpose

WTA is committed to safe, inclusive and positive Touch experiences. This Code states the behaviour expected of everyone involved with WTA and supports respect, integrity, fairness, participant welfare and enjoyment on and off the field.

## 2. Who this Code applies to

This Code applies to Committee members, employees, contractors, coaches, managers, referees and referee coaches, selectors, volunteers, representative and module players, parents and caregivers, spectators, affiliated-module personnel, and any person participating in or acting on behalf of WTA. It applies at activities, during travel and accommodation, in team communications and online where conduct is connected with WTA.

## 3. Our values

| Value | What it means |
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| **Respect** | Treat people with courtesy, dignity and fairness and value their rights, identity, culture, ability and contribution. |
| **Integrity** | Be honest, accountable, impartial and act in the interests of safe and fair Touch. |
| **Inclusion** | Help people feel welcome, supported and able to participate, learn and develop. |
| **Excellence** | Show commitment, professionalism, teamwork and a willingness to improve. |
| **Enjoyment** | Promote positive experiences and lifelong participation in Touch. |

## 4. Standards expected of everyone

- Follow the rules and spirit of Touch and promote fair play.
- Treat teammates, opponents, officials, volunteers and spectators respectfully.
- Accept decisions without abuse, intimidation, threats or aggressive behaviour.
- Use appropriate language and behaviour and take responsibility for your actions.
- Communicate honestly, respectfully and professionally, including when disagreeing.
- Respect facilities, accommodation, equipment, uniforms and WTA property.
- Follow WTA policies, event rules, safety instructions and lawful directions.
- Report unsafe, harmful, dishonest or concerning behaviour promptly.
- Protect confidential information and the privacy of others.
- Do not act in a way that brings WTA or the sport into serious disrepute.

## 5. Safeguarding and professional boundaries

- Place the safety and wellbeing of children, young people and adults at risk first.
- Maintain appropriate professional boundaries and avoid grooming, favouritism, sexualised conduct and unnecessary physical contact.
- Avoid isolated or unobserved one-to-one contact with a child wherever reasonably practicable.
- Use approved communication channels and do not use secret or disappearing communication to bypass oversight.
- Follow WTA requirements for supervision, changing areas, travel, accommodation, images and digital contact.
- Report a safeguarding concern immediately through the Safety, Wellbeing and Integrity Policy. Do not conduct your own investigation or promise absolute confidentiality.

## 6. Respectful and inclusive behaviour

WTA prohibits bullying, harassment, sexual harassment, abuse, neglect, intimidation, violence, discrimination, racism, retaliation, grooming, sexually harmful behaviour and conduct that creates an unsafe or hostile environment. Harm may occur in person or online and may be one serious incident or a pattern.

## 7. Social media and communications

- Apply the same standards online as in person.
- Do not bully, harass, intimidate, shame or post discriminatory, abusive or offensive content.
- Do not publish confidential WTA information or another person’s private information without authority.
- Use team chats, messaging, email, online meetings and social media respectfully and for appropriate purposes.
- Do not impersonate WTA or present an unofficial account or statement as authorised.

- Follow the Photography and Image Policy and report harmful or inappropriate content.

## 8. Respect for officials and volunteers

- Allow coaches to coach, referees to referee and authorised personnel to perform their roles.
- Never abuse, intimidate, threaten or deliberately undermine an official or volunteer.
- Raise genuine concerns through the appropriate process rather than confrontation or public attacks.
- Encourage positive sideline behaviour and welcome new participants and officials.
- Recognise and value the contribution of volunteers.

## 9. Parents, caregivers and spectators

- Encourage all players and model positive behaviour.
- Focus on effort, improvement, teamwork and enjoyment rather than only results.
- Respect coaches, managers, referees and event personnel.
- Do not enter team areas, fields or official spaces without permission.
- Do not coach from the sideline where this conflicts with the appointed coach.
- Ensure children in your care understand and follow relevant expectations.

## 10. Players and representative participants

- Attend and prepare for required trainings, meetings, travel and events and communicate promptly about availability.
- Support teammates and management and contribute positively to the team environment.
- Wear approved WTA uniform correctly and respect hosts, venues and accommodation providers.
- Meet eligibility, agreement, health, safety, safeguarding and financial requirements.
- Represent WTA professionally and follow the Representative Programme Policy.

## 11. Coaches, managers, referees and officials

- Place safety and participant welfare above performance or winning.
- Be consistent, impartial, competent and honest about qualifications and experience.
- Use positive, developmentally appropriate feedback and never ridicule or humiliate a participant.
- Declare and manage conflicts of interest and do not misuse authority, information or relationships.
- Follow appointment, vetting, safeguarding, reporting and professional-development requirements.
- Address unsporting or unsafe behaviour and model good sportsmanship.

## 12. Alcohol, drugs, smoking and vaping

- Never supervise, coach, officiate, drive or participate while impaired.
- Do not use or possess illegal drugs at WTA activities.
- Do not supply alcohol to minors and comply with any team, event, venue or accommodation restrictions.
- Follow smoke-free and vape-free requirements and do not expose children to use in team environments.
- Comply with applicable anti-doping requirements.

## 13. Images and privacy

- Capture and use images respectfully and in accordance with WTA's Photography and Image Policy.
- Respect consent and opt-out instructions and never photograph in changing, showering or treatment areas.
- Do not share an image or personal information that may embarrass, exploit or place another person at risk.
- Use only authorised WTA branding and channels.

## 14. Reporting concerns

Concerns may be reported to the Operational Co-ordinator, Safeguarding Lead, President, another trusted WTA official or an appropriate external authority. Call 111 where anyone is in immediate danger. A person does not need proof before raising a genuine concern, and retaliation is prohibited.

## 15. Responding to breaches

- Immediate protective action may be taken where safety, safeguarding or process integrity requires it.
- Concerns will be managed under the relevant safeguarding, complaints, employment or disciplinary process.
- Where safe and lawful, the person whose conduct is at issue will be told the concern and given a reasonable opportunity to respond before a final internal decision.

- Outcomes may include education, support, apology, conditions, warning, removal from an activity, suspension, removal from a programme, ending an appointment or referral to Touch New Zealand or an external authority.
- Decisions must be made by a properly authorised, non-conflicted person and reasons must be recorded.

## 16. Acknowledgement and approval

By participating in a WTA activity, each person acknowledges this Code. WTA may also require a signed or electronic acknowledgement for a particular role or programme.

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| **Approved by** | Ani Nock |
| **Approval date** | 19 August 2026 |
| **Effective date** | 19 August 2026 |
| **Next review date** | 30 June 2028 |
| **Version** | 1.0 |