

Code of Professional Responsibility

PREAMBLE

In fulfilling the role of a women's gymnastic judge, the individual judge assumes a role that requires the performance of many difficult tasks not all of which can be foreseen. It is the purpose of the Code of Professional Responsibility to provide the fundamental ethical principles which are always present to guide the judges so as to insure, as best it can be insured, that the judge's conduct will be such as will be responsible and promote respect for the dignity not only of the judge but also for the Association of which she/he is a part. The Code of Professional Responsibility is intended to provide standards by which to judge one charged with being a transgressor of the Code and to provide the procedures whereby the Association and the judge may be dealt with in a fair and just manner. The fulfillment of the role of a women's gymnastic judge who is a part of the National Association of Women's Gymnastic Judges requires an understanding by the individual judge of her/his relationship with and function in a well ordered and justly administered system of judging women's gymnastics events and it is this which creates and give rise to the consequent or resultant obligation on the part of the individual judge to maintain the highest standards of ethical conduct and personal and professional integrity at all times.

PRELIMINARY STATEMENT

This Code of Professional Responsibility consists of three but interrelated parts: Canons, Disciplinary Rules and Disciplinary Action. The Canons express in general terms the conduct expected of women's gymnastic judges in their relationship with the public, with the Association and with the profession of judging in general; the Canons embody the general concepts from which the ethical consideration and disciplinary rules are derived. The Disciplinary Rules are mandatory and set forth the minimum level of conduct below which no judge who is a member of the Association can fall and will be uniformly applied to all members. Permeating both the Canons and the Disciplinary Rules are matters of ethics which represent the objective toward which every member of the Association should strive.

CANONS

- CANON 1: A judge should assist in maintaining the integrity and competence of the profession of judging women's gymnastic events.
- CANON 2: A judge should assist the Association in fulfilling its duty of making judges available for women's gymnastic events.
- CANON 3: A judge should assist in improving the system of judging women's gymnastic events.
- CANON 4: A judge should avoid even the appearance of professional impropriety.
- CANON 5: A Judge should be well qualified in gymnastics, know the rules and be thoroughly prepared for each assignment. Each team, meet contestant and participant, as well as the spectators, are entitled to the official's best efforts to administer the rules of the sport.
- CANON 6: A judge should prepare for each judging assignment and should, through study and clinics, keep her/his judging knowledge current.

- CANON 7: A judge should fulfill all assignments accepted and be punctual. A judge should also attend all judging and other meetings which are intended to promote a well ordered and conducted meet or event.
- CANON 8: A judge should be alert at all times, quickly yet accurately produce her/his scores and have a basis for the scores derived and prepared. If a legitimate need should arise, the judge should explain and support such scores by working through conferences and dealing with inquiries in a dignified, professional manner.
- CANON 9: A judge should not solicit meets for herself/himself or for others.
- CANON 10: A judge shall be completely unbiased. A judge should not give any appearance, especially at a meet, of any particular friendship with any coach or competitor. Also, a judge should decline any assignment in which affiliation with a team or individuals would tend to influence the judge's ability to be fair and objective.
- CANON 11: A judge should treat gymnasts, coaches, judges, promoters and spectators with respect. A judge should respect the privacy, property and feelings of any judge or other person with whom such judge is living during the event being judged, and should not do anything which would embarrass or offend such person.
- CANON 12: A judge should at all times both look and act professionally. A judge should maintain a neat and well-groomed appearance when judging. He/she should wear the uniform of the Association (except where other dress is permitted).
- CANON 13: A judge should not be overly officious. She/he should not criticize other officials or attempt to explain other officials' judgments.
- CANON 14: A judge should confine her/his duties to the purposes of judging; i.e., coaching or meet directing are not included in a judge's responsibilities.
- CANON 15: A judge should never consume alcoholic beverages or drugs prior to a judging assignment where such consumption is evident by odor, conduct or appearance.
- CANON 16: A judge should exercise good judgment when using social networking media (Facebook, Twitter, blogs, texting, e-mail, etc.) i.e. avoid communicating with coaches or gymnasts during, before or after a competition; or refrain from making inappropriate statements about fellow judges, coaches, gymnasts, clubs or parents.
- Canon 17: Judges may not participate in any wagering activities involving amateur, collegiate or professional gymnastics, nor can they provide any information to individuals involved in any type of gymnastics wagering activities.

Revised 7/2015

DISCIPLINARY RULES

- *RULE 1:* A judge who is a member of this Association shall not:
 - (a) Violate a disciplinary rule,
 - (b) Circumvent a disciplinary rule through actions of another,
 - (c) Engage in illegal conduct involving moral turpitude,
 - (d) Engage in conduct involving dishonesty, fraud, deceit or misrepresentation,
 - (e) Engage in conduct prejudicial to the judging of women's gymnastic events,
 - (f) Engage in any other conduct that adversely reflects on her/his fitness to engage in the profession of judging women's gymnastic events.
- *RULE 2:* A judge who is a member of this Association shall report any knowledge she/he has of a violation of Rule 1 by any other judge or member to her Association, such report to made to the National Judging Director and every effort shall be made by the reporting party to keep such report and the content thereof confidential to all other except the National Judging Director unless and until called upon by the Association to make the content thereof known to others.
- *RULE 3:* A judge who possesses knowledge or evidence concerning another judge or member of this Association shall reveal such knowledge or evidence upon proper request of one having authority from the Association to investigate or act upon the conduct of such judge.
- *RULE 4:* A judge shall not accept any compensation, remuneration or consideration in connection with her/his fulfilling her contract to judge an event other than that which is the paid or otherwise accorded her by the Association or otherwise sanctioned by the Association.
- *RULE 5:* A judge shall not suffer or permit or allow anything to influence or otherwise affect or to give the appearance of affecting or having affected her/his judgment in rendering a fair and impartial and otherwise honest judgment.
- *RULE 6:* A judge shall not accept anything of value from any person whether the judge knows or reasonably should know that the offer is for the purpose of influencing her/his actions as a women's gymnastics judge.
- *RULE 7:* A judge shall not use her/his position as such to endeavor to influence or attempt to influence anyone in any manner whatsoever, or to obtain any special advantage for herself/himself by reason of or as consequence of her/his being a judge.
- *RULE 8:* A judge shall not knowingly make a false statement concerning any fellow judge or other person having involvement whatsoever in any meet or event in which this Association is in any way involved or interested.
- *RULE 9:* A judge shall not engage in any conduct which gives even an appearance of impropriety.
- *RULE 10:* A judge who has accepted employment and has contracted for such with this Association and who later cannot for valid and substantial reasons perform that contract shall make every reasonable effort to replace herself/himself with a judge of equal rating and ability and shall undertake to do so at the earliest possible time.
- *RULE 11:* A judge shall not engage in any conduct which results in or tends to result in an event or meet being seriously interrupted and/or compromised or terminating prematurely or terminating in discord, but, instead, shall endeavor to see to and participate in the event or meet to its regular and orderly completion without interruption or delay or discord and shall look in the first instance to the Association for resolution of any disagreements,

improprieties, impositions, contract disputes, monetary losses or disagreements or kindred matters thereto pertaining all to the end that the judge will neither interject herself/himself into argument, debate or other acrimonious exchanges or remove herself/himself from or withdraw from further participation, none of which will promote or otherwise further the conducting of a successful event or meet.

- *RULE 12:* A judge shall not purport to undertake to speak for or in the name of the Association to the press or other media or any other person or entity without first having requested and received from the Association express prior permission and approval so to speak.

DISCIPLINARY ACTION

A judge who violates any of the foregoing Canons or Disciplinary Rules is subject to disciplinary action by the Association, which action, if undertaken, shall be undertaken in the following manner:

A. REPORTING A VIOLATION - GRIEVANCE: A party desiring to report a violation of this Code by a member of this Association to this Association shall do so by certified letter addressed to the State Judging Director for the State in which the violation is alleged to have occurred. Such a report shall be deemed to be and shall be referred to as a "grievance" and shall state in detail the nature of the violation of which complaint is made and the details and circumstances of its occurrence.

B. DISPOSITION OF GRIEVANCE - PROCEDURE: The State Judging Director in receipt of such grievance shall transmit a copy thereof to the party who is the subject of the grievance and this shall be by registered or certified mail, return receipt requested, with delivery restricted to the addressee only. The envelope in which same is transmitted to such party shall be plainly marked "Personal and Confidential" so as to further insure the confidentiality of the matter at this stage of the proceedings. The State Judging Director shall upon receipt of such grievance convene a panel comprised of such State Judging Director and two other State Judging Directors of her/his selection within the same Region as the State of violation.

- (a) A date, time and place shall be fixed for the hearing of the grievance and the party who is the object of such grievance shall be informed and advised in writing of the date, time and location of the hearing (as well as the composition of the panel to hear same) and shall be accorded a reasonable opportunity to appear personally before the panel and to present testimony or other evidence in defense of the charge.
- (b) It shall be optional with the reporting party to attend or not to attend such hearing. The party who is the object of the grievance may elect to present her/his evidence in written form for the consideration of the panel and may elect not appear personally.
- (c) The panel shall, within thirty (30) days from and after the conclusion of the hearing or the review of the written submissions render its decision as to the merit or lack of merit of the grievance.
- (d) In the event that the grievance is found by a majority of the panel to be without merit, the matter shall thereupon terminate and no further action on such grievance shall be taken either by the panel, the party, the party who is the object of such grievance or the reporting party and the panel shall make its findings in written form and shall transmit a copy of its findings to the reporting party, to the party against whom the proceedings were initiated and to the National Judging Director for inclusion in the official records of this Association.

- (e) In the event that the grievance is found by a majority of the panel to have merit and disciplinary action (as hereinafter delineated) is taken or to be taken, then, in such event, a report of the panel's findings shall be provided to the reporting party, the party reported upon and to the National Judging Director. The party reported upon and against whom action is to be taken shall have the right to the appeal and findings and judgment if, and only if, less than a unanimous finding and judgment was made by the panel. Such an appeal shall be to the Regional Director whose Region includes the State in which the alleged violation occurred. Such Regional Director shall refer a copy of the record as developed during the proceedings before the State Judging Director to two other Regional Directors of her/his selection and they, solely upon the record thus made at the State Judging Director's level and exclusive of any appearance by the reporting party, the aggrieved party or any other party, such panel shall, within thirty (30) days from and after receipt by all three Regional Judging Directors of a copy of such record make their findings and judgment on the record thus presented and by the majority vote of such panel shall either affirm or sustain or reverse the findings and judgment of the State Judging Director's panel. In the event that the judgment of the State Judging Director's panel's action is reversed and the aggrieved party is thereby exonerated, the matter shall end at that point and there shall be no further proceedings or appeals. In the event that the State Judging Directors panel's findings and judgments are sustained then the matter shall, likewise end; provided, however, that in the event the State Judging Director's panel's findings and judgment are sustained by less than a unanimous vote of the Regional Director's panel, then in such event, the aggrieved party may initiate a further appeal in like manner and within the same time period to a panel composed of the Association's National Judging Director and two Governing Board Members appointed by her. The Findings and Judgment of the Regional Judging Director's panel shall be sent to the reporting party, the aggrieved party and to the National Judging Director for inclusion in the Association's records.
- (f) An appeal to the National Judging Director shall be conducted and resolved in manner similar to that of the resolution of an appeal at the Regional level and shall be based upon the record as initially made at the State Judging Director's level, which record shall be transmitted to the National Judging Director upon her/his request and copies thereof provided to the two Governing Board members by her/him appointed for the purpose of resolving the appeal. At this final level of appeal, a decision of the majority of the panel thus constituted shall be final and there shall be no further appeal permitted.
- (g) All such appeals which the aggrieved person intends to initiate shall be initiated by her/him within fifteen (15) days after receipt by her/him of a copy of the findings from the hearing last held and conducted (or, if not a hearing, the findings resulting from a appeal) in the matter of the subject grievance and with respect to which a majority or more of the panel sustained the grievance. Initiation of an appeal shall be by letter from the aggrieved party that she/he desires the matter be heard by the next higher level of authority within the Association as herein provided. Such letter requesting this appeal shall be termed a "Notice of Appeal" and shall be sent by the aggrieved party by certified mail to the State Judging Director or the Regional Judging Director, as the case may be, who last heard the matter and who was the director selecting the other members of the panel which heard the matter. The date of the posting or delivery of the notice of appeal, whichever shall be sooner, shall be the date of the initiation of the appeal.
- (h) There shall be no appeal from a grievance which a majority of any of the panels herein mentioned found to be without merit. In the event that a majority or more of any panel is unable to agree within the allotted time whether or not a grievance is or is without merit, then, in such event, it shall be deemed that the grievance was without merit.

C. PENALTY - IMPOSITION: The punishment of penalty for a violation of this Code shall be not more than any one of the following for each violation and the punishment to be administered shall be solely and exclusively in the discretion of the panel hearing the matter in the first instance, provided, however, that in fixing the punishment to be administered the panel shall give due consideration to the relative gravity of the offense, the number of previous offenses or infractions by the aggrieved party, if any, and the mitigating or extenuating factors and circumstances bearing upon the infraction as be known to or otherwise brought to the attention of the panel, to-wit:

- (a) Letter of reprimand - private - sent only to the aggrieved party and the reporting party;
- (b) Letter of reprimand together with the public reprimand in any publication, newsletter or like item published, issued or sponsored by the Association;
- (c) Loss of rotation (period to be fixed and determined by the panel but in no event to be in excess of a period of two years);
- (d) Expulsion from the Association for a fixed period of time but not to exceed five (5) years;
- (e) Permanent expulsion from the Association.

The penalties for which provision is herein provided shall be effective fifteen (15) days from and after the date of communication of same to the aggrieved party (same to be part of the findings and judgment of the panel); provided, however, that the initiation of an appeal as herein and within the time for which provision is herein made shall stay the imposition of such penalty pending the resolution of the appeal and any subsequent appeal taken as herein provided.

In the event that the aggrieved party is a State Judging Director, a Regional Judging Director or an Officer (other than the National Judging Director, then, in such event, in the case of State and Regional Directors and Officers other than the National Judging Director, the National Judging Director shall designate an appropriate replacement to act as part of the panel instead of the aggrieved party to decide such grievance. If the aggrieved party is the National Judging Director, then, in such event, the replacement shall be designated by the Governing Board of the Association.

The panel to which an appeal has been taken shall have the prerogative of sustaining the findings and judgment of the panel from which the appeal was taken but a majority of such panel to which appeal was taken shall also have the prerogative of modifying the penalty imposed by, and only by, reducing the severity thereof.