Puerto Rico Sports Fishing Federation (PRSFF) Code of Conduct,

Media Release & Policies

3/8/2024



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**PRSFF – Code of Conduct Agreement**

General Code of Conduct for PRSFF Members, Volunteers, Ambassadors, Coaches, Athletes, Staff & Board of Directors:

On my honor I promise to comply with this PRSFF Code of Conduct while serving in my capacity as an PRSFF member:

1. I have or will complete my registration with PRSFF, answering all questions truthfully and honestly.
2. I will do my best to live up to the PRSFF Code of Conduct and hold others in PRSFF accountable to those standards. I will exercise sound judgment and demonstrate good leadership and use my PRSFF membership for its intended purpose consistent with the mission of PRSFF.
3. I will make the protection of all a personal priority, regardless of race, creed, gender, sexual orientation, age or religion.
4. If needed for my type of membership, *I will complete and remain current with Youth Protection training requirements (Volunteers, Ambassadors, Coaches, Athletes, Staff and Board of Directors).*
5. When transporting Youth or other PRSFF members, I will obey all laws, comply with Youth Protection guidelines, and follow safe driving practices.
6. I will respect and abide by the Rules and Regulations of PRSFF, its policies, and provided training, including but not limited to those relating to:
	* Unauthorized fundraising activities.
	* Advocacy on social and political issues, including prohibited use of PRSFF’s uniforms, logos and brands.
	* Bullying, hazing, harassment, sexual harassment, and unlawful discrimination of any kind.
7. I will not discuss or engage in any form of sexual conduct while engaged in PRSFF activities. I will refer PRSFF’s Youth with questions regarding these topics to talk to their parents, family or spiritual advisor.
8. I confirm that I have fully disclosed and will disclose in the future any of the following:
	* Any criminal suspicion, charges, or convictions of a crime or offense involving abuse, violence, sexual misconduct, or any misconduct involving minors or juveniles, or adults.
	* Any investigation or court order involving domestic violence, child abuse, or similar matter.
	* Any criminal charges or convictions for offenses involving controlled substances, driving while intoxicated, firearms, or dangerous weapons.
9. I will not possess, distribute, transport, consume, or use any of the following items prohibited by law or in violation of any PRSFF rules, regulations, and policies during official PRSFF events:
	* Controlled substances or a doping violation as defined by the Confederation of International Sports Fishing, International Olympic Committee (IOC), World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA), the United States Anti-doping Agency (USADA), The United States Olympic Committee (USOC), and any other regulatory agency.
	* Concealed or unconcealed firearms, fireworks, or explosives
	* Pornography or materials containing words or images inconsistent with PRSFF values.
10. If I am taking prescription medications with the potential of impairing my functioning or judgment, I will not engage in activities that would put PRSFF members at risk, including driving or operating equipment.
11. I will take steps to prevent or report any violation of this code of conduct by others in connection with PRSFF activities to Team Captain and/or PRSFF board member(s).

**PRSFF – Media Release & Consent**

General Media Release & Consent for PRSFF Members, Volunteers, Ambassadors, Coaches, Athletes, Staff & Board of Directors:

1. I am aware that PRSFF and PRSFF Team sponsors, suppliers, and licensees provide critical support for PRSFF and each PRSFF Team and, in recognition of this fact, I will wear designated PRSFF Team apparel at all officially sanctioned PRSFF or PRSFF Team functions and events.

2. I will not conceal or cover-up any PRSFF or PRSFF team sponsors, suppliers or licensee brands or other identification appearing on my **OFFICIAL** PRSFF or PRSFF Team apparel.

3. I agree to be filmed and photographed by the official photographer(s) and networks(s) of PRSFF under

 conditions authorized by PRSFF and give event organizers and PRSFF the right to use my name,

 picture, likeness, and biographical information before, during and after the period of my participation in PRSFF events and activities. I will promote the PRSFF sponsors at the activity/event in which I participate and promote the success of PRSFF and any team for which I compete; in no event may PRSFF, the PRSFF Team or the event organizers use or authorize the use of my name, picture, likeness, voice and biographical information for the purpose of trade, including any use in a manner that would imply an endorsement of any company, product, or service, without my verbal or written permission; **I will not promote personal sponsors in any manner at official PRSFF sanctioned events and/or on PRSFF official media platforms**.

4. I will not use or authorize the use of photographs, films or videos of myself in my PRSFF or PRSFF Team apparel or equipment or the use of PRSFF logo or PRSFF Team logo for the purpose of trade, without the prior written consent of PRSFF board (which consent shall not be unreasonably withheld).

5. I will not act as a journalist, medial liaison or in any other media capacity during the time I represent Puerto Rico as a PRSFF National Team member, **including social media postings about PRSFF and its PRSFF Team’s event information- unless authorized by PRSFF**. I recognize that PRSFF and PRSFF Team sites are the forum for information distribution.

6. Puerto Rico teams, members and their team leadership have further branding responsibilities:

* The PRSFF logo, global sponsor(s) logo and reciprocal web link(s) on digital mediums, to be placed on following:
	+ Marketing materials of printed banners, flyers, handouts, newsletters, or any collateral. Website(s) home pages – have PRSFF logo prominently placed.
	+ PRSFF logos included on social platforms, or appropriate area of medium.
	+ Team jersey/shirt/HATS (PRSFF logo placement and size per PRSFF board).

**Further PRSFF Code of Conduct and Policy for:**

**PRSFF Athletes, Coaches and Support Staff**

I acknowledge that I have a right to a hearing if my opportunity to compete or attend PRSFF events is

denied, or if I am charged with violation of this Code of Conduct & Policy.

I further acknowledge that if I am found to be in violation of this Code of Conduct & Policy, I may be

subject to sanctions up to and including suspension or dismissal from the organization and representing

Puerto Rico in PRSFF approved functions.

I have familiarized myself with the PRSFF Code of Conduct & Policy and understand that acceptance of its

provisions are a condition of my participation in PRSFF events and its licensed representation.

**IN ORDER TO BECOME A MEMBER OF PRSFF, AN INDIVIDUAL MUST SIGN THIS CODE OF CONDUCT AND POLICY IN UNALTERED FORM IN ALL APPLICABLE PLACES:**

**As a member of PRSFF, I hereby promise and agree that I:**

- will abide by all rules related to PRSFF and Team selection procedures as approved by PRSFF board**.**

- will act in a sportsmanlike manner consistent with the spirit of fair competition and responsible conduct.

- use my best efforts to assist other members of my Team, the Team Manager/Captain and Team Staff

Members, PRSFF Board in achieving the goals and objectives of the Team.

- will maintain a level of fitness and competitive readiness that will permit my performance to be at the maximum of my abilities.

- will not commit a doping violation as defined by the Confederation of International Sports Fishing, International Olympic Committee (IOC), World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA), the United States Anti-doping Agency (USADA), The United States Olympic Committee (USOC), and any other regulatory agency.

- am not currently serving a doping violation and/or do not have a pending or unresolved doping charge; and I understand that a suspension, or pending or unresolved anti-doping rule violation may be cause for my not being selected to a PRSFF National team.

- will not engage in any conduct that is criminal under any laws applicable to me, including, but not limited to laws governing the possession and use of drugs, alcohol and providing of drugs to any person or alcohol to minors.

- have never been convicted of violating a criminal law and have no pending indictment or a pending charge, except as I have listed on Attachment A (except for misdemeanors, which, if known, would not be a factor in my selection as a PRSFF Team member or convictions as a minor which have been legally sealed), and I understand that such conviction, indictment or criminal charge may be cause for my not being selected to a PRSFF Team;

- am eligible to compete under the rules of the Puerto Rico Sports Fishing Federation (PRSFF), Pan Am Sports fishing Federation and CIPS Federations.

- will have a valid USA passport with an expiration date of at least 6 months post event – I will carry this for the duration of the time I am a PRSFF Team member, Coach or Support Staff.

- will refrain from conduct detracting from my ability or that of my teammates to attain peak performance.

- will respect property of others whether personal or public.

- will respect members of my Team, other teams, spectators and officials, and engage in no form of discriminatory behavior or verbal, physical or sexual harassment or abuse.

- will follow my Team's rules and programs including by way of example: rules regarding curfew, training, required attendance at team meetings, training and competition programs, including the execution of game plans.

- will compete whenever I am selected and will not default or refuse to compete when asked by the coach or support staff. I understand that if I refuse to compete other than for reasons of illness or injury, I may be liable for sanctions up to and including dismissal from the team and/or suspension of my PRSFF membership.

- understand that if I require legal representation because I am accused of a doping violation or am accused of criminal misconduct, or if for any other reason I require the services of an attorney, I will be personally responsible for payment of all such legal fees and expenses.

- understand that I must come equipped to compete at the highest level, and that the PRSFF Team may provide some sponsor equipment, but that it is my responsibility to come fully prepared to compete.

- understand that **currently**, I am responsible for all individual tournament fees, my flight tickets, and competition living arrangements (**in the future PRSFF will potentially pay tournament fees, official lodging as well as provide flight vouchers for the team, when funds are available**). In the event of an emergency or expulsion, I am responsible for any extra travel or logistics costs to make personal travel arrangements that are not part of the team’s official itinerary.

- understand that the chain of command of PRSFF and the PRSFF Team must be followed when issuing any
information request or lodging any complaint.

- will act in a way that will display respect and honor to myself, my teammates, PRSFF, PRSFF Team and Puerto Rico.

- will remember that at all times, I am an ambassador for my sport, Puerto Rico and the Olympic Movement.

In consideration of the above, the following list illustrates conduct, which is inconsistent with PRSFF and it’s Team values, and the responsibilities associated with being affiliated with PRSFF and it’s Teams. Infractions and Repercussions will be monitored to assure consistency in application. This list does not establish a complete set of rules prescribing every aspect of inappropriate behavior and is intended to illustrate a sampling of unacceptable behaviors, their relative level of severity, examples of possible penalties/repercussions of such behavior.

LEVEL 1 INFRACTION

- Verbally abusive, disrespectful, offensive, racist or sexist behavior.

- Being late to or absent from an official event activity (camp, seminar, meeting, competition)

- Unsportsmanlike conduct

- Public disturbance or nuisance

- Failure to follow the dress code as designated by the PRSFF Team Manager, at an official event or activity

- Endorse personal sponsors at official sanctioned PRSFF events or on official PRSFF media platforms

**Penalties/Repercussions:**

- Verbal or written reprimand

- Performance of specified task(s), such as formal written and/or oral apology or restitution

- Denial of the privilege to participate in any or all remaining team activity(s) at the event

**LEVEL 2 INFRACTION**

- Second offense of Level 1 Infraction

- Making accusations against teammates or staff outside the proper chain of command

- Disparage the PRSFF organization, PRSFF sponsors or Team members

- Refusing to follow team game plans or participating in competition activities

- Inappropriate Drunkenness [if 21 or over]

- Sexual harassment

- Pranks, jokes, or other activities, which endanger the safety of others

**Penalties/Repercussions:**

- Any of the penalties described under Level 1 infractions

- Being sent back to travel point of origin or home base

- Revoking of uniform or other Team supplied items

- Probation for one (1) year

- Suspension from all PRSFF and PRSFF Team activities (trials, training camps, etc.) for one (1) year

**ZERO TOLERANCE INFRACTIONS**

- Fighting

- Using recreational drugs

- Using banned performance enhancing substances

- Vandalizing public or private property

- Theft of property

- Breaking the law

- Purchasing, possessing or drinking alcoholic beverages, if under 21 years old

- Drunkenness at an official competition or event

**Penalties/Repercussions:**

- Any of items described under Level 2 Infractions

- Prevented from competing or participating in an official competition, event or activity

- Being sent back to travel point of origin or home base. At the discretion of the person in authority, the athlete may be allowed to travel with the Team and/or remain at the official venue, if that is the most practical alternative.

- If infraction occurs before departure, privileges to travel with the Team and participate in an official competition, event or activity may be revoked.

- Revoking of uniform or other Team supplied items

- Expulsion from the Team

- Probation for two (2) years

- Suspension from all PRSFF and PRSFF Team activities (trials, training camps, etc.) for two (2) years

- Any other penalty that may be deemed appropriate for the particular violation

**ENFORCEMENT DURING AN PRSFF OR PRSFF TEAM EVENT/PROGRAM IN PROGRESS:**

**1. Initiating and Carrying Out the Enforcement Process**

- PRSFF’s Board of Directors will dutifully assign appropriate volunteers & staff to act as the official PRSFF Conduct Committee

- An PRSFF Acting Disciplinary Authority (PRSFF Board of Directors, Event Manager, Team Manager/Captain**,** or Coach) may act on his or her own initiative to impose sanctions or penalties for violations of this Policy. In addition, an individual may allege a complaint against a player or team by directly contacting the appropriate Acting Disciplinary Authority, who may act upon the complaint as he or she sees fit. Due to time sensitive nature of the situation, no written complaint is necessary.

**2. Immediate Appeal of an Acting Disciplinary Authority's Decision**

- Generally, if a higher level Acting Disciplinary Authority **(PRSFF Hierarchy of Acting Disciplinary Authority: 1. PRSFF Board of Directors – Chairman/President*,* 2. PRSFF Board Vice-President, 3. Any other PRSFF Board member, 4. PRSFF Team Manager/Captain 5. PRSFF Team Coach)** is ascertainable and reachable during the event, a PRSFF Team member may appeal the initial decision made by the lower level Acting Disciplinary Authority. For example, in a PRSFF Team national series event such as the Qualifiers or Finals, an Acting Disciplinary Authority's decision may be immediately appealed to the PRSFF Board officers, either in person or via telephone or email communication. If the PRSFF Board officer can be reached in time to make a meaningful decision on the matter, PRSFF's decision is final with respect to how to proceed during an ongoing event. However, in situations where there may be no clear higher level Acting Disciplinary Authority, the Acting Disciplinary Authority decision may not be appealed. This Policy encourages PRSFF members to conduct themselves in a manner that is in conformance with the requirements of this Policy and to ensure quick decision making and finality during ongoing events.

**3. Appeal of the Acting Disciplinary Authority Decision**

- If the sanctions imposed by Acting Disciplinary Authority continue beyond the tournament or event where the conduct violation took place, the sanctions may be appealed by following the procedures set forth in Section B below. PRSFF members may also appeal a decision which they believe was made by an Acting Disciplinary Authority unfairly or in error pursuant to the PRSFF Administrative Appeals Policy.

**B. Enforcement through a Formal Complaint**

- The second method by which alleged violations of this Policy are reviewed is through a more formal written complaint-review-appeal process. While this process is more formal, it is understood that a particular situation may have a time-sensitive nature, and as such the timeframes set forth below may be accelerated at the discretion of the Conduct Committee to ensure that time-sensitive complaints are reviewed quickly while still being afforded the full appeal process outlined below.

**1. Initiating the Enforcement Process**

- Any PRSFF member or group may file a written complaint against any other member, group of players, team or decision made by an Acting Disciplinary Authority if the sanctions imposed continue beyond the tournament or event where the conduct occurred. In the case of a complaint relating to on-field conduct, the complainant must be a witness to the conduct in question. An individual who hears of but does not witness offensive conduct may request an investigation by the Conduct Committee, who may act on such requests at their discretion.

-Additionally, any individual who had been suspended for longer than one (1) year shall have the right to have their suspension reviewed annually by submitting a request for review in writing to the Conduct Committee. Review of suspensions shall be heard by the Conduct Committee and shall not require an Initial Determination.

**2. Initial determination made by the appropriate staff member**

- Any PRSFF member or group may file a written complaint against any other member, group of players, team or a decision made by an Acting Disciplinary Authority if the sanctions imposed continue beyond the tournament or event where the conduct occurred. In the case of a complaint relating to on-field conduct, the complainant must be a witness to the conduct in question. An individual who hears of but does not witness offensive conduct may request an investigation by the Conduct Committee, who may act on such requests at their discretion.

- Additionally, any individual who has been suspended for longer than one (1) year shall have the right to have their suspension reviewed annually by submitting a written request for review to the Conduct Committee. Review of suspensions shall be heard by conduct Committee and shall not require an Initial Determination.

- The Conduct Committee will determine the appropriate Staff Member(s) to review the complaint, make an Initial determination and provide a recommended course of action. The Conduct Committee will forward copies of all information it has obtained on a particular matter to the appropriate Staff Member(s). The Staff Member(s) shall have authority to conduct its own investigation to obtain further information in order to make its Initial Determination.

- The Staff Member's(s) Initial Determination and recommended course of action must be delivered to the Conduct Committee within thirty (30) days of receiving the defendant's written response to the allegation. This period may also be shortened or lengthened by the Conduct Committee in its sole discretion as a result of the (a) time-sensitive nature of a particular issue or (b) in order to ensure that the involved parties have a meaningful opportunity to avail themselves of the full appeal process.

**3. Review of the Initial Determination by the Conduct Committee**

- The Conduct Committee shall review the Initial Determination upon receipt within five (5) days of receipt, the Conduct Committee may validate the Initial Determination or reconsider the Initial Determination.

 (a) Validation. If the Conduct Committee validates the Initial Determination, the Initial Determination shall become the final decision of the Conduct Committee.

 (b) Reconsideration. The Conduct Committee may reconsider the Initial Determination if, in the Conduct Committee's reasonable judgment either the Initial Determination:

 (i) significantly departs from existing precedent.

 (ii) imposes sanctions that are grossly disproportionate to the violation in question (i.e., too strict or too lenient).

 (iii) clearly misinterprets existing rules regulations, policies or

 (iv) if significant new information has been presented which may affect the facts and circumstances involved in the alleged conduct violation. Reconsideration may not necessarily result in modifications of or changes to the Initial Determination.

- If the Conduct Committee chooses to reconsider the Initial Determination it may conduct its own independent investigation and may incorporate any new information presented into its decision-making process.

- The Conduct Committee's final decision (the "Conduct Committee Decision") shall be communicated in writing to the affected parties within thirty (30) days of receiving the Initial Determination. Unless otherwise stated, the Conduct Committee Decision shall take effect immediately. This decision may be appealed to the PRSFF Board of Directors as set forth below.

- The Conduct Committee reserves the right to shorten or lengthen the time periods set forth above in its sole discretion due to either the (a) time-sensitive nature of a particular issue or (b) in order to ensure that the involved parties have a meaningful opportunity to avail themselves of the full appeal process. Any changes to deadlines contained herein must be expressly communicated to the involved parties in writing immediately after the decision has been made by the Conduct Committee.

- During the review process the Conduct Committee may temporarily impose or suspend imposed penalties on affected parties until the matter is fully resolved. For example, this may mean at PRSFF events until the final resolution of an appeal.

- Conduct Committee decisions are based on majority vote when no consensus can be reached. In the event of a tie, the Chair of the Committee casts the deciding vote. If present, the PRSFF BOD member is chair. If not present, PRSFF Team Manager, and PRSFF Coach, in that order.

**4. Appeal to the PRSFF Board of Directors**

- Any aggrieved party may appeal a decision in writing made by the Conduct Committee, except the decision to grant the initial hearing, to the PRSFF Board of Directors. Appellants may contest the decision, challenge the appropriateness of the sanction or penalty, and/or introduce compelling new evidence. Appeals that merely restate a case will be deemed frivolous and shall not be reviewed. Appeals must be submitted in writing to the PRSFF Chairman within thirty (30) days of notification of the Conduct Committee Decision. The PRSFF Chairman/President will distribute all relevant information to the Board of Directors. Within five (5) days of receiving the appeal the Board of Directors shall either validate the Conduct Committee Decision or reconsider the Conduct Committee Decision.

 (a) Validation. If the Board of Directors validates the Conduct Committee Decision, the Conduct Committee Decision shall become the final decision on the matter.

 (b) Reconsideration. The Board of Directors may reconsider the Conduct Committee Decision, if, in the Board of Director's reasonable judgment the Conduct Committee Decision:

 (i) significantly departs from existing precedent

 (ii) imposes sanctions that are grossly disproportionate to the violation in question (i.e., too strict or too lenient)

 (iii) clearly misinterprets existing rules regulations, policies

 (iv) if significant new information has been presented which may affect the facts and circumstances involved in the alleged conduct violation. Reconsideration may not necessarily result in modifications of or changes to the Conduct Committee Decision.

- If the Board of Directors chooses to reconsider the Conduct Committee Decision it may conduct its own independent investigation and may incorporate any new information presented into its decision-making process. If the Board of Directors chooses to reconsider the Conduct Committee Decision, it must issue its decision within thirty (30) days of receiving the appeal.

- The Board of Directors shall communicate its decision to the relevant parties in writing. This decision is final and may not be appealed. Decisions made by the Board of Directors are based on majority vote when no consensus can be reached. In the event of a tie, the Board Chairman/President casts the deciding vote. The Board's ruling is final. Unless otherwise stated, rulings on appeal take effect immediately.

PLEASE CONFIRM YOUR AGREEMENT TO THE ABOVE CODE OF CONDUCT, MEDIA RELEASE AND POLICY IN ITS ENTIRETY BY SIGNING BELOW:

**PRSFF MEMBER AFFIRMATION**

* Membership, all persons participating in any level PRSFF activity, must become a PRSFF annual member to be authorized to participate, prior to the event in which they will participate.
* Membership **dues of $50 annually** (non-refundable) due by **5 April 2024**. Dues will be paid to PRSFF account thru PRSFF website membership page: [www.puertoricoangling.org](http://www.puertoricoangling.org). **All transaction fees to be paid by member when sending fees**. Fees will be used to fund PRSFF business operating expenses (FIPSed/CIPS & PASF membership fees etc.)**.**
* I have read and accept this document’s Code of Conduct and Media Release in its unaltered form. I agree to the rules, guidelines, jurisdiction and procedures stated in these documents as a condition of being selected to participate as a member of PRSFF.

**Return signed document to your Regional Vice-President by 22 March 2024!**

**USA Regional Vice-President:** **proesapr@msn.com****; (703) 638-0399**

**Puerto Rico Regional Vice-President:** **edgarqmc@gmail.com****; (787) 922-0738**

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Signature Date

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Athlete's Name (print)

*If Participant is under 18 years of age:*

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Parent/Guardian Signature Date

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Parent Name (print)