

# Greater Napanee Soccer Club

## Facility and Equipment Safety Policy

### 1. Purpose

The Greater Napanee Soccer Club (GNSC) is committed to providing a safe, inclusive, and development-focused environment for all players, coaches, referees, volunteers, and spectators. This policy ensures that all facilities and equipment used for GNSC activities meet safety expectations aligned with the principles in the Canada Soccer Safety Guide.

### 2. Scope

This policy applies to all GNSC-sanctioned programming, including training sessions, games, tournaments, camps, and special events.

### 3. Roles & Responsibilities

#### Club Responsibilities

- Provide fields and equipment that are safe, properly maintained, and suitable for the age and level of play.
- Conduct regular facility inspections and document any hazards and corrective actions.
- Ensure all goals, nets, and field equipment meet Canada Soccer and Ontario Soccer safety standards.
- Provide safe storage of equipment when not in use.
- Communicate safety procedures and expectations to coaches, officials, and volunteers.

#### Coach & Team Official Responsibilities

- Complete a pre-session field and equipment check before every training or game.
- Immediately report hazards to the Club Administrator or Field Coordinator.
- Remove or mark unsafe areas until hazards are corrected.
- Ensure players use equipment properly and safely.

#### Referee Responsibilities

- Complete a field inspection prior to kickoff.
- Ensure goals are anchored and equipment meets match safety standards.
- Delay or suspend play if any safety concern arises.

#### Participant Responsibilities

- Use equipment as intended.
- Wear appropriate footwear and shin guards.
- Report unsafe conditions to a coach or official promptly.

## **4. Facility Safety Standards**

### **Field Conditions**

- Fields must be level, free of holes, debris, rocks, and hazards.
- Standing water and slippery surfaces must be assessed before allowing play.
- Field lines must be clearly visible.
- Spectator areas must be clear of obstructions and maintain safe distances from the field of play.

### **Weather & Environmental Safety**

Activities must follow Canada Soccer's weather safety practices such as:

- Immediate suspension of play for lightning or thunder.
- Heat management guidelines followed (hydration, shade, scheduled breaks).
- Air quality and smoke conditions monitored, with play modified or cancelled when needed.

## **5. Equipment Safety Standards**

### **Goals & Nets**

- All goals must be securely anchored (sandbags, stakes, or weighted systems).
- No game or practice may begin with unanchored goals.
- Nets must be free of tears, sharp edges, or exposed wires.
- Portable goals must be moved safely by adults only - never by players.

### **Balls**

- Must be properly inflated and appropriate to the age group.
- Defective balls must be removed immediately.

### **Training Equipment**

- Cones, poles, and agility tools must be in good condition and free of sharp edges.
- Benches, tents, and team shelters must be stable and secured.
- First-aid kits must be present and fully stocked at all sessions.

## **6. Pre-Activity Safety Checklist**

Before every session, coaches and referees must verify:

1. Field is safe and free of hazards.

2. Goals are anchored securely.
3. Equipment is intact and appropriate for use.
4. Weather conditions are safe.
5. Emergency action plan is known (address, access points, AED location).
6. If a hazard cannot be corrected immediately, the session must not proceed.

## **7. Incident Response**

- Any injury or safety incident must be reported to GNSC within 24 hours.
- Fields or equipment involved in an incident must be inspected before next use.
- Serious hazards must be logged and escalated to Club leadership immediately.

## **8. Blood, Jewellery & Head Coverings Safety**

GNSC adheres fully to the safety requirements outlined in the Canada Soccer Safety Guide and the FIFA Laws of the Game. The following standards apply to all GNSC-sanctioned games, practices, camps, clinics, and events.

### **Blood Policy**

In accordance with Canada Soccer safety standards:

Any participant who is bleeding, has an open wound, has blood on their uniform, or blood on their person must leave the field immediately.

- The individual may not return until:
  - The bleeding has stopped
  - The wound is fully covered
  - Any blood on the skin has been completely cleaned
  - The uniform has been changed or cleaned appropriately
- No player may participate with visible blood on their body or clothing.

### **Jewellery Policy**

For the safety of all participants and in alignment with Canada Soccer rules:

NO jewellery of any kind is permitted.

This includes but is not limited to:

- Rings
- Bracelets (except approved medical alert bracelets)
- Earrings
- Necklaces
- Visible body piercings

- Anklets
- Any metal hair accessories
- Additional requirements:
- Taping over jewellery is not permitted.
- Medical alert bracelets are allowed ONLY if:
- They are made of Velcro or similar soft material or
- They are fully covered with a sweatband.

Participants will not be allowed to join or continue in a session until all unsafe items are removed or secured as required.

### **Headscarves, Turbans & Religious Head Coverings**

GNSC follows the IFAB decision (Law 4 – The Players' Equipment) regarding the use of headscarves and religious head coverings.

- Headscarves, turbans, and other approved head coverings are permitted provided they:
- Are black or the same main colour as the team shirt
- Match among all players wearing them
- Maintain a professional appearance consistent with player equipment
- Are not attached to the shirt
- Are not dangerous to the wearer or any other player (e.g., no opening/closing mechanisms around the neck)
- Have no protruding or rigid elements

The referee or designated club official has final authority on-site to determine whether a head covering meets safety requirements.

### **9. Review & Updates**

This policy will be reviewed annually or following updates to the Canada Soccer Safety Guide, Ontario Soccer requirements, or changes in facility standards.