Concussion Code of Conduct

Policy Owner:	Membership	**Version:**	2.0
Approved By:	President & CEO	**Approval Date:**	August 26, 2026
Review Cycle:	Annually	**Next Review:**	August, 2027
Companion to:	OC Concussion Policy, Version 1.0. This Code forms Appendix A of that Policy and is published separately for signature. The two documents are reissued together.		
Supersedes:	Concussion Code of Conduct for Athletes and Parents/Guardians, August 2022		
Related Policies:	OC Concussion Policy, OC Code of Conduct & Ethics, OC Discipline & Complaints Policy, OC Records Management Policy		

1) How This Code Works

a) Purpose

i) This Concussion Code of Conduct sets out the commitments that Ontario Cycling ("OC") requires from athletes, parents and guardians, coaches, team trainers, officials, commissaires and designated persons.

ii) It is required by Rowan's Law (Concussion Safety), 2018 and O. Reg. 161/19: General, and it is the signing instrument for the OC Concussion Policy. The Policy sets out the full removal-from-sport and return-to-sport requirements; this Code sets out what each person commits to.

iii) This Code is the authoritative text. Appendix A of the OC Concussion Policy cross-references this document rather than reproducing it. Both documents are reviewed and reissued together, annually.

b) Who Signs, and When

Who	Part	When	How often
Athletes under 26 years of age	Part A	Before registering in an OC activity	Every year
Parent or guardian of an athlete under 18	Part A	Before the athlete registers	Every year
Coaches and team trainers	Part B	Before serving	Every year

i) A signature given once, at first registration, does not satisfy this requirement. The Code must be reviewed and confirmed every year.

ii) Registration is not complete, and no person may take part in or serve at an OC-sanctioned activity, until the confirmation required by this Code is on file, together with confirmation that an Ontario Concussion Awareness Resource has been reviewed within the previous 12 months.

iii) Athletes, coaches and team trainers who are not ordinarily resident in Ontario are not required to sign this Code in order to enter a single competition held in Ontario. The removal-from-sport and return-to-sport requirements still apply to them at that competition.

c) How to Read the Markings

Marking	Meaning
*	The commitment is mandatory content required by O. Reg. 161/19: General. The wording may be explained but should not be narrowed.

Marking	Meaning
†	The commitment is an Ontario Cycling requirement that goes beyond the statutory minimum.
(No marking)	Standard content drawn from the Ontario Ministry's sample Code of Conduct templates and OC's previous Code.

d) If This Code Is Not Followed

i) Failure to comply with this Code may result in disciplinary action under the OC Discipline & Complaints Policy. Sanctions available to OC include a concussion hold or eligibility hold, a reprimand, required additional training, suspension, removal of coaching, officiating or team trainer status, refusal or withdrawal of event sanctioning, loss of club or team affiliation, and refusal of registration.

2) Part A – Athletes Under 26, and Parents or Guardians

To be signed by the athlete. Where the athlete is under 18 years of age, a parent or guardian must also sign.

a) I will help prevent concussions by:

- wearing the proper equipment for my sport, wearing it correctly, and replacing my helmet after any impact †;
- developing my skills and strength so that I can participate to the best of my ability;
- respecting the rules of my sport or activity; and
- committing to fair play and respect for all, respecting other athletes, coaches, team trainers, commissaires and officials.

b) I will care for my health and safety by taking concussions seriously, and I understand that:

- a concussion is a brain injury that can have both short-term and long-term effects;
- a blow to my head, face or neck, or a blow to the body that causes the brain to move around inside the skull, may cause a concussion;
- I do not need to lose consciousness to have had a concussion;
- symptoms may not appear straight away – they can develop over hours, or first appear the next day;
- I have a commitment to concussion recognition and reporting, including self-reporting of a possible concussion and reporting to a designated person when I suspect that another individual may have sustained a concussion. * Meaning: if I think I might have a concussion I will stop participating in further training, practice or competition immediately, and I will tell an adult if I think another athlete has a concussion; and
- continuing to participate in further training, practice or competition with a possible concussion increases my risk of more severe and longer-lasting symptoms, and increases my risk of other injuries.

c) I will not hide concussion symptoms. I will speak up for myself and others.

- I will not hide my symptoms. I will tell a coach, official, commissaire, team trainer, parent or another adult I trust if I experience any symptoms of concussion.
- If someone else tells me about concussion symptoms, or I see signs that they might have a concussion, I will tell a coach, official, commissaire, team trainer, parent or another adult I trust so that they can help.
- I understand that if I have a suspected concussion, I will be removed from sport, and that I will not be able to return to training, practice or competition until I have undergone a medical assessment by a physician or nurse practitioner and have been medically cleared.
- I understand that the decision to remove me is based on suspicion, not diagnosis, and that my own assurance that I am fine is not a reason to overturn it.

- I will tell Ontario Cycling about any concussion or suspected concussion I sustain outside Ontario Cycling activity, including in another sport, on a recreational ride, at work, at school or at home, before I return to cycling activity. †
- If Ontario Cycling asks me whether I have sustained a head injury, I will respond within five business days. I understand that if I do not respond, my eligibility will be placed on hold until I do. †
- I have a commitment to sharing any pertinent information regarding incidents of removal from sport with my school and any other sport organization with which I am registered. Meaning: if I am diagnosed with a concussion, letting my other coaches and my teachers know about my injury will help them support me while I recover. *

d) I will take the time I need to recover, because it is important for my health.

- I have a commitment to supporting the return-to-sport process, and I will follow Ontario Cycling's Return-to-Sport Protocol as set out in the OC Concussion Policy. *
- I understand that for the first 24 to 48 hours I should follow relative rest, normal daily activities that do not make my symptoms worse by more than a little, and only briefly, and that I should keep screen time down. I understand that shutting myself in a dark room is not what is recommended.
- I understand that I must be medically cleared by a physician or nurse practitioner before I go past Step 3 of the return-to-sport steps, and that no one at my club, my team or Ontario Cycling can waive that.
- I understand that only a physician or a nurse practitioner can clear me, not a physiotherapist, athletic therapist, chiropractor, paramedic, coach or team trainer, and that the practitioner who clears me must not be a member of my own family or household †.
- If I am at elementary or secondary school, I understand that returning to learning comes first, and that I must be back at school full-time before I return to unrestricted practice or competition †.
- I understand that it is my responsibility, or my parent's or guardian's, to provide written confirmation of my medical clearance to my club and to Ontario Cycling, and that until that confirmation is received I am not eligible to participate, for as long as it takes †.
- I will respect my coaches, team trainers, parents, health-care professionals, physicians and nurse practitioners regarding my health and safety.
- I understand that failing to follow this Code may result in sanctions under the OC Discipline & Complaints Policy.

e) Acknowledgement

By signing here, I acknowledge that I have fully reviewed and commit to this Concussion Code of Conduct, and that I have reviewed an Ontario Concussion Awareness Resource within the past 12 months.

Name of athlete (print)		Date of birth	
Signature of athlete		Date	
Club / team		OC membership number	

Where the athlete is under 18 years of age, the parent or guardian must also sign, confirming that they have reviewed this Code and an Ontario Concussion Awareness Resource within the past 12 months.

Name of parent or guardian (print)		Signature	
Date		Contact telephone / email	

3) Part B – Coaches and Team Trainers

To be signed by every coach and team trainer who interacts with participants under 26 years of age.

a) I can help prevent concussions through my:

- efforts to ensure that my athletes wear the proper equipment, wear it correctly, and replace a helmet after any impact †;
- efforts to help my athletes develop their skills and strength so that they can participate to the best of their abilities;
- respect for the rules of my sport or activity, and my efforts to ensure that my athletes respect them too; and
- commitment to fair play and respect for all, respecting other coaches, team trainers, commissaires, officials and all participants, and ensuring my athletes respect others and play fair.

b) I will care for the health and safety of all participants by taking concussions seriously. I understand that:

- a concussion is a brain injury that can have both short-term and long-term effects;
- a blow to the head, face or neck, or a blow to the body, may cause the brain to move around inside the skull and result in a concussion;
- a person does not need to lose consciousness to have had a concussion;
- an athlete with a suspected concussion must stop participating in training, practice or competition immediately;
- I have a commitment to concussion recognition and reporting, including self-reporting of a possible concussion and reporting to a designated person when I suspect that another individual may have sustained a concussion *; and
- continuing to participate in further training, practice or competition with a suspected concussion increases a person's risk of more severe and longer-lasting symptoms, and increases their risk of other injuries.

c) I will create an environment where participants feel safe and comfortable speaking up. I will:

- encourage athletes not to hide their symptoms, but to tell me, an official, a commissaire, a parent or another adult they trust if they experience any symptoms of concussion after an impact;
- lead by example, I will tell a fellow coach, official or team trainer and seek medical attention from a physician or nurse practitioner if I am experiencing any concussion symptoms myself;
- understand and respect that any athlete with a suspected concussion must be removed from sport and is not permitted to return until they undergo a medical assessment by a physician or nurse practitioner and have been medically cleared;
- not seek, encourage or accept an exception to the removal or clearance requirements, and not permit an athlete subject to a concussion hold to train, ride or race, including at a warm-up, a recovery ride or a club activity; †
- refer any request for an exception, and any dispute about a removal, to Ontario Cycling rather than deciding it myself; †
- for coaches only: provide opportunities before and after each training session, practice and competition to enable athletes to discuss potential issues related to concussions.

d) I will support all participants to take the time they need to recover.

- I have a commitment to supporting the Return-to-Sport process as set out in the OC Concussion Policy. *
- I understand that athletes must be cleared by a physician or nurse practitioner before progressing beyond Step 3 of the return-to-sport steps, and that Steps 1 to 3 must be completed off the road bike, trainer, rollers or stationary bicycle only †.

- I understand that bunch riding is treated as the equivalent of contact and is not permitted before Step 5 †.
- I understand that a school-age athlete must be back at school full-time before returning to unrestricted practice or competition †.
- I will respect my fellow coaches, team trainers, parents, physicians and nurse practitioners, and any decisions made regarding the health and safety of my athletes.

e) Where I am a designated person, I understand my additional responsibilities. I will:

- remove an athlete immediately where removal is required, regardless of where or how the concussion was sustained;
- call 9-1-1 where any red flag sign or symptom appears;
- inform the parent or guardian of an athlete under 18 of the removal, the same day and before the athlete leaves the venue where reasonably possible;
- advise the athlete, or the parent or guardian, that a medical assessment by a physician or nurse practitioner is required before the athlete may return;
- provide the athlete, or the parent or guardian, with the OC Concussion Policy and its protocols as soon as possible after the removal;
- complete the OC Concussion Removal Record within 24 hours, and submit the OC Sport Injury Form within five days †;
- record the athlete's progression through the graduated return-to-sport steps until confirmation of medical clearance is provided; and
- inform the athlete, or the parent or guardian, of the importance of disclosing a diagnosis to the athlete's school and to any other sport organization with which the athlete is registered. *

f) Acknowledgement

By signing here, I acknowledge that I have fully reviewed and commit to this Concussion Code of Conduct, and that I have reviewed an Ontario Concussion Awareness Resource within the past 12 months.

Name and role (print)		Signature	
Club / team		Date	
Am I a designated person? (Y/N)		Discipline(s)	