PORCUPINE UNITED FOOTBALL CLUB

RULE OF TWO POLICY

Policy ID	Approved by	Effective date	Review
PUFC-SAFE-006	Board of Directors	Upon approval	Annually

Policy status: Proposed for Board approval. This policy is adapted from the Canada Soccer Rule of Two Guidelines supplied with the request.

Definition: A Person in Authority includes an NCCP-trained or certified coach, a screened volunteer, or another adult in a position of responsibility.

1. PURPOSE AND COMMITMENT

Porcupine United Football Club (PUFC) is committed to providing a safe, respectful and positive sport environment for all participants. PUFC adopts the Rule of Two as part of the Responsible Coaching Movement.

The purpose of the Rule of Two is to ensure that interactions and communications between a Person in Authority and an athlete are open, observable and justifiable. It is intended to protect participants, particularly minors, and coaches in potentially vulnerable situations by ensuring that a coach is never alone with an athlete, except in a medical emergency.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to all PUFC activities and settings, including practices, games, tournaments, festivals, team meetings, dressing rooms, changing areas, transportation, overnight travel, virtual training and electronic communication.

It applies to coaches, assistant coaches, team managers, screened volunteers, club administrators and other adults acting in a position of authority or responsibility with athletes.

3. THE RULE OF TWO – STANDARD OF SUPERVISION

PUFC will work toward the safest possible standard: two screened and NCCP-trained or certified coaches present with an athlete whenever the athlete is in a potentially vulnerable situation.

If two screened and NCCP-trained or certified coaches are not available, PUFC will use the following alternatives, in order:

- One screened and NCCP-trained or certified coach together with one screened Person in Authority, such as a team manager, support person, chaperone or club director.
- If a screened Person in Authority or other screened volunteer is not available, another adult, such as a parent/guardian of another athlete in a youth setting, may temporarily substitute.
- If another adult is not available, more than one athlete must be present with the coach. This is the lowest standard and is not recommended; it is not the preferred or normal operating arrangement.

4. GENERAL IMPLEMENTATION REQUIREMENTS

PUFC will organize practices, games and other activities so that interactions are open, observable and interruptible. Coaches must not be alone and out of sight with a participant without another screened coach or screened adult present.

- Training environments should be open to observation by parents/guardians and club representatives.
- Parents/guardians and athletes will be informed that PUFC aims to meet the highest standard of two screened and NCCP-trained or certified coaches.
- Parents/guardians and athletes are encouraged to help identify and acknowledge situations where the Rule of Two has not been followed.
- PUFC may identify a team liaison or other volunteer to help arrange screened parent/guardian or volunteer support when two qualified coaches may not be available.
- Parents and volunteers assisting teams may be asked to participate in the club's screening process and obtain the required checks.
- PUFC encourages interested parents and volunteers to learn about NCCP training and certification.

- Coaches must consider the gender identity of athletes when arranging screened adults for supervision, as described in Section 8.

5. TRAINING AND COMPETITION ENVIRONMENT

The Rule of Two applies before, during and after practices and games.

- A Person in Authority must not be alone with an athlete before or after an activity unless that adult is the athlete's parent or guardian.
- If an athlete is the first to arrive, their parent/guardian should remain until another athlete or Person in Authority arrives. If an athlete drives themselves, they should wait for another athlete before going to the field.
- If an athlete may be left alone with a Person in Authority after an activity, the Person in Authority should ask another Person in Authority, a parent/guardian of another athlete, or another athlete (in a senior environment) to stay until the athlete is picked up.
- If another adult is unavailable, another athlete should be present so that the Person in Authority is not alone with one athlete.
- Instructions, skill demonstrations, drills or lessons delivered to an individual athlete must take place within the earshot and eyesight of another Person in Authority.

6. TRANSPORTATION

A Person in Authority must not be alone in a vehicle with an athlete unless that Person in Authority is the athlete's parent or guardian. Where an athlete requires transportation, another adult should be present. Transportation arrangements must also comply with PUFC's Youth Travel Policy and any applicable consent requirements.

7. LOCKER ROOMS, CHANGING AREAS AND MEETING ROOMS

Interactions between a Person in Authority and an individual athlete should not occur in a room where there is a reasonable expectation of privacy, such as a locker room, meeting room, washroom or changing area. If an interaction is necessary in such a space, a second Person in Authority must be present.

- Locker rooms and changing areas should be supervised by two Persons in Authority who share the gender identity of the players whenever possible.
- If a second Person in Authority is unavailable, the supervising Person in Authority must never be alone with an individual athlete.
- If Persons in Authority are not present in a locker room or changing area, or are not permitted to enter, they should remain available outside and able to enter if required. This is not considered best practice.
- Privacy, dignity and applicable facility rules must be respected at all times.

8. GENDER IDENTITY CONSIDERATIONS

A Person in Authority interacting with athletes should be of the same gender identity as the athletes. PUFC will make reasonable efforts to ensure appropriate screened supervision is available.

- For teams consisting of athletes of one gender identity, a Person in Authority of the same gender identity should be available to participate in or attend every interaction.
- For teams consisting of athletes of more than one gender identity, a Person in Authority of each gender identity should be available to participate in or attend every interaction.
- PUFC will approach these arrangements respectfully, taking account of athletes' dignity, privacy and individual circumstances.

9. VIRTUAL SETTINGS AND ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION

The Rule of Two applies to virtual sessions involving minor athletes. For athletes under 16, a parent or guardian should also be present during the session where possible. PUFC recommends applying the Rule of Two to non-minor athletes as well.

- Each virtual session must include two adult coaches, or one coach and one other adult, such as a parent, guardian, volunteer or club administrator. One-on-one virtual sessions are prohibited.
- Virtual sessions must be focused on coaching and training, not social engagement. Parents/guardians must be informed in advance about the activities and process.
- Sessions should take place in an open and observable environment in the athlete's home; bedrooms and overly personal settings should be avoided. Coaches must also initiate sessions from an appropriate professional location.

- Parent/guardian consent must be obtained before irregularly scheduled sessions, or before the first session in a series of regularly scheduled sessions.
- Where the technology allows, recording a virtual session is recommended, subject to appropriate consent, privacy and secure handling.
- One-on-one texting, emailing or online contact between a coach and athlete is prohibited. Coaching-related communication must be group-based and include at least two adults; parents of minor athletes must be given the opportunity to receive the messages.
- Social-media contact from a coach to an athlete is prohibited, including sharing memes or non-training videos.

10. EXCEPTIONS AND EMERGENCIES

One-on-one interactions between a coach and athlete must be avoided in all circumstances except medical emergencies. In a medical emergency, an adult may need to act immediately to protect the athlete's health or safety. The adult should seek additional assistance as soon as reasonably possible, keep the interaction observable where practicable, and document the circumstances and actions taken.

11. RESPONSIBILITIES

Coaches and Persons in Authority are responsible for planning and maintaining Rule of Two supervision, using transparent communication, seeking assistance when coverage is insufficient and promptly reporting any breach or concern.

Parents/guardians are encouraged to remain present when required by arrival or pick-up circumstances, support team supervision arrangements and raise concerns when they observe a failure to follow this policy.

Athletes should follow reasonable supervision instructions and tell a trusted adult if an interaction or communication makes them uncomfortable.

Team liaisons and volunteers may assist with arranging screened adult support but do not replace the club's screening requirements.

12. NON-COMPLIANCE AND REPORTING

Any person who observes or becomes aware of a situation that may not comply with this policy should raise the concern promptly with the coach, team manager or club's designated safeguarding contact. If the concern involves that person, it should be raised with another Board representative or the appropriate external authority.

PUFC will review reported breaches and may take steps to protect participants, including changing supervision arrangements, restricting duties or applying disciplinary measures under the club's applicable policies. Suspected child abuse or potentially criminal conduct must be reported directly to the appropriate authorities; internal reporting does not replace any legal reporting obligation.

13. EDUCATION, DISTRIBUTION AND REVIEW

PUFC will provide this policy to coaches, team personnel, volunteers, parents/guardians and athletes in an age-appropriate manner. Coaches and Persons in Authority must acknowledge that they have read and agree to follow it before undertaking duties with athletes.

The Board of Directors will review this policy at least annually and after any significant incident or change to applicable Canada Soccer guidance. The club will communicate material changes to affected participants and families.

BOARD APPROVAL

Approval date: _____

President: _____

Secretary: _____

Implementation note: PUFC should confirm its screening, training, travel, communication and reporting procedures before adoption, and ensure this policy is read alongside the Child Protection Policy, Code of Conduct to Protect Children, Electronic Communication & Social Media Policy and Youth Travel Policy.