NWANA Code of Conduct

Nordic Walking Association of North America (NWANA) · Official text as published at https://nwaofna.org/code-of-conduct · Downloaded November 22, 2026

Code of Conduct

The Nordic Walking Association of North America (NWANA, we, us, or our) is committed to creating a safe, respectful, fair, and welcoming environment for all participants, athletes, license holders, instructors, coaches, officials, volunteers, organizers, donors, sponsors, partners, parents, guardians, and spectators. This Code of Conduct applies to all NWANA programs, events, competitions, challenges, training activities, certification activities, license activities, meetings, communications, online spaces, and related organizational activities. By participating in NWANA activities, representing NWANA, holding a NWANA license or certification, volunteering, organizing, sponsoring, donating, or interacting with NWANA programs or communities, you agree to follow this Code of Conduct.

Effective Date: August 10, 2026

1. Core Principles

Everyone involved with NWANA is expected to act with: respect; fairness; honesty; safety awareness; sportsmanship; inclusion; accountability; integrity; responsibility toward the community. NWANA expects all individuals to help build a positive culture for Nordic Walking in North America.

2. Respectful Behavior

All individuals must treat others with respect, dignity, and courtesy. This includes respecting: participants of all ages and abilities; beginners and experienced athletes; instructors, coaches, officials, organizers, and volunteers; parents, guardians, families, and spectators; people of different backgrounds, cultures, languages, identities, beliefs, and physical abilities; partner organizations, sponsors, venues, and host communities. Disagreements should be handled calmly, respectfully, and through appropriate channels.

3. Safety First

Safety is a shared responsibility. Participants, athletes, instructors, coaches, officials, volunteers, organizers, and spectators must follow applicable safety rules, event instructions, venue rules, equipment guidance, and NWANA safety standards. Individuals should not knowingly create unsafe conditions, ignore safety instructions, pressure others to participate beyond their ability, or continue activity when injury, illness, weather, course conditions, or other risks make participation unsafe. If you see a safety concern, report it to the appropriate NWANA representative, event organizer, official, instructor, coach, or volunteer.

4. Fair Play and Sportsmanship

NWANA expects fair play and good sportsmanship in all programs, events, challenges, competitions, rankings, and team activities. Participants must not cheat, falsify results, manipulate rankings, misrepresent age, category, identity, team affiliation, license status, certification status, or eligibility. Athletes and teams must respect officials, course rules, timing procedures, event instructions, and final decisions made through proper NWANA processes. Winning, ranking, recognition, or personal goals never justify dishonest, unsafe, abusive, or disrespectful behavior.

5. Inclusion and Non-Discrimination

NWANA welcomes individuals who want to participate in Nordic Walking, sport, wellness, education, community programs, and related activities. NWANA does not tolerate discrimination, harassment, exclusion, or abusive conduct based on race, color, national origin, ethnicity, religion, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, disability, veteran status, language, culture, economic status, physical ability, or any other protected or personal characteristic. Reasonable differences in eligibility, categories, safety requirements, training requirements, or event rules may apply where needed for fairness, safety, age grouping, competition structure, or program integrity.

6. Harassment, Abuse, and Bullying

NWANA does not tolerate harassment, abuse, bullying, intimidation, threats, stalking, hazing, unwanted physical contact, sexual misconduct, exploitation, retaliation, or other harmful behavior. This applies in person, online, by email, by phone, through social media, in messaging platforms, during events, during training, during travel connected to NWANA activities, and in any NWANA-related setting. Any concern involving abuse, harassment, youth protection, participant safety, or serious misconduct should be reported promptly.

7. Youth Protection

Adults working with or around youth participants must act with care, professionalism, and appropriate boundaries. Parents, guardians, instructors, coaches, officials, volunteers, organizers, and NWANA representatives must follow applicable youth safety rules, SafeSport principles, reporting expectations, supervision standards, and conduct requirements. Adults must not exploit, manipulate, isolate, endanger, or engage in inappropriate relationships or communications with youth participants. Youth safety concerns should be reported immediately through the appropriate NWANA reporting channel and, where required, to law enforcement or child protection authorities.

8. Instructor, Coach, Official, and Organizer Responsibilities

NWANA instructors, coaches, officials, organizers, volunteers, and representatives have additional responsibility because they influence participant safety, trust, and the reputation of NWANA. They must: act within the scope of their role, license, certification, training, and authority; avoid making false claims about qualifications, licenses, certifications, titles, or NWANA approval; teach, coach, judge, organize, or lead responsibly and safely; avoid conflicts of interest where possible; disclose conflicts when appropriate; treat participants fairly; protect confidential or sensitive information; avoid favoritism, manipulation, exploitation, or misuse of authority; report safety, conduct, or policy concerns when required. A NWANA license or certification is an organization-issued credential. It is not a government-issued medical, healthcare, physical therapy, athletic training, or professional state license.

9. Health, Wellness, and Medical Boundaries

NWANA activities may include health, wellness, movement, sport, education, and training content. NWANA participants, instructors, coaches, license holders, volunteers, and representatives must not present NWANA programs as medical treatment, diagnosis, physical therapy, rehabilitation, or healthcare unless they separately hold the required professional license and are acting within that lawful professional scope. NWANA instructors and coaches may teach Nordic Walking technique, safety, group activity, athletic progression, sport preparation, and wellness-oriented movement within the scope of their NWANA training.

Participants with medical conditions, injuries, disabilities, or health concerns should consult qualified healthcare providers before participating.

10. Anti-Doping and Clean Sport

NWANA supports clean sport principles. Athletes, coaches, instructors, officials, organizers, and support personnel must not encourage, assist, conceal, or participate in doping, banned substance misuse, result manipulation, or conduct that undermines sport integrity. Participants in higher-level competition may be required to follow anti-doping education, testing, or eligibility requirements established by NWANA, event organizers, or applicable sport authorities.

11. Alcohol, Drugs, and Impairment

Participants, instructors, coaches, officials, volunteers, organizers, and representatives must not participate in, lead, judge, supervise, coach, or organize NWANA activities while impaired by alcohol, drugs, medication misuse, or any substance that creates a safety risk or impairs judgment. Illegal drug use, unsafe substance use, or substance-related conduct that endangers others is prohibited at NWANA activities.

12. Communications and Online Conduct

NWANA expects respectful conduct in all communications, including email, phone, text messages, social media, online groups, registration platforms, comments, forums, and digital meetings. Do not use NWANA-related communications to harass, threaten, insult, defame, shame, exploit, spam, impersonate, mislead, or abuse others. NWANA may moderate, remove, restrict, or report harmful, misleading, abusive, or inappropriate communications connected to NWANA activities or platforms.

13. Privacy and Confidentiality

Individuals may receive personal, private, sensitive, safety-related, youth-related, financial, or organizational information through NWANA activities. Such information must be handled responsibly and used only for appropriate NWANA purposes. Do not share private participant information, youth information, contact details, reports, internal documents, donation information, incident details, or confidential communications unless authorized or required by law, safety, reporting, or NWANA policy.

14. Conflicts of Interest

Individuals representing NWANA or acting in official roles should avoid conflicts of interest and disclose conflicts when appropriate. This includes situations involving judging, awards, rankings, licensing, certification, vendor selection, sponsorship, discipline, complaints, family relationships, financial interests, or personal relationships that could affect fairness or trust. NWANA may require recusal, disclosure, reassignment, review, or other action to protect integrity.

15. Use of NWANA Name, Logo, and Authority

No person may misuse the NWANA name, logo, brand assets, titles, licenses, certifications, materials, or official status. Individuals may not claim to represent NWANA, approve events, issue licenses, certify others, speak on behalf of NWANA, use NWANA branding, or create official NWANA programs unless authorized. Use of NWANA branding, materials, logos, or titles must follow NWANA approval, brand guidelines, and applicable license or certification terms.

16. Reporting Concerns

NWANA encourages reporting of safety concerns, misconduct, harassment, abuse, discrimination, bullying, policy violations, conflicts of interest, suspected result manipulation, or other conduct concerns. Reports should include as much relevant information as possible, such as: names of individuals involved; date, time, and location; event or program name; description of the concern; witnesses, if any; supporting documents, screenshots, messages, photos, or other evidence. For urgent danger, medical emergencies, abuse, threats, or criminal conduct, contact emergency services or appropriate authorities immediately.

17. No Retaliation

NWANA does not tolerate retaliation against anyone who makes a good-faith report, participates in a review, asks a safety question, raises a policy concern, or supports another person in reporting. Retaliation may include threats, harassment, exclusion, intimidation, punishment, public shaming, loss of opportunity, or other negative treatment because someone raised a concern.

18. Review and Enforcement

NWANA may review conduct concerns, safety concerns, reports, complaints, or policy violations. NWANA may take action when appropriate, including but not limited to: warning; education or corrective action; removal from an event or program; disqualification; result correction or removal; suspension of participation; restriction from NWANA activities; denial, suspension, or revocation of licenses or certifications; removal from volunteer, official, instructor, coach, organizer, or leadership roles; referral to law enforcement or appropriate authorities where required. NWANA may act immediately when needed to protect safety, youth participants, participants, the public, or the integrity of NWANA activities.

19. Cooperation

Participants, license holders, instructors, coaches, officials, volunteers, organizers, and representatives are expected to cooperate with reasonable NWANA reviews, safety inquiries, eligibility checks, conduct reviews, and policy enforcement. Failure to cooperate may result in restriction, suspension, removal, or other action.

20. Updates to This Code

NWANA may update this Code of Conduct from time to time. Updates will be posted on this page with a revised effective date. Continued participation in NWANA activities after updates are posted means you acknowledge the updated Code of Conduct.

21. Contact NWANA

For questions or concerns related to this Code of Conduct, contact NWANA: Email: info@nwaofna.org. Subject line: Code of Conduct Concern