

## **General Code of Conduct for VCKC Members**

VCKC is a volunteer, member-run paddling club.

We are united by our passion for paddling, and we celebrate our unique differences.

This code of conduct is put forward not in anticipation of bad behavior, but to articulate Club values and accountabilities to one another, to reinforce respect, and provide all members with clear expectations.

VCKC commits to enforce and evolve this Code as needed. Disregard of the VCKC Member Code of Conduct may result in disciplinary action, which can result in membership suspension or expulsion.

### **As a Club member:**

I recognize that membership is a privilege. It is my responsibility to make myself aware of, read, and follow, all Club policies. VCKC Policies and Procedures document can be found [HERE \(LINK\)](#).

#### **1. Safety**

I will ensure that my guests and I will use club facilities and equipment in a respectful, careful and secure manner, so as not to cause damage of any kind to club property, or risk injury to themselves, other club members, or members of the general public.

It is my responsibility to make myself aware of, read, and follow, all club safety policies, adhering to all safety requirements, and using all paddling safety gear as directed in course certification and/or program requirements.

Should I need assistance in determining safety requirements for my paddling activity, I can –

- review the safety information posters in the club basement
- contact the appropriate VCKC Program Director, or Education, Standards and Safety Director
- review the VCKC Club Policies and Procedures Manual ([LINK](#))
- review my paddling certification course materials

I will ensure that my guests and I will be attentive to, and follow, the guidance of club instructors, coaches, trip leaders, and coordinators of any club activity, especially when guidance is concerned with issues of personal and/or group safety.

However, I acknowledge that ultimately, I am responsible for my own safety and the safety of my guests while paddling.

#### **2. VCKC is Committed to Being a Safe and Inclusive Space<sup>1</sup>.**

As a Club member, I commit to ensuring that my guests and I treat all persons with respect at all times and conduct themselves in a respectful manner that ensures the success and enjoyment of club activities for all members and is supportive of Club volunteers.

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<sup>1</sup> VCKC is dedicated to creating an inclusive environment for everyone, regardless of race, ethnicity, religion, color, national origin, age, disability (physical or mental), sexual orientation, gender identity, parental status, marital status, political affiliation as well as gender expression, mental illness, socioeconomic status or background, neuro(a)typicality, or physical appearance. Inclusivity is only limited by issues of water and watercraft safety. Anyone with limitations who wishes to request an accommodation should contact the appropriate program director and the Club President/Vice-President. Accommodation requests are a collaborative process.

I commit to actively ensuring that VCKC is free from bullying, discrimination, and harassment.

I will ensure that my behaviour, language and nonverbal communication is welcoming to all, at all times. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Conveying respect when communicating about or referring to fellow members, new recruits or guest paddlers (both oral and written communication);
- Refraining from, and refusing to tolerate in others (Be an Ally), all forms of harassment, abuse and discrimination;
- Respecting the property and space of all individuals;
- Demonstrating integrity and good sportsmanship in all relationships;
- Being inclusive and welcoming to other members and fellow paddlers in all events and programs;
- Have special regard, and welcome, inexperienced paddlers into any group;
- Offer assistance to anyone in genuine need, on or off the water; but not put myself or fellow paddlers at risk;
- Behaving appropriately when participating in activities as a club member and when representing the club. Being respectful of officials, competitors and organizers of all club-related events, and when participating in paddling events outside of the club;
- Acknowledge and respect that all individuals within the club have a common interest and are present at events and activities as either participants or volunteers of their own time;
- When I have concerns or disagree with a Club decision, I will abstain from being argumentative, or badgering members and volunteers, instead I will use Club processes to air my concerns and in turn, I can expect to be respectfully heard.

### **3. Respect for Club Volunteers**

VCKC is strictly a volunteer organization and members are not paid for any work they do for the club except in circumstances specified in the VCKC Club Policies and Procedures ([LINK](#)).

As such, I commit to:

- Actively and respectfully participating and contributing to any decisions that I have an opinion on following due process;
- Recognizing and complying with the final decisions made by the Executive Board or the membership at an AGM;
- Showing respect for the members volunteering in any capacity including as elected Directors of the Executive Board, course instructors, event leaders, trip leaders; and
- Fulfilling my membership obligation to volunteer at least 10 hours of my time to the Club's governance, maintenance or operations;

Finally, I acknowledge that I am continually learning. I will probably make mistakes and I will work to take ownership of any harm I may inadvertently cause. With this, I can ask for, and expect help from the Club Executive and leadership if I do not understand how I might have contravened our Code.

I commit to helping VCKC move forward as a welcoming and inclusive paddling club. As such I commit to helping turn breaches in our Code as learning opportunities. If I experience, witness or am made aware of an incident breaching our Code I will contact an Executive member, trip leader, instructor or event leader, as appropriate. If I do not know who to talk to, or wish to communicate my concerns to the appropriate persons via digital means, I can find more information [HERE](#) (link).

I have been made aware of (below) the steps that will be undertaken should any breach of this Code occur.

By checking a box in my online Member Profile, I indicate that annually I have read, understand and agree to uphold and advance the principles of the VCKC Code of Conduct:

**For all members' information:**

All members of the Executive Board have affirmed their commitment to the VCKC Code of Conduct and are committed to upholding its expectations in their own conduct as well as for the Club.

If it is alleged that a member has breached the VCKC Code of Conduct the Executive Board will take the following steps:

For the first alleged offence, a designated member of the Executive will contact the member for an informal conversation about the incident, the Code of Conduct policy, and will support learning from the incident. This will focus on a "Calling In" format as a learning opportunity instead of a "Calling Out" or shaming format. Resources will be provided. The Executive will also consider if any Club procedures, policies, structures played a role in the incident. Seek commitment from the member that they understand their misstep and desire to do better. A follow-up letter is sent, by email, to the member with a copy of the VCKC Code of Conduct for their reference.

If a second allegation is made regarding a different incident, two designated members of the Executive will meet with the member to discuss the allegation. Again, following the "Calling In" format. After the meeting a follow up letter, by email, will be sent to the member summarizing the breach of the Code of Conduct, the expectations moving forward, and notice that further breaches may result a Hearing with the VCKC Executive Board to review the situation and seek resolution and commitment to the VCKC Code of Conduct going forward.

Third and subsequent breach of the VCKC Code of Conduct: A Hearing with the VCKC Executive Board will be scheduled, per the Section G. VCKC Policies and Procedures ([LINK](#)). The outcome of the Hearing will determine if the VCKC Executive Board pursues a Special Resolution of the Membership for a suspension or expulsion of the member.