

BC Complaint Management FAQs

July 2025

Q: What is Sport Safeguarding BC?

A: Sport Safeguarding BC is dedicated to ensuring safe and respectful participation for everyone in amateur sport across BC. The Society's role is to provide a trusted space to voice concerns and to work to resolve issues with integrity with the goal to strengthen safety and well-being in sport.

Q: What is the purpose of Sport Safeguarding BC? Why is independence important?

A: Sport Safeguarding BC's mandate is to:

- promote a safe and inclusive sport culture by ensuring accountability of individuals and organizations, and;
- provide an independent complaint management service for amateur sport organizations in BC that develops and upholds clear and enforceable standards to protect the overall well-being of individuals involved.

Sport Safeguarding BC will provide a centralized service where participants in amateur sport can raise a concern or file a complaint pertaining to allegations related to the Universal Code of Conduct to Address Maltreatment in Sport (UCCMS).

Consultation with individuals in the sector emphasized the importance of having an independent system that could be trusted by those raising concerns. Independence is essential to mitigate biases, and ensure accountability and transparency by prioritizing fair and impartial resolutions. Having a professional organization staffed by qualified individuals will ensure the professionalism of these services.

Q: What is viaSport's role in safety in sport?

A: viaSport's role includes stewarding government investment in amateur sport as well as setting and evaluating/monitoring [viaSport Designation Program standards](#).

Housing the function of complaint management outside of viaSport, avoids conflict of interest by eliminating any vested interests in maintaining positive and separate relationships with the Designated Organizations.

viaSport is supporting the startup of Sport Safeguarding BC and was responsible for the appointment of the First Directors of the Board. viaSport will not be directly involved in the day-to-day operations of the Society.

viaSport will continue to own and develop PlaySafe, a centralized online hub with practical tools and resources for individuals to learn how to contribute to a positive sport culture and foster safe experiences.

Q: Who are the Directors of this Sport Safeguarding BC?

A: Watson Advisors Inc. was hired to conduct recruitment of Directors based on a Board Skills and Diversity Matrix. The First Directors of the Society were appointed by the viaSport Board of Directors based on the recommendation from the recruitment process.

The newly appointed board brings together a diverse group of leaders with expertise in child protection, dispute resolution, trauma-informed practice and nonprofit governance. Their combined knowledge and leadership will be instrumental in guiding the strategic direction and ensuring accountability, transparency, and impact of their work.

The following individuals have been appointed as the First Directors for Sport Safeguarding BC:

- Janine Benedet, K.C., Professor, Faculty of Law, University of British Columbia
- Jon Festinger, K.C., Of Counsel, Chandler Fogden Lyman; Lecturer, UBC Allard School of Law
- Laura Nashman, CEO, British Columbia Pension Corporation
- Leah Zille, Executive Director, The Treehouse Child & Youth Advocacy Centre
- Sharon Sutherland, Executive Director, Mediate BC

In accordance with Sport Safeguarding BC's bylaws, the individuals that have been appointed are not currently serving as a director or employee of any sport organization in Canada.

Q: What jurisdiction will this cover – which sport organizations and which regions?

A: The initial scope of Sport Safeguarding BC services will be for members of [viaSport Designated](#) (Accredited/Recognized/Affiliated) Sport Organizations. The intent is for the services to cover local and provincial level sport in BC. This may require a phased approach to implementation based on the different organizational structures in place within each sport and their bylaws, rules and policies. Alignment of policies and procedures will be required of all participating organizations.

Organizations (or individuals associated with organizations) that are not part of the viaSport Designation Program will not fall under the jurisdiction of Sport Safeguarding BC at this time.

Q: When will the services be available?

A: Sport Safeguarding BC was formed in July 2025, but it will take time before services will be available. More information will be provided by Sport Safeguarding BC on timing in the coming months.

Q: Who will pay for Sport Safeguarding BC and the associated services?

A: The initial investment from the Province is intended to provide seed funding to establish Sport Safeguarding BC and will support the management of the services over the first few years. The long-term financial model will be determined once Sport Safeguarding BC is fully operational.

Q: Who will be the members of Sport Safeguarding BC?

A: Individuals who are eligible to be members of the Society are those that have previously served as directors, committee members or employees of organizations whose purposes are similar to or beneficial to the Society as determined by the Board and whom possess the knowledge, experience and expertise that is relevant to the Society.

The Sport Safeguarding BC Board will determine an application process for individuals to apply to become members in accordance with their bylaws.

Individuals are not eligible to become a Member of Sport Safeguarding BC if they are currently a director, committee member or employee of any sport organization in Canada or have been a director, committee member or employee of a sport organization in Canada within the three months (for First appointed members) prior to appointment (and 12 months for all other members).

Q: How was the amateur sport in BC sector consulted in the development of this strategy?

A: viaSport consulted with the sector to understand gaps and amateur sport system needs through [extensive research](#), [community summits](#) and discussions with our Safe Sport Working Group.

viaSport conducted further consultation with viaSport Designated Sport Organizations and sector participants to identify key success factors for an independent complaint process. This included a conference with Designated Sport Organizations, regular meetings with the Safe Sport Working Group and focus groups for sector participants (athletes, parents, officials, coaches and staff, managers and directors).

Refer to the [viaSport website](#) for reports on the findings.

Q: How is BC's approach aligned with the national system?

A: The Canadian Safe Sport Program was established by the Canadian Centre for Ethics in Sport to address Safe Sport issues at the National level. Each province and territory is responsible to establish their own approach to ensure that the needs of provincial and local sport are addressed. Sport Safeguarding BC will align through the use of the UCCMS and this look for other opportunities to learn from, share information and align where appropriate.

Q: What is being done to address concerns in the meantime?

A: Currently in BC, sport organizations have their own complaints and dispute policies. In the event of a complaint, the organization and ultimately the Board of Directors is responsible for implementing and upholding their organizational policies. Some sport organizations' policies direct complaints to an independent complaint management company. Policies of the organization and information on how to raise concerns should be publicly available.