

Row Georgia Inc. Code of Conduct



Purpose

To clearly state the expectations of conduct from all affiliated parties of Row Georgia Inc., including (but not limited to) athletes, parents and coaching staff. In addition to this, outline procedures for the handling of violations of said expectations.

Mantra

Growth.

In all ways, including personal, athletic as well as organizational.

Missions

Row Georgia - (Row GA) works towards the following missions:

1. To provide education, training, instruction, and participation in middle school, high school, recreational and masters rowing while developing the healthy minds, bodies, and character of student athletes.
2. To encourage sportsmanship, teamwork, and the principles and standards expected of participants at Junior, Collegiate, Masters and National levels.
3. To educate the public about the benefits of lifetime participation in rowing.

In order to fulfill such missions, Row GA is centered around respect, hard work, and reliability. When the team acts and works collectively with these values in mind, both the individuals and the team excel towards growth.

The Row GA Team Culture

Members and athletes of Row Georgia will achieve our missions as outlined above, through continuous demonstration of respect, as defined by due regard for the feelings, wishes, or traditions of others regardless of their age, sex, roles, or beliefs. Row GA athletes should show respect to their teammates and coaches through their language and behavior within and outside-of the boathouse. All affiliated parties are reminded that they are **ambassadors** of the program, not only at Lake McIntosh, but also in the public view. All affiliated parties are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that aligns with the program's mantra and missions when representing the club in any fashion.

On race day, respect for competitors is also important. This includes, but is not limited to, creating and adhering to a safe and competitive environment at the trailer and the start line, and congratulating teams at the finish line regardless of the race outcome. Athletes shall also show respect to any equipment and facilities used by Row GA.

Additionally, hard work is a foundational element to success in rowing. All Row GA athletes are expected to put their best effort forward both physically and mentally at practice every day. Working hard also requires that the athletes take recovery seriously by hydrating, stretching and icing when needed, and being open with coaching staff about any symptoms that athletes may be experiencing.

Finally, reliability is an expectation that the athletes should strive to have in all aspects of the sport including being on time to practice, attending practice regularly, and working consistently from day to day. An athlete's reliability has a direct impact on both individual and team performance.

Practice Expectations for Athletes

Athletes will be prepared to begin practice promptly at the specified start time. Being prepared means the athlete is ready for practice. This includes, but is not limited to, having water bottles and required attire with them.

Athletes will wear appropriate attire to every Row GA practice and the attire may not contain explicit language or content. All athletes must wear shirts during practice.

Athletes are expected to be prepared to train and learn during practice. Before practice begins, athletes should be prepared to focus and learn as much as possible.

Athletes who are consistently unprepared for practice interfere with individual and team success. If an athlete is consistently unprepared the athlete may be subject to disciplinary actions as defined at the end of this document.

Expectations of Row GA Parents / Guardians

The safety and well-being of our athletes is of primary importance to our program, coaches and staff. Row GA families are expected to share in this responsibility by working cooperatively with coaches and administrators to ensure the safety and well-being of the athletes in our mutual care. To that end, parents and family members are encouraged to bring any issues to the attention of coaches or, when appropriate, to the board of directors. However, personal verbal attacks are forbidden and may result in appropriate sanctions.

Parents/Guardians are expected to follow the appropriate means of contacting the coaching staff. For questions regarding coaching, all inquiries must be directed to the Head Coach (Coach Lambert), via his email address

(christopher.r.lambert@gmail.com). It is inappropriate to contact any assistant coaches regarding concerns with the team, nor is it appropriate to contact the coaching staff in any other method other than via email (including, but not limited to text, phone, and social media).

Row GA expects that parents, families, and legal guardians, will use common sense and responsibility as designated chaperones (when applicable) during Row GA events as well as at non-Row GA events in which Row GA athletes participate.

Drugs, Alcohol, and Illegal Performance Enhancing Substances

The use of drugs, alcohol, or illegal performance-enhancing substances by athletes prior to, following, or while involved with any Row GA-related event, practice, competition, banquet, while traveling with the team, or during any other Row GA team-related activity is strictly prohibited.

Individuals acting in defiance of this policy will be subject to disciplinary actions as defined at the end of this document

Bullying, Harassment, and Hazing Policy

Bullying, harassment, and hazing (collectively referred to as “bullying”) by athletes, parents, family members, guardians, or friends associated with Row GA is strictly prohibited. For purposes of Row GA, bullying is defined as an act that endangers the mental or physical health or safety of an individual, with the intention to cause personal degradation or humiliation, or that damages or may damage, destroy, or remove public or private property for the purpose of initiation in, admission to, or as a condition of continued membership in Row GA, a specific boat, or a squad.

Bullying activities include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Physical punishment, contact, exercise, or sleep deprivation that causes excessive fatigue and/or physical or psychological shock.
- Forced or coerced consumption of food, drink, alcohol, tobacco, and/or illegal drugs.
- Forced or coerced transportation of individuals.
- Public humiliation, ridicule, or indecent exposure of any kind.
- Use of profanity towards any individual.
- Coercing or forcing illegal acts of any kind.
- Coercing or forcing acts that are immoral or unethical.
- Blocking an individual's academic, athletic, or personal success.

- Interfering with an individual's health.
- Personal servitude.
- Mental harassment.
- Sexual harassment.
- Using electronic media (including cell phones, the internet, social media sites, and the athlete group chats) to harass, denigrate, or otherwise comment negatively on an individual, a group of individuals, or a class of individuals.
- Deception.
- An act of, or threat of, social exclusion.
- Conduct that is deliberately detrimental to team morale or cohesiveness.

If a person engages in any of the acts below, he or she shall have committed the act of Bullying:

- Engaging directly in bullying.
- Soliciting, encouraging, directing, aiding, or attempting to aid another person in bullying activities.
- Intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly permitting bullying to occur.
- Having first-hand knowledge of the planning or execution of an incident or event of bullying and failing to report the incident or event to Row GA administrators or coaches.

Individuals involved in any form of bullying will be held accountable for their actions and will be subject to disciplinary actions as stated at the end of this document.

Furthermore, depending on the severity of the offense, Row GA Head Coach reserves the right to report instances of bullying or harassment to the governing body (USRowing/Safesport) and/ or Police and proper authorities, for further investigation.

Social Media

No member of Row GA will use any social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, etc.) as a venue to denigrate, harass, or bully any teammate, competitor, coach, administrator, board member, parent, or other member of the Row GA family. See the section above for a detailed definition of bullying.

No member of Row GA will use any social media to post content which negatively reflects on an individual's or group's race, religion, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, or gender identity. Information placed on social networking sites may become available to coaches, parents, family, administrators, college admissions offices, or future

employers. The image you present on the internet must reflect the values stated in this Code of Conduct as well as the values of inclusion, respect, civility and growth.

Inappropriate postings on any social networking site may result in any disciplinary actions as stated at the end of this document.

Regattas and Travel

Participation in regattas is an earned privilege. While at regattas, members of Row GA are expected to conduct themselves with proper decorum, to act courteously, and to use good judgment. Each member must accept responsibility for their own actions and actively encourage their teammates to do the same. The actions of the individual reflect on the entire Row GA organization. While at overnight accommodations, athletes will follow the direction and instruction of their coaches.

While at regattas, the following expectations are to be upheld by the individual and insisted upon by the team:

- Appropriate Row GA uniforms are to be worn while at the regatta venue.
- Members of Row GA are expected to observe all USRowing rules and regulations.
- Race officials, regatta volunteers, coaches, and members of other rowing programs will be treated with respect and courtesy at all times.
- Crews must be on time for their events, including arrival time at the trailer, boat preparation, or other pre-race activities. It is the responsibility of the individual members of the crew to assure that all race requirements have been met.
- It is up to the individual members of the crew to assure their boat is properly rigged and ready to race.
- Crews, with proper instruction from the coaches, are expected to de-rig each boat they race in and load all equipment onto the boat trailer in preparation for the return trip to the boathouse.
- Any equipment not stored or secured properly in the trailer or left at the venue is the responsibility of all the athletes who used that equipment.

All members of the Row GA team (athletes, parents, family members, legal guardians, and affiliated parties) will act in a sportsman-like manner. Sportsman-like conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following scenarios:

- The outcome of regattas and rulings of race officials will be accepted graciously.
- Protests, if required will be coordinated between the crew, their coach, and the Head Coach as appropriate. (NOTE: Parents, guardians, family members, and friends are not

permitted to participate in the protest process of any regatta event in which a Row GA boat participates.)

-Athletes, parents, guardians, and family members will speak about and to other teams with respect regardless of race results, the actions of other teams, and any other factors.

Row GA Equipment & Facilities

The use of Row GA equipment and the Row GA facilities is a privilege, not a right. Each member of the Row GA team recognizes that the success of the team is dependent on well maintained, properly functioning equipment. The following expectations must be upheld by all individuals on the Row GA team and enforced not only by the coaches, but by the athletes as well:

-Treat all equipment with care.

-All malfunctions recognized by Row GA athletes while on the water should be reported to a coach immediately upon returning to the boathouse and before the end of practice. Repairs can be made quickly when coaches are informed in a timely manner.

-Any minor repairs (i.e. attaching a shoe or footboard, tightening bolts, replacing spacers, etc.) should be done by the athletes before getting on the water. Athletes should feel free to seek guidance from any Row GA coaches if they are unsure how to make these repairs.

-Row GA equipment including but not limited to boats, oars, cox boxes, and speed coaches are not to be removed from Row GA grounds without express permission from a coach.

-Any equipment that is willfully or negligently damaged or lost will be paid for by the individual(s) responsible.

-Any property owned or leased by Row GA that is willfully or negligently damaged will be paid for or repaired by the individual(s) responsible.

Reporting Violations of the Code of Conduct

Any athlete, parent, guardian, family member, or friend may file a grievance or report any violations of the Row GA Code of Conduct through the process stated below. The rights of the individual reporting a violation must be respected. All information shall be kept confidential to the extent reasonably possible to handle the issue in question. If witnesses are to be interviewed, they will be informed of the confidential nature of the issue and instructed not to discuss the matter with others. Such discussion would also be considered a breach of the Row GA Code of Conduct.

How to Report a Violation

-Contact a Coach – An athlete's coach should be the first point of contact, by the athlete. The coach may choose to resolve the issue or escalate it to the next level of action.

-Contact the Head Coach – The Head Coach may be approached directly or through another member of the staff by the athlete. The Head Coach may choose to resolve the issue directly, work with another coach to resolve the issue, or raise the issue to the next level of action. Parents/Guardians may contact only the Head Coach via email to raise concerns.

-Contact the Board of Directors – The board is the highest level of review for any infractions of the Row GA Code of Conduct or grievances that cannot be resolved through direct contact with a coach. The board, working with the Head Coach when appropriate, may ask for additional information and interview athletes, parents, or any Row GA staff members in trying to resolve the issue.

-Contact the Appropriate Legal Authorities – If a law is broken, it is the right and responsibility of the coaches and staff to reach out to the appropriate legal authorities. The disciplinary actions of the local authorities will be placed in addition to any disciplinary actions agreed to by the board, coaches, and staff.

Retaliation

Individuals who become aware of a violation to the Row GA Code of Conduct are encouraged to report that matter to the Row GA coaches or staff. It is a violation of the Row GA Code of Conduct to engage in retaliation for such reporting.

Wrongful Accusation

Any individual accused of violating the Row GA Code of Conduct has the right to challenge that accusation by following the same appeal procedures listed below to appeal the accusation to their coach, the Head Coach / Executive Director, or the Board of Directors. No individual shall be considered in violation of the Row GA Code of Conduct without due process.

Disciplinary Actions

Student athletes and members of Row GA who fail to adhere to the Code of Conduct will be subject to disciplinary actions. Depending on the severity of the violation, disciplinary actions may include, but are not limited to:

- A verbal or written warning of the offense.
 - Discussion of the infraction with the offender and parental guardian.
 - Temporary suspension from the Row GA team.
 - Temporary or permanent loss of eligibility to participate in practices and/or regattas.
 - Dismissal from the Row GA team **without refund**.
 - Reporting to local, state, or federal authorities when appropriate.
 - For offenses relating to drugs, alcohol, and illegal performance enhancing substances, required chemical dependency assessment and/or treatment program.
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To achieve Row GA's mission, it is essential that our athletes train, compete and work together as a team to represent the club positively on and off the water. Row GA parents and guardians should also strive to embody the core values outlined in the mission statement above. By modeling these values, parents / guardians help to foster a healthy, happy, and fast team.

This Code of Conduct has been prepared to provide policies and guidelines for acceptable behavior for members and athletes of Row GA. In addition to these guidelines, all members and families are expected to comply with USRowing rules and regulations, as well as applicable local, state, and federal laws.

Row Georgia grants the Head Coach, Chris Lambert, broad discretion in choosing and imposing disciplinary actions on athletes or members who violate the Code of Conduct. He will consider input from other coaches, Board of Directors, USRowing referees, and parents when applicable.

What follows below is an excerpt from the Row GA bylaws and is subject to modification as necessary.

Discipline Bylaw

Article XII

Program participant, or participant, or member, or participating member (or any variation of) (referred to as “Participant” for ease of reference) includes youth and adult athletes, guest rowers, alumni rowers, members at large, anyone that uses the facility and or equipment.

Row GA Row Georgia, Inc.

RGABC Full-time paid professional employee titled Row Georgia Head Coach with a minimum of US Rowing Level 2 Coach Certification. In the event this position is vacant, the Board of Directors will assume discipline responsibility until the Row Georgia Head Coach position is filled.

It is the hope and expectation of ROW GA that each member will contribute to and enjoy a team atmosphere, as rowing is recognized globally as an ultimate team sport.

Participation in the ROW GA program confirms the participant’s agreement to adhere to the ROW GA Code of Conduct, as well as any and all applicable local, state and federal laws.

ROW GA Head Coach (RGABC) is the initial authority for, and is responsible for determining, communicating and administering discipline of and for program participants. In order to provide opportunities for the enjoyment and advancement of rowing to the communities served, it is the responsibility and obligation of the RGABC along with the Assistant Coach(es) to undertake efforts in an effort to limit participants exposure to disruptive, unsportsmanlike conduct, demoralization of the team or other harmful conduct where possible.

The following table is an example of progressive disciplinary options that the RGAHC and at least one Assistant Coach may elect to utilize, depending on the severity of the conduct / repeated offenses.

DISCIPLINARY ACTION	EVENT/INCIDENT RECORD & NOTIFICATIONS
More progressive action may be utilized earlier, depending on the offense. Example, a first offense of leaving trash in a boat vs. a first offense of causing physical harm or threatening to cause harm to another member or property will not result in the same consequence.	The RGAHC and Assistant Coaches will administer
1. Verbal warning	Head Coach and an Assistant Coach Event / Incident recorded with Coach(es)
2. Written warning 3. Three (3) - Seven (7) day suspension	Head Coach and an Assistant Coach Email event/incident record to Board of Directors Email event/incident record to parent(s)
4. Suspension 5. Dismissal / Membership Termination	Head Coach and an Assistant Coach Email event/incident record to Board of Directors Email event/incident record to parent(s)

The RGAHC and at least one Assistant Coach may opt to utilize progressive discipline unless conduct a) is severe enough to endanger another member, b) amounts to continued demoralization of another member, c) reflects repeated offenses following warnings, or d) is detrimental to the team, equipment, or program as a whole, in which case the ROW GA Head Coach may recommend to the Board of Directors that the Board of Directors suspend that participant from all program activities, events, use of

equipment, facilities, practices, the group's communication platforms and ROW GA social media. This recommendation from the RGAHC will include suspension length, parameters, and a date and time of any follow-up meeting or communication to occur either during or at the end of the suspension period. The Board of Directors may then vote to suspend the participant in question based on the RGAHC recommendation for suspension. The Board Secretary will notify the terminated participant of the result of the Board vote on the matter.

Suspension

A. Any suspended member or suspended member's parent, guardian, or representative that causes harm or threatens in any way another member, or interferes with the suspension process, or violates other suspension terms, will face immediate membership termination.

B. If no additional disciplinary actions are determined to be necessary following successful completion of the suspension, the member will be notified by the Board Secretary, that he/she may resume full participation in all team activities.

Termination of Participation

A. During a suspension, if the RGAHC recommends that membership termination is the next course of action, the RGAHC will submit a written recommendation of membership termination to the Board of Directors and the participant in question. This recommendation shall include all relevant details and event / incident records. The Board of Directors may vote to terminate the participant in question. The Board Secretary will notify the terminated participant of the result of the Board vote on the matter.

B. The Board Secretary will file the RGAHC recommendation of membership termination and the vote of the Board of Directors into records.

C. In the event a terminated participant held a seat in a race or another position on the team, the RGAHC will make it a priority to, in an expeditious way, identify a replacement crew member for the team.

Appeal of Suspension - Optional

A participant is permitted to appeal a suspension if he or she so chooses in accordance with the following:

- A. If during a five-day or more suspension, the participant has had no further violations, an appeal may be submitted in accordance as outlined here. It is entirely optional.
- B. To initiate this appeal, the participant will email a request to the RGAHC following completion of the second day of suspension. For youth participants, the participant must copy his/her parent / guardian on all in-writing communication (letter, email, text, or other).
- C. The RGAHC will notify the Board of Directors that the participant in question has submitted the appeal of their suspension.
- C. After the second day completion of a five-day or more suspension, the participant may request a conference to make an appeal to the RGAHC. In that meeting, if the participant appeals for a reduced suspension, the Coach will notify the Board of Directors and the participant in less than 24 hours if the Coach recommends modifying the suspension. The Board of Directors may vote to modify the suspension of the participant in question. The Board Secretary will then notify the participant, parents of any minor participant and all Coaches.

Appeal of Termination - Optional

A participant is permitted to appeal a termination if he or she so chooses in accordance with the following:

- 1. To appeal a termination, the participant must submit a written appeal that must include a statement of the reasoning for the appeal. The written appeal is to be emailed it to the RGAHC and the Board Secretary (email addresses listed below):

ROW GA Head Coach - christopher.r.lambert@gmail.com

ROW GA Secretary - secretary.rowptc@gmail.com

- 2. The Secretary will then forward the appeal email from the participant to the Board of Directors.

**For youth participants, the participant must copy his/her parent / guardian on all written communications (letter, email, text, or other).*

3. The Secretary will coordinate with the RGAHC and Board of Directors to convene (in person / phone / zoom, etc.) within 7 business days of receipt of the written appeal.
4. The Board of Directors may vote to lift the suspension of the participant in question.
5. The Board Secretary will then email the appeal decision to the RGAHC and the participant in question, replying to the email used to submit the appeal, within and no later than two (2) business days following the date of the decision.

An appeals process is provided as outlined above. Therefore, an attempt to bypass, interfere or circumvent the appeals process will result in termination of participation will forfeit the appeals option and membership and participation will be terminated.

Interfering with a suspension includes contacting a Board Member or other program members or any attempts to coerce, bully or threaten board members or other program members, whether in writing, over the phone, electronically, verbally or in any form, will result in immediate participant termination.

Participation in ROW GA confirms the acceptance of the ROW GA Code of Conduct, as well as local, state and federal laws. Failure to abide by the terms of the suspension, including not adhering to the process, will result in termination of the participant's membership.

ROW GA will contact the Peachtree City Police Department and/or the Fayette County Marshal's if needed for assistance with anyone who violates park rules, local, state or federal laws, and includes, but is not limited to the following: pose a threat to the physical well-being of others or themselves, demonstrate vulgar behavior, act in a manner that puts others in harm's way, uses foul or threatening language, etc. or any conduct that endangers, with potential to harm, themselves or others.

Athlete / Parent Acknowledgement:

I have read the Row Georgia Code of Conduct and agree to act in a manner consistent with its policies and requirements.

Print Athlete's Name _____

Athlete Signature _____

Date _____

Parent / Guardian Signature _____

Date _____