



MASTER CONDUCT STANDARD

OCA Code of Conduct

For competitors, organizers, officials, certified members, and participants in OCA-sanctioned competition

Take the competition seriously. Take the people seriously. Do not take ourselves too seriously.

OCA exists to make competition broader, fairer, more welcoming, more creative, and more accountable. This Code establishes the conduct expected of everyone who competes, organizes, officiates, represents OCA, or participates in an OCA-sanctioned environment.

1. Who This Code Applies To

This Code applies to anyone participating in, working at, representing, or holding status through the Open Competition Alliance. That includes, without limitation:

- Competitors and teams.
- Event organizers and organizing staff.
- Adjudicators and panel chairs.
- Scorekeepers and scrutineers.
- Safeguarding Leads.
- Floor, stage, technical, and competition officials.
- Volunteers, contractors, and other event personnel.
- Individuals approved, licensed, certified, credentialed, endorsed, or otherwise recognized by OCA.
- OCA representatives, delegates, staff, and leadership.
- Any other participant whose conduct is reasonably connected to an OCA-sanctioned event or OCA activity.

This Code may apply to conduct before, during, and after an event when that conduct materially affects participant welfare, competition integrity, OCA operations, or the safe and respectful functioning of the OCA community.

2. The OCA Standard

OCA gives organizers and communities enormous latitude in what they compete at and how their competitions are designed. That openness does not extend to conduct that undermines fairness, safety, dignity, inclusion, or trust.

WIDE LATITUDE. FIRM VALUES.

OCA is open on format and uncompromising on fairness, respect, inclusion, safeguarding, and accountable competition.

Everyone covered by this Code is expected to:

- Treat others with dignity and respect.
- Compete, judge, score, organize, and participate honestly.
- Follow published rules and legitimate event procedures.
- Avoid discriminatory, degrading, threatening, exploitative, or retaliatory conduct.
- Disclose material conflicts of interest.
- Respect the boundaries and authority of other event roles.
- Protect participant safety and safeguarding obligations.
- Communicate professionally, especially when disagreements are intense.
- Report serious integrity, safety, safeguarding, or misconduct concerns through appropriate channels.
- Avoid conduct that knowingly misrepresents OCA status, credentials, sanctions, or results.

3. Respect, Inclusion, and Equal Dignity

OCA welcomes competitors and communities across disciplines, backgrounds, identities, experience levels, traditions, and competitive cultures. No one is entitled to participate in OCA activities while degrading other people or groups.

Prohibited conduct includes, but is not limited to:

- Harassment, bullying, hazing, intimidation, or threats.

- Discriminatory conduct or prejudicial treatment based on protected or personal characteristics.
- Sexual harassment or unwanted sexual attention.
- Deliberate humiliation, demeaning conduct, or targeted ridicule.
- Retaliation against someone who makes a good-faith report or participates in a review process.
- Exclusionary conduct that conflicts with event rules or OCA standards.
- Encouraging, organizing, or normalizing abusive or degrading behavior.

Competitive intensity is not misconduct by itself. Strong rivalry, physical contact where the activity permits it, theatrical confrontation, satire, spirited disagreement, and emotional investment can all coexist with respect. The line is crossed when conduct becomes abusive, discriminatory, coercive, exploitative, or unsafe.

4. Fair Play and Competition Integrity

Every person covered by this Code has a responsibility to protect the integrity of competition.

- Do not manipulate scores, ballots, brackets, advancement, eligibility, or official records.
- Do not offer, request, or accept improper benefits intended to influence competitive decisions.
- Do not falsify entries, credentials, results, identities, qualifications, or official records.
- Do not interfere with judging, scoring, tabulation, or result verification.
- Do not pressure officials to change a legitimate decision outside the authorized correction or appeal process.
- Do not knowingly exploit procedural errors in a way that undermines fair competition.
- Do not retaliate against judges, scorekeepers, organizers, or competitors for good-faith competitive decisions.

THE RESULT MATTERS. THE METHOD MATTERS TOO.

A competition is only credible when participants can trust that the rules, judging, scoring, advancement, and corrections are handled consistently and honestly.

5. Safety and Safeguarding

All participants must comply with applicable OCA safeguarding standards, event safety rules, venue requirements, and lawful instructions intended to protect participants. Conduct involving minors or vulnerable adults carries heightened responsibilities.

Anyone who becomes aware of a serious safeguarding concern should follow the reporting procedures established under the **OCA Safeguarding Policy for Sanctioned Events** and any applicable event or legal requirements.

- Do not engage in grooming, sexualized, coercive, exploitative, or secretive conduct involving minors.
- Respect appropriate physical, digital, and professional boundaries.
- Do not retaliate against a person who raises a safeguarding concern.
- Do not obstruct lawful reporting, protective action, or an appropriate safeguarding response.
- Take immediate safety concerns seriously and escalate them appropriately.

6. Conflicts of Interest

Material conflicts of interest must be disclosed. A conflict does not always require automatic recusal, especially in small or highly interconnected competitive communities, but it must be handled transparently and in accordance with applicable event or OCA procedures.

Potential conflicts may include:

- Family or romantic relationships.
- Current or recent coaching, mentoring, or instructional relationships.
- Employment, ownership, business, sponsorship, or financial interests.
- Close personal friendships or active personal disputes.
- Direct competitive rivalry.
- Any other relationship that could reasonably call impartiality into question.

7. Professional Communication and Disagreement

Competition produces disagreement. Disagreement is allowed. Abuse is not.

- Use designated protest, appeal, correction, or reporting procedures rather than personal confrontation.
- Do not publicly berate, threaten, or intimidate competitors or officials.
- Do not use social media to harass, dox, threaten, or coordinate retaliation against others.
- Criticism of rules, systems, decisions, organizers, or OCA itself is allowed when expressed lawfully and without harassment or abuse.
- Private disagreement does not excuse dishonest conduct, retaliation, or interference with event operations.

8. Alcohol, Drugs, and Impairment

Individuals serving in official, safety-sensitive, safeguarding, or competition-administration roles must not perform those duties while impaired. Events may impose additional restrictions appropriate to the activity, venue, participant age, or risk level.

Illegal drug activity, dangerous intoxication, or substance-related conduct that threatens safety, judgment, professionalism, or event integrity may violate this Code.

9. Representation of OCA

OCA credentials, certifications, sanctioned status, logos, seals, titles, and public representations must be used accurately.

- Do not claim a certification, license, sanction, registry status, title, role, or endorsement that has not been granted.
- Do not imply OCA approval extends beyond the event, discipline, role, or scope actually approved.
- Do not alter official records or credentials in a misleading way.
- Do not use OCA branding to imply political, commercial, personal, or organizational endorsement that OCA has not provided.
- Individuals acting in an OCA role must avoid conduct that materially misuses the authority or trust associated with that role.

10. Competitor Standards

Competitors are expected to pursue excellence without undermining the dignity, safety, or fair opportunity of others.

Competitors must:

- Enter honestly and comply with eligibility, registration, division, and classification rules.
- Follow the rules and instructions governing the competition.
- Compete without deliberate cheating, score manipulation, sabotage, or improper collusion.
- Treat opponents, partners, teammates, adjudicators, scorekeepers, organizers, volunteers, and spectators respectfully.
- Accept good-faith adjudicative decisions unless using an authorized protest or appeal procedure.
- Avoid disruptive conduct intended to intimidate judges or interfere with another competitor's performance.
- Report known result, eligibility, safeguarding, or integrity issues through appropriate channels.
- Comply with event-specific safety and safeguarding requirements.

GOOD SPORTSMANSHIP IS NOT FORCED CHEERFULNESS

Competitors may be disappointed, frustrated, competitive, outspoken, and ambitious. OCA requires respect and fair play, not fake smiles.

11. Event Organizer Standards

Event organizers hold substantial authority and therefore carry substantial responsibility. An organizer's job is not merely to produce an event; it is to create a competitive environment participants can reasonably trust.

Event organizers must:

- Publish or otherwise provide clear rules, scoring procedures, eligibility standards, advancement procedures, and material event policies.
- Apply rules consistently and avoid arbitrary favoritism.
- Appoint appropriately qualified officials.
- Ensure required OCA-certified roles are filled where applicable.
- Establish and enforce reasonable conflict-of-interest procedures.
- Maintain required safeguarding practices, including a trained Safeguarding Lead when minors participate.
- Provide a process for concerns, corrections, protests, or appeals where applicable.
- Protect scorekeeping and result integrity.
- Avoid directing adjudicators toward a preferred competitive outcome.
- Respond promptly to serious misconduct, safety, safeguarding, or integrity concerns.
- Use OCA sanctioning marks and representations accurately.
- Submit required results and post-event reporting honestly and on time.

Organizers must not use their position to retaliate against competitors, officials, volunteers, or other participants for raising good-faith concerns or using legitimate OCA procedures.

12. Scorekeeper / Scrutineer Standards

Scorekeepers and scrutineers are custodians of the official competitive record. Their role is to receive, tabulate, verify, and report results according to the competition's authorized system, not to substitute their own competitive judgment for that of adjudicators.

Scorekeepers and scrutineers must:

- Apply the authorized scoring and tabulation method accurately and consistently.
- Maintain independence from improper organizer, competitor, judge, or audience pressure.
- Protect the confidentiality and integrity of ballots and scoring data where required.
- Document permitted score corrections or administrative changes.
- Never alter a judge's substantive decision except through an authorized correction process.
- Identify mathematical, entry, advancement, missing-ballot, or procedural errors promptly.
- Avoid manipulating results, selectively applying rules, or concealing known errors.
- Disclose conflicts of interest that could affect their role.
- Preserve official records according to applicable event and OCA requirements.

SCOREKEEPERS CALCULATE. JUDGES JUDGE.

A scorekeeper or scrutineer may identify and correct authorized administrative errors, but must never rewrite an adjudicator's good-faith judgment merely because the result seems surprising.

13. Adjudicator Standards

Adjudicators are expected to combine discipline-specific expertise with fair, independent, and rule-based decision-making.

Adjudicators must:

- Understand the published rules, criteria, format, scoring system, and their assigned role before judging.
- Judge the competition actually presented, rather than imposing unrelated personal standards.
- Apply the rubric or criteria consistently across competitors.
- Make decisions independently when the format requires independent adjudication.
- Avoid discussing or coordinating scores with other judges unless the format expressly calls for deliberation.
- Disclose material conflicts of interest.
- Remain attentive and avoid unnecessary distractions while judging.
- Avoid coaching competitors from the judging position unless the format explicitly authorizes it.
- Avoid retaliatory, discriminatory, reputation-based, popularity-based, or favoritism-based scoring.
- Submit scores honestly and avoid changing them merely because another score or result becomes known.
- Use professional, criterion-related language in any required comments or feedback.
- Respect the limits of their expertise and decline assignments they are not qualified to judge.

The rubric outranks the adjudicator's personal philosophy. A judge may have strong preferences about what excellent performance should look like, but the published competition criteria determine what is being evaluated.

14. Standards for OCA-Certified, Licensed, Approved, or Credentialed Individuals

OCA status carries public trust. Anyone holding an OCA certification, license, approval, endorsement, credential, or formal role is expected to protect that trust both while actively serving and when publicly representing that status.

Credentialed individuals must:

- Represent their qualifications accurately.
- Remain within the scope of their actual knowledge, training, and authorization.
- Maintain required renewals, training, or continuing obligations where applicable.
- Cooperate with legitimate OCA reviews of credential-related conduct.
- Avoid using OCA status to pressure, exploit, intimidate, or obtain inappropriate access to participants.
- Report material changes that affect eligibility to hold or use a credential when required by OCA policy.
- Return, cease using, or stop representing suspended, expired, revoked, or withdrawn credentials as active.

15. Reporting Concerns

OCA encourages good-faith reporting of serious misconduct, safeguarding concerns, competition-integrity concerns, credential misuse, retaliation, and other material violations of this Code. Reports should be made through the appropriate event or OCA channel.

Reports should, where possible, distinguish:

- What the reporter personally observed.
- What another person reported or disclosed.
- Relevant dates, locations, roles, or event information.
- Documents, messages, ballots, photographs, or other evidence that may exist.
- Any immediate safety or safeguarding concern.

A good-faith report does not violate this Code merely because an allegation is ultimately unsubstantiated. Knowingly false or malicious reports, fabricated evidence, or intentional misuse of complaint procedures may themselves violate this Code.

16. Non-Retaliation

Retaliation is prohibited. No person may threaten, punish, blacklist, harass, disadvantage, intimidate, or otherwise retaliate against someone for making a good-faith report, participating in an OCA or event review, requesting a correction, or using an authorized protest or appeal process.

17. Review and Possible Consequences

OCA may review alleged violations of this Code when the conduct falls within OCA's reasonable jurisdiction. The nature and form of review may vary according to the seriousness of the concern, available evidence, participant safety, the person's OCA status, and the relationship between OCA and the event.

Possible responses may include:

- Informal guidance or corrective instruction.
- Required education or remediation.
- Formal warning.
- Conditions or restrictions on an OCA role or credential.
- Removal from an event role.
- Suspension or revocation of certification, license, approval, or credential.
- Suspension or withdrawal of event sanctioning.
- Ineligibility for future OCA roles, credentials, or sanctioned participation where warranted.
- Referral to an event organizer, venue, governing authority, law enforcement, protective service, or other appropriate body.
- Other proportionate action reasonably necessary to protect participants, competition integrity, or OCA.

OCA may take interim action when necessary to protect participant safety, safeguarding, competition integrity, or the fairness of an ongoing process.

18. Context, Proportionality, and Good Faith

Not every mistake, disagreement, awkward interaction, scoring dispute, or instance of poor judgment is a **Code violation**. OCA considers context, severity, intent where relevant, pattern, impact, corrective action, role, power, risk, and available evidence.

This Code is intended to protect fair and respectful competition, not to create a culture of procedural weaponization. Participants should use reporting and review processes in good faith.

THE CULTURAL TEST

Does this conduct help create a competition people can trust, participate in with dignity, and return to with confidence?

19. Relationship to Other OCA Policies and Event Rules

This Code operates alongside other applicable OCA policies, sanctioned-event rules, discipline-specific rules, venue requirements, and law. Where another applicable policy imposes a more specific requirement, the more specific requirement should generally govern that situation.

Related OCA materials may include:

- OCA Event Sanctioning Guide.
- OCA Safeguarding Policy for Sanctioned Events.
- OCA General Adjudication Standards.
- Applicable Scorekeeper/Scrutineer standards and training.
- Registry-specific rules.
- Discipline-specific rules or event procedures.
- OCA credentialing, sanctioning, protest, appeal, and result-correction policies.

20. The OCA Conduct Commitment

COMPETITION, WIDE OPEN

We welcome serious championships, local traditions, experimental formats, niche communities, established disciplines, and competitions nobody else thought to build. The openness works because the standards are real.

Fairness. Respect. Inclusion. Curiosity. Accountability. Play.

GAME FOR ANYTHING.

As long as we compete like people worth competing with.

This Code establishes general OCA conduct expectations. It does not replace applicable law, venue requirements, professional obligations, safeguarding duties, or more specific event and discipline rules.