



## **Team Travel Policy**

### **Scope**

This policy applies to all Row Ontario teams of all ages when traveling as a team for any distance and exists in support of the Athlete Protection Policy and all of Row Ontario's Safe Sport policies.

### **Definitions**

**Team Travel** – Any time athletes are traveling together for the purposes of training and or competing while officially representing Row Ontario.

**Person in Authority** – Any individual who holds a position of authority within RCA or a Rowing organization, including but not limited to, coaches, umpires, officials, managers, support personnel, chaperones, Committee members, and Directors or Officers.

### **Policy**

Row Ontario is committed to creating a safe and positive environment for all, and to ensuring that it promotes an environment free of misconduct. Row Ontario will establish Team Travel Procedures focused on establishing clear boundaries, minimizing one-on-one interactions, and protecting the welfare of our athletes, parents/guardians, and coaches/staff during team-related travel. Adherence to these travel procedures will increase athlete safety and improve the competitive experience while keeping travel a fun and enjoyable experience.

### Travel Scheduling

When appropriate, every effort will be made to schedule travel to minimize the impact of travel on educational commitments. However, in situations when Row Ontario staff or volunteers are driving vehicles, regardless of the presence of athletes and/or trailers, the number of hours and kilometers traveled in a single day will be limited to ensure the safe operation of vehicles for the safety of all involved. This may result in extra time being added to travel. All Row Ontario operated vehicles will travel together for safety and to ensure appropriate adult to athlete ratios at stops and in case of emergencies.

### Individual Athlete Travel

Under no circumstances will a single athlete under 19 travel alone with one coach for any event or practice, including local events, unless the Person in Authority is the athlete's parent or guardian. The athlete may be required to provide an adult who can travel with them.

### Mixed Gender and Mixed-Age Travel

Competitive teams often include male and female athletes spanning various age groups. For mixed gender teams or groups of athletes, there must be one Person in Authority present from each gender. For overnight travel when athletes must share a hotel room, roommates will be age-appropriate and, for minors, shall be within two years of age of one another and of the same gender identity. Room or bed checks during overnight stays will be completed by two Persons in Authority. Regardless of gender,

a Person in Authority shall not share a hotel room or be in a hotel room alone with an athlete unless the Person in Authority is the athlete's parent or guardian.

*Board approved last: July 27, 2022*

*To be reviewed by: July 2025*

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## **Operational Procedures**

Travel Documentation – Every participant will be responsible for ensuring they have the necessary travel documentation while travelling. Additionally, in all cases of international travel, the athlete will need to provide a photocopy of their passport 14 days before the trip to the designated Row Ontario staff. In cases of international travel, for athletes 19 and under, all parents/guardians will also be asked to sign consent forms to give permission for the Row Ontario designate to accompany the minor athlete across the border.

Cross Border Travel – In addition to ensuring every athlete has a consent form for international (cross border) travel, the team will travel with a master list and a letter signed by the Chief Executive Officer detailing the trip and participants. This will be provided for all members of the group, regardless of the age of each individual.

Travel Notification – All transportation plans will be communicated to athletes (and parents/guardians for athletes under 19) with reasonable advance notice, including the dates, location, and duration of the event. Travel notice will also include designated team hotels for overnight stays as well as dedicated Row Ontario contact information. Row Ontario will provide to all team members (and parents/guardians for athletes under 19) specific travel itineraries and include the detailed competition or training schedule. For athletes under 19, Row Ontario is committed to communicating with parents/guardians during team travel.

- Parents/guardians will be provided with two emergency contact information options as well as information for all hotels and venues as well as regular coach updates.
- Athletes are encouraged to use their cell phones and other forms of electronic communication during trips and encouraged to send information to their families—especially regular updates from the road and changes to schedules.
- Dedicated times will be established for athletes to contact their families.
- Any changes to the detailed travel itinerary as well as progress (such as reaching the airport/hotel, etc.) will be provided by Row Ontario official means as soon as reasonably possible.
- Email will be the official means of communication between Row Ontario and athletes (and parents/guardians of athletes under 19) regarding travel information, except in cases of emergencies when phone calls or text message will be made.

Safe Driving Procedures – When Row Ontario staff or volunteers are required to drive a vehicle, no one day of travel will be longer than 8 hours of one individual driving or 10 hours if two drivers are sharing the driving. No one stretch of driving should be longer than 4 hours, without a break. When trip planning, staff/volunteers should consider the estimated time for travel considering time of day and anticipated

traffic. It is expected in trip planning that staff will be prepared for unexpected traffic or other issues that may limit distance covered in a period of time.

Coach/Staff Responsibilities – Coaches and staff will:

- Prepare athletes for team travel and make athletes aware of all expectations. Supplemental information will be given to the parent/guardians of athletes who are considered inexperienced travelers, new or relatively new to team travel, or who are under the age of 19.
- Familiarize themselves with all travel itineraries and schedules before the initiation of team travel.
- Encourage athletes to participate in regular, at least daily, scheduled communications with their parents/guardians. As well the coaches will provide quick daily updates.
- Monitor the activities of athletes and fellow coaches. Help athletes be on time for all team commitments.
- Assist with team travel logistical needs.
- Support the monitoring of athletes for adherence to curfew restrictions set based on age and competition schedule as listed in the travel itinerary.
- Make certain that athletes are not alone in a hotel room with any adult apart from a family member; this includes coaches, staff, and volunteers.
- Not use drugs or alcohol in the presence of minors or be under the influence of drugs or alcohol while performing their coaching duties.
- Notify parents/guardians before taking any disciplinary action against a minor athlete if the athlete is traveling without them.
- Report off-site incidents as soon as information is available, using the standard Row Ontario Incident Report Form.

Row Ontario will designate a lead staff person for each team travel group who additionally will:

- Provide travel notification and documentation packages to all athletes.
- Be available to answer questions and communicate with athletes and their family members before and during the trip.
- Be in regular contact with Row Ontario Chief Executive Officer and any other appropriate staff.
- Be responsible for maintaining travel documentation including expenses.
- Create a trip plan that will ensure all policies and procedures are met.

*Last reviewed: July 26<sup>th</sup>, 2022*