

Force Soccer Academy

Developing confident, inspired, and competitive athletes.

forcesoccer.ca



Equity and Inclusion Policy

Updated November 2023

Introduction:

Burlington Force Soccer Academy (BFSA) believes that soccer is more than just a game; it's a unifying force that brings people together from diverse backgrounds, creating a community that reflects the multicultural tapestry of our society. BFSA is dedicated to fostering an environment where everyone, regardless of their race, gender, sexual orientation, religion, nationality, or ability, feels valued, respected, and has an equal opportunity to participate and contribute. Our Equity and Inclusion Policy is designed to ensure that all members, employees, and participants are treated with fairness and respect, and that our programs are accessible to everyone.

This policy will uphold the principles of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and provincial human rights legislation, setting a standard for an equitable and inclusive atmosphere within all layers of our organization.

The Academy adheres to the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) Policy, as published by the Ontario Government. To view the full policy, please click [here](#).

Equity and Inclusion Principles

1. BFSA shall not discriminate or treat anyone less favorably on the grounds of gender, sexual orientation, marital status, race, nationality, ethnic origin, color, religion or belief, or any other prohibited grounds.
2. Our Club will actively pursue the principles of equality and inclusiveness in all aspects, ensuring equitable access to resources, programming, and opportunities for all community members.
3. BFSA is committed to continually reviewing and improving policies and procedures to enhance equity and inclusion, including adopting any new policies released by Ontario Soccer and Canada Soccer.

Definitions

Inclusive Environment: A setting where every individual can participate meaningfully, feeling a sense of belonging and being able to reach their full potential by respecting and actively involving diverse groups.

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Equity: Tailoring allocation of resources, opportunities, and decision-making fairly, such that all individuals have similar opportunities to benefit from soccer-related activities.

Diversity: Embracing the wide array of characteristics that make up our community, ensuring that everyone's unique background is acknowledged, respected, and valued.

Key Focus Areas

- **Athletes with Disabilities:** BFSFA will work towards creating partnerships to provide athletes with disabilities access to suitable programs and facilities, incorporating training for coaches to address the needs of athletes with disabilities effectively.
- **Women in Sport:** Our aim is to support and promote the development of female athletes and coaches, ensuring their representation and support in technical programs, operations, and coaching opportunities.
- **Mental Health:** Recognizing the importance of mental well-being, BFSFA will promote an environment supportive of mental health awareness and provide resources to help identify and support those facing mental health challenges.
- **Religious Inclusion:** BFSFA will strive to accommodate different religious beliefs and practices, ensuring that our programming is sensitive and adaptable to various religious observances.
- **Sexual Orientation:** BFSFA stands against homophobia in sport and is dedicated to creating a welcoming environment where individuals feel safe to be open about their sexuality without fear of discrimination.

Reporting and Accountability

Discrimination of any kind is not tolerated. Members are encouraged to report any incidents of discrimination to BFSFA officials, initially verbally, followed by a written report. BFSFA commits to investigating all reports thoroughly and taking appropriate actions to address any issues.

Continuous Improvement

BFSFA is dedicated to the ongoing education and training of our coaches, staff, and members to foster a diverse and welcoming environment. By implementing this Equity and Inclusion Policy, BFSFA affirms its commitment to creating a community where everyone is welcome, and soccer acts as a bridge, connecting us across all boundaries. Together, we are stronger, more diverse, and inclusive.

By being part of Burlington Force Soccer Academy, I agree to adhere to this Equity and Inclusion Policy

Name: _____ Position: _____

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Date: _____ Signature: _____

