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TENNIS CANADA ENHANCES COMMITMENT TO SAFE SPORT BY JOINING ABUSE-FREE SPORT PROGRAM

Abuse-Free Sport represents next step in Tennis Canada's robust safe sport practices

Toronto, January 31, 2023 — On Tuesday, Tennis Canada announced that it has signed an agreement to join Abuse-Free Sport, the new independent program to prevent and address maltreatment in sport.

Tennis Canada and its stakeholders, all National Tennis Centre and National High Performance Program athletes, team coaches, program staff, and the organization's board of directors, will have access to the services of the Office of the Sport Integrity Commissioner (OSIC), which serves as the central hub of Abuse-Free Sport, following a transition period which will end no later than March 31, 2023. All other organizational participants will continue to have access to Tennis Canada's independent mechanism.

"Tennis Canada recognizes that safe sport is everyone's responsibility," said Michael Downey, President and Chief Executive Officer, Tennis Canada. "As such, it has been a priority for our organization for a number of years and we are committed to doing our part to support a growing national movement that is changing the culture of sport in this country. As part of that commitment, we're pleased to sign on to Abuse-Free Sport and to soon have the OSIC to administer our safe sport complaints. The sport community has been asking for just this kind of consistent national program. It's an important step forward for everyone involved in sport in Canada."

During the transition period, Tennis Canada will complete full adoption of the Universal Code of Conduct to Prevent and Address Maltreatment in Sport (UCCMS), which it must do before it can become part of the Abuse-Free Sport program, and making the required policy changes.

Prior to March 31st, participants who have experienced or witnessed abuse will continue to have access to independent third-party services through [Tennis Canada's independent mechanism](#) or tenniscanada@integritycounts.ca.

Tennis Canada is considered a leader in safe sport in Canada after taking several important steps to foster safer environments to practice tennis. Since 2017, Tennis Canada has employed a full-time Director of Safe Sport and Integrity and, for several years, has had an independent mechanism in place that has been available to participants at all levels.

"The adoption of Abuse-Free Sport represents another step forward in the organization's robust safe sport practices," said Jennifer Bennett, Director of Safe Sport and Integrity, Tennis Canada. "Through our Tennis Professionals Association and in partnership with our Provincial Tennis Associations, Tennis Canada requires coaches to be fully certified in safe sport and has implemented annual background checks as part of its safeguarding practices. Furthermore, Tennis Canada has launched a national education and awareness campaign in partnership with its Provincial Tennis Associations whereby athletes and parents can check their coach's certification status to better understand their requirements."

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Learn more about the [Abuse-Free Sport program](#), the [OSIC](#) and [Tennis Canada's commitment to safe sport](#).

About Tennis Canada

Founded in 1890, Tennis Canada is a non-profit, national sport association with a mission to lead the growth of tennis in Canada and a vision to become a world-leading tennis nation. We value teamwork, passion, integrity, innovation and excellence. Tennis Canada owns and operates the premier National Bank Open presented by Rogers WTA and ATP Tour events, four professional ATP and ITF sanctioned events and financially supports four other professional tournaments in Canada. Tennis Canada operates junior national training centres/programs in Toronto, Montreal, Vancouver and Calgary. Tennis Canada is a proud member of the International Tennis Federation, the Canadian Olympic Committee and the Canadian Paralympic Committee, and serves to administer, sponsor and select the teams for Davis Cup, Billie Jean King Cup, the Olympic and Paralympic Games and all wheelchair, junior and senior national teams. Tennis Canada invests its surplus into tennis development. For more information on Tennis Canada please visit our Web site at: www.tenniscanada.com and follow us on Facebook and Twitter.

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