



Policy title:	<b>Concussion Policy</b>	Policy No: <b>SSO 7-16</b>
Approval authority:	Board of Directors	
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Related documents:	<i>SSO Code of Conduct &amp; Ethics</i> <i>SSO Discipline &amp; Complaint's Policy</i> <i>SSO Synchro-specific Concussion Guidelines</i>	
		Pages: 4

## Definitions

In this Policy:

1. “*Concussion*” refers to a type of traumatic brain injury caused by a bump, blow or jolt to the head, face, neck or body that causes the head and brain to move rapidly back and forth and can alter the way the brain normally functions;
2. “*Concussion awareness resources*” refer to information or materials on concussion prevention, detection, reporting and management;
3. “*Including*” means including but not limited to;
4. “*Medical professional*” means a family physician, pediatrician, emergency room physician, sports-medicine physician, neurologist or nurse practitioner;
5. “*Members*” mean The Regional Training Centre, Ontario and any Competitive, Recreational, Scholastic, University synchronized swimming club or Trillium awards program provider registered with SSO;
6. “*Most Responsible Person or MRP*” refers to the person assigned to have final decision-making authority to remove an athlete who is suspected of having sustained a concussion;
7. “*Officials*” means all judges, including practice judges, referees and scorers;
8. “*Parents*” refers to parents or guardians of athletes under 18 years of age;
9. “*Registrant*” means any Member or individual that has fulfilled the requirements of registration as required by SSO and has paid any associated registration fees to SSO;
10. “*SSO*” means Synchro Swim Ontario;
11. “*SSO Activity*” means all SSO business and activities over which SSO has jurisdiction; and
12. “*SSO Participants*” means all persons engaged in any paid or volunteer capacity with SSO or otherwise under the jurisdiction of SSO.

## Purpose

The purpose of this Policy is to contribute to a safe and positive sport environment through education and training and by making SSO Participants aware of synchro-specific concussion awareness resources to assist in recognizing and managing a concussion injury.



## **Renewal**

This Policy will be reviewed every four (4) years to coincide with the International Consensus on Concussion in Sport.

## **Application of This Policy**

This Policy applies to all SSO Participants including:

1. All SSO Members or Registrants;
2. SSO directors, officers, committee members and volunteers;
3. SSO employees and persons under contract with SSO;
4. All athletes eligible for selection to, or forming part of, any team or routine participating in competitions, events or activities over which SSO has jurisdiction; and
5. All persons working with those teams or athletes, including coaches and other support persons.

This Policy applies at all times, wherever the SSO Activity takes place, which includes the SSO offices as well as external locations in Canada and abroad and includes all sanctioned activities over which SSO has jurisdiction. SSO Activity includes:

1. SSO hosted conferences or clinics;
2. Participation in provincial or national competitions including related training and organized group travel;
3. All SSO hosted meets; and
4. All SSO hosted selection and assessment processes and regular training or practice time, whether inside or outside Canada.

## **Responsibilities**

SSO has made the following concussion awareness resources available to Members and SSO Participants on its public website at <http://synchroontario.com/member-resources/concussion-resources/>:

1. SSO Synchro-specific Concussion Guidelines including:
  - a. SSO Removal-from-sport Protocol
  - b. SSO Synchro-specific Concussion Return-to-sport Protocol
  - c. Concussion Recognition Tool
  - d. SSO Return-to-synchro Concussion Progress Tracker
2. SSO Injury Tracker
3. SSO Concussion Information and Guidelines for Athletes and Parents.

## **SSO will:**

1. Ensure all SSO Activity is properly supervised, including the use of certified lifeguards in aquatic environments;



2. Assign the Most Responsible Person for all SSO hosted meets, selection and assessment processes and teams (e.g., Chief Referee or Head Coach for provincial teams);
3. Maintain a system for collecting and analyzing concussion injury data reported by Members during the season;
4. Assess changes in concussion rates over seasons and make recommendations on training or routine elements that put athletes in a position of high risk for concussion injury;
5. Provide annual concussion education for Members, coaches, officials and other SSO Participants at its Journey to Excellence conferences and other SSO hosted conferences, clinics or calls;
6. Develop concussion awareness resources for Members, officials, coaches, athletes and their parents;
7. Provide a copy of the SSO Synchro-specific Concussion Guidelines to all officials and confirm that they have reviewed the resource by no later than October 15 of each year;
8. Ensure that Members provide a copy of the SSO Synchro-specific Concussion Guidelines to all coaches and confirm that coaches have reviewed the resource by no later than October 15 of each year;
9. Ensure that Members provide a copy of the SSO Synchro-specific Concussion Guidelines to all new and returning athletes and, for athletes under 18 years of age, their parents and that they have confirmed they have reviewed the resource prior to registration; and
10. Review its concussion awareness resources every four (4) years to coincide with the International Consensus on Sport in Concussion.

**All Members have responsibility to:**

1. Ensure all activities are properly supervised, including the use of certified lifeguards in aquatic environments;
2. Provide a copy of the SSO Synchro-specific Concussion Guidelines to all new and returning athletes and, for athletes under 18 years of age, their parents and confirm that the athlete or parent, as appropriate, has reviewed the resource prior to registration;
3. Provide a copy of the SSO Synchro-specific Concussion Guidelines to their coaches and confirm that they have reviewed the resource by no later than October 15 of each year;
4. Ensure their coaches are familiar with their responsibilities under the SSO Synchro-specific Concussion Guidelines including how to recognize, report and manage a concussion injury;
5. Keep a copy of the Concussion Recognition Tool on deck and available to coaches;
6. Assign the Most Responsible Person for removing an athlete with a suspected concussion (e.g., Head Coach or lead team coach);
7. Submit an incident report through the SSO Injury Tracker for all instances of suspected or confirmed concussion injury sustained during synchro activity;
8. Implement SSO Synchro-specific Return to Play Protocol for all instances of concussion injury; and



9. Modify or limit training or routine elements that put athletes in a position of high risk for concussion injury based on SSO analysis and recommendations.

All Members are encouraged to establish their own Concussion Policy consistent with the responsibilities described above. These policies can strengthen, but cannot weaken, the responsibilities set out in this Policy. Failure to abide by this Policy and the protocols contained in the *SSO Synchro-specific Concussion Guidelines* may result in disciplinary action in accordance with SSO's *Discipline and Complaint's Policy*.

**The Most Responsible Person (MRP) has responsibility to:**

1. Remove an athlete who is suspected of having sustained a concussion from further training, practice or competition;
2. Call 911 immediately if any Red Flag symptoms are present (see Concussion Recognition Tool);
3. For athletes under 18 years of age, inform the parent or guardian of the removal and remain with the athlete until discharged to a parent, guardian or other trusted adult or EMS. For athletes over 18 years of age, the MRP should contact their emergency contact person;
4. Communicate to the athlete's parent or guardian the need for immediate medical assessment by a medical professional when Red Flag symptoms are not present but other concussion symptoms are reported or observed;
5. Complete an incident report through the SSO Injury Tracker immediately after a concussion is suspected;
6. For Members, ensure medical clearance is provided prior to beginning Step 2 of the SSO Synchro-specific Return to Play Protocol; and
7. For Members, ensure the SSO Synchro-specific Return to Play Protocol is implemented for all instances of concussion injury.

The MRP may delegate any of the above responsibilities to another official or coach, as appropriate. Final decision-making authority to remove an athlete who is suspected of having sustained a concussion rests with the MRP.