



# Creating an Inclusive Training Environment

Want to make your league, training and coaching more inclusive? Wondering how to create safe spaces?

Here are some ideas for assessing the inclusivity of your training structure, competitive pathways, training climate and culture. We've included some policy recommendations where relevant to support your next steps. In general, these should be agreed on by all league members.

For more general league policy recommendations see the [WFTDA Code of Conduct](#) and the [Code of Conduct Toolkit](#).

## WFTDA Values (as identified in the 2020 Strategic Plan)

- i. Led by women-identifying and gender expansive community
- ii. Democratically governed
- iii. Community-driven
- iv. Member-focused
- v. Community-supported
- vi. Fundamentally inclusive
- vii. Committed to diversity, equity, and advocacy
- viii. Innovative and daring
- ix. Continuously striving for excellence in safety

## What are your values?



### Quick List of Recommended Policies & Documents:

- Mission statement and values
- Inclusive attendance policy
- Training plan for values
- “Culture Code” or “Culture Document”
- Spectator /Event Code of Conduct
- Policies on pronoun usage
- Policy against using deadnames
- Hardship policies and scholarships
- Skater name policy, logos, and league materials
- Flexible but safe rostering and assessment practices & policies
- Supportive Injury and Return To Play Policies



## How to Create an Inclusive Training Environment

### ACCOUNTABILITY MATTERS

Hold each other accountable for un-welcoming; unsupportive; hostile; racist; classist; ableist; ageist; sexist; homophobic; biphobic; transphobic; xenophobic and ethnocentric behavior.

### ACCESSIBILITY MATTERS

Be specific and conscious about the accessibility you are (or aren't) providing in your league. This includes your training facilities, financial support systems, and language barriers, among others.

### SAFETY MATTERS

Safe Spaces can be emotional or physical. We are all responsible for creating a safe environment in roller derby and making that environment a welcome and friendly place.

### WORDS MATTER


Language and communication can be empowering, but also harming. Educate yourself, correct each other, create a culture of accountability and foster nonviolent communication.

### ATTITUDE MATTERS

How we deal with a "bad" training, how we celebrate success, or how we behave during games defines what kind of team player and sportsperson we - and ultimately our values - are.

### RESPECT MATTERS

Treat all participants equally and with respect. Respect your coaches, officials and respect your teammates by not being disruptive. Help create a space where everyone can learn.



**Assess your policies & procedures, your training structure (team, roles, etc.), your league's competitive pathways, and your league's training culture or climate.**

**Do you have:**

**1. Agreed-on values and a mission statement?**

- a. Does your training reflect your values?
- b. Is there a clear and visible process in place for reporting incidents at training which conflict with the league values?
- c. Are these values and statements communicated outside of your team/league? (e.g., website, social media, etc.)

## **2. A training plan in place to share, explain, and implement WFTDA values and your league values with new participants?**

- a. Do you have an introduction to volunteer-based organization and values in place for new participants coming in? What does it mean to be part of the roller derby community in your league?
- b. Do you have a "Culture Code" or "Culture Document" to provide an opportunity to say "this is who we are, what we do and how we do it"?

## **3. An inclusive attendance policy?**

- a. Who can attend your training and when? The time of day / day of the week / where you train can affect who is able to attend at different times.
- b. Do you offer child care or other support systems so members can attend training more easily?
- c. What percentage of training do your members need for attendance? Can they ask for an exception?
- d. How far in advance do you announce events? Do you schedule events on holidays/days of importance? Do you offer the opportunity to opt out of practices / games / events that could prove dangerous or unsafe without fear of repercussions (due to location, timing, demographics etc.)?

## **4. A financial support system in place?**

- a. Do you offer hardship policies and scholarships? This can include gear support, affordable jerseys, funding travel teams or skaters who cannot afford travel.
- b. Do you provide equipment lending and donations?
- c. Do you support officials and coaches financially when they travel or in their education/training?

## **5. League spaces and pathways that are accessible for everyone?**

- a. How do you select your leadership? Do you elect coaches? Do you offer train-the-trainer, mentorship or other programs to support new coaches and trainers and give them the opportunity to become better coaches?
- b. Do you have safe rostering policies and practices? Are you actively looking at recognizing and removing bias when making decisions on team selections? Are you using multiple trainers to assess and cross assess skaters?
- c. Are officials being included in strength, skating fundamentals and endurance practices?
- d. Do you have conversations in your league and team around your values and competition?
- e. Do you offer open skates, training, or teams with no requirements, attendance tryouts etc.?

## **6. Supportive training and learning environments?**

- a. Do participants know how to come prepared for training?
- b. Do you have a culture of openness to drills? Everyone can learn!
- c. Do you adjust drills to abilities and needs?
- d. Do you show examples of drills, and share training plans beforehand or after for members who can't be there?
- e. Do you celebrate each other's achievements and improvements?
- f. Do you have policies in place that help and support your members with mental health and chronic illness?

## **7. Accessible and safe spaces?**

- a. Do you have safe changing spaces in your training facility? For example, gender neutral changing rooms/bathrooms with clear signs.
- b. Reflect and assess your location, venues and access to it: How easy is it to get to? How easy is it to access? Assess and measure any level or floor changes, stairs, bathrooms, locker rooms.
- c. Do you respect everyone's different needs for self-care and try to normalize accommodations for folk who need them?
- d. Do your members know how to recognize and dismantle fatphobia/diet culture (body shaming) and toxic sport & fitness culture?
- e. When you have events do you tie a spectator Code of Conduct policy to a ticket purchase? Do you protect your league members and other participants from abuse, discrimination, and/or harassment during your events? Do you teach your security/bouncer volunteers how to handle situations of abuse, discrimination, and/or harassment during an event?

## **8. Safety and Risk Management values reflected in your documents and training?**

- a. Do you value and encourage warm ups, cool downs and a culture of watching out for each other?
- b. Is everyone acting responsibly towards the health of others as well as their own?
- c. Are you responsible by playing within your level of skills & expertise?

## **9. Supportive Injury and Return To Play Policies?**

- a. Do you have a clear injury protocol that is shared with everyone on what to do when you or someone is injured?
- b. Does everyone in your league know who is your Risk Coordinator, who is a medic (or part of a medical and first responder team) or who is first aid certified?
- c. Do your injured skaters, or skaters coming back from a leave of absence, returning to training know how and when they can come back to training/contact?

- d. What policies for engagement with injured participants do you have in place? Who is in contact with them? A committee? The team? Captain?
  - Do you provide a “Skater #21” roster position when someone is injured or pregnant?
  - Do you have an injured skater fund or a pool to make medical equipment available, such as crutches/scooters?
  - Do you offer car pooling or meals when someone is seriously injured?
- e. Do you have policies or a back- to - training plan that introduce training and league activity when returning from break/offseason?

### **10. Policies on language and pronouns?**

- a. Have you reviewed your skater and official name policy, including logos, and your league materials (team names, cheers, chants, mascots, skating maneuvers or skating skills, etc.) to address misappropriations of culture in roller derby?
- b. What language are you training in? Do you offer support for non-native speakers? Do you offer support for participants who are hard of hearing?
- c. Have you degendered your training documents and training language? Are you actively trying to minimize ableist language?
- d. Do you have a policy on pronoun usage?
  - Don’t assume. Share, ask for, and respect individuals’ pronouns.
  - Include pronouns on rosters provided to announcers, officials, opponents.
  - Consider encouraging pronouns on uniforms - including cis-people - in order to normalize the practice (sticker, pin, button, etc).
- e. Do you respect names and name changes and reflect them in your policies (for example in a policy against using deadnames)?
  - Do you protect individuals who may not have yet been able to legally change their name within your league records? (e.g., keep required legal information private and confidential, request “name”/“non-derby name” on documents instead of “legal name” wherever possible, etc.)
- f. Does your communication reflect respect for each other? Do you encourage positive language communication and use positive framing of goals and abilities?

