

PARTICIPATION IN FEMALE-ONLY SCHOOL ATHLETICS

Background

The *Government of Alberta's Fairness and Safety in Sport Act* and *Fairness and Safety in Sport Regulation* require school authorities to establish clear procedures regarding eligibility to participate in female-only school athletic leagues, classes, or divisions by student athletes who are aged 12 years and older.

The Peace River School Division (PRSD) is committed to ensuring fairness, safety, and compliance with legislation when determining athlete eligibility.

Procedures

1. Athlete Eligibility
 - 1.1. To participate in a female-only league, class or division of a relevant sport, an athlete who is 12 years old or older must be of the female sex at birth, as indicated on the athlete's birth registration document.
2. Confirmation of Eligibility
 - 2.1. Before participating in a female-only sport league, class or division, the parent or guardian of an athlete who is 12 or older (or the athlete, if at least 18 years old or if an independent student), must confirm in writing that they understand and meet the eligibility criterion set out in Section 1 of this procedure. Written confirmation will be documented through the PRSD Parent/Guardian Acknowledgement of Athlete Eligibility Form 261-01.
 - 2.2. Failure to provide written confirmation of an athlete's eligibility will render the athlete ineligible to participate.
3. Confidential Challenge to Athlete Eligibility
 - 3.1. A confidential written challenge may be submitted if there are reasonable grounds to believe that an athlete is ineligible under Section 1 of this procedure.
 - 3.2. To initiate a confidential challenge of eligibility, applicants must be:
 - 3.2.1. A parent or guardian of an athlete who is 12 to 17 years old and who is in the same sport category;
 - 3.2.2. An athlete who is at least 18 years old (or an independent student), and who is in the same sport category;

- 3.2.3. Coaches and team managers in the same sport category; or
 - 3.2.4. Other individuals who have been deemed by the Superintendent or designate to have a meaningful interest in fairness and safety.
- 3.3. A confidential challenge must be made in writing and sent to the Peace River School Division, care of the Superintendent or designate.
- 3.4. A confidential written challenge to an athlete's eligibility must include:
 - 3.4.1. The name of the applicant;
 - 3.4.2. The name of the athlete, their team, and sport;
 - 3.4.3. Information that supports the grounds for the challenge.
- 4. Verification of Athlete Eligibility
 - 4.1. Upon receipt of a confidential written challenge to an athlete's eligibility, the PRSD will confirm receipt and notify the Minister of Tourism and Sport, without personal identifying information, within three (3) business days.
 - 4.2. The PRSD may dismiss the challenge if, in the opinion of the Division, reasonable grounds do not exist for the challenge. Reasonable grounds include, but are not limited to:
 - 4.2.1. Having previously resolved a challenge for the same athlete;
 - 4.2.2. Not enough information being provided to proceed as a valid challenge;
 - 4.2.3. The challenge is determined to have been made in bad faith.
 - 4.3. Upon dismissal of the challenge, the applicant will be notified by the PRSD. The Division will also notify the Minister of Tourism and Sport of the dismissal, without personal identifying information, within 30 business days of the challenge being made.
 - 4.4. If the PRSD does not dismiss the challenge:
 - 4.4.1. Notification that the challenge is moving forward will be sent to the applicant and the parent or guardian of the athlete (or directly to the Athlete, if at least 18 years old or if an independent student) whose eligibility is the subject of the challenge;
 - 4.4.2. A copy of the birth registration document belonging to the athlete whose eligibility is the subject of the challenge must be provided to the Division;
 - 4.4.3. The athlete whose eligibility is the subject of the challenge will be permitted to compete throughout the verification process.
 - 4.5. Failure to provide the birth registration document as defined in the Vital Statistics Act or similar document issued outside of Alberta will render the athlete ineligible to participate in a relevant sport.

5. Resolution

- 5.1. Once the required documentation is received, the Division will verify the athlete's eligibility under Section 1 of this procedure.
- 5.2. If the challenge is upheld and the athlete is determined to be ineligible, the PRSD will notify the applicant and the parent or guardian (or the athlete, if at least 18 years old or if an independent student). The athlete will be permanently ineligible for participation in a female-only league, class or division of a relevant sport while attending a PRSD school.
- 5.3. If the challenge is dismissed and the athlete is determined to be eligible, the Division will notify the applicant the parent or guardian (or the athlete, if at least 18 years old or if an independent student). The athlete will be permanently eligible for participation in a female-only league, class or division of a relevant sport while attending a PRSD school.
- 5.4. Once a determination on the challenge has been made, the Division will notify the Minister of Tourism and Sport of the decision, without personal identifying information, within 30 business days of the challenge being made.

6. Appeals

- 6.1. Applicants may appeal to the PRSD's Board of Trustees regarding the dismissal of a challenge.

7. Protection of Personal Information

- 7.1. All eligibility information will be treated as sensitive personal information and will be processed as such in accordance with applicable data protection and privacy laws. Such information and data will not be used for any purpose other than to determine athlete eligibility

Adopted/Reviewed/Revised: SEP 2025

Reference: Government of Alberta Bill 29 - Fairness and Safety in Sport Act
Fairness and Safety in Sport Regulation