

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR ATHLETES

Effective 1 April 2017



FITNESS
MOVEMENT
LEAGUE

Introduction

The core mission of **Fitness Movement League** is to encourage participation and the pursuit of excellence in the sport of bodybuilding and fitness modeling. Athlete participation in FM League's championships is a privilege. FM League may withdraw this privilege if it determines that an athlete's conduct is inconsistent with FM League's mission or the best interests of the sport and those who participate in it.

This Code represents FM League's policy response to problems seen in our community. As our community evolves and new important issues are identified, this Code will be updated to reflect those changes. As such, this Code is not a statement of core principles but an evolving document that lays out organisational rules that address specific issues and that FM League can reasonably enforce with limited resources.

This Code's core purpose is to create a better community for the sport in Singapore. The reach of this Code and reasonable enforcement diminishes quickly as we move away from Singapore. Areas like Johor in Malaysia that are proximate to Singapore are within reach, but practices further away that have no impact on the Singapore community are not within the scope of this Code. As such, this Code applies primarily to Singaporeans, those who live or are frequently in Singapore, those with substantial ties to Singapore, and those within the immediate vicinity.

Code and Addendum

This Code of Conduct includes an Addendum that forms part of the Code. Please make sure you read the entire Code and the Addendum to fully understand the Code of Conduct. **Rule 1** relates to general conduct. **Rule 2** lists specific conditions under which athletes cannot compete. **Rule 3 and Rule 4** relate to an athlete's **public conduct** and the impact it has on the community, and do not relate to an athlete's private conduct which, as long as it remains private and not publicly advocated by the athlete, is the athlete's individual choice. The two-page addendum is an integral part of the Code of Conduct, providing guidance on some of the rules and listing groups explicitly flagged by FM League.

Admission to Championships

For all FM League championships, athletes must submit an application along with a non-refundable application fee. All applications will be evaluated by a Review Committee to determine if the athlete has violated the Code of Conduct for Athletes. The Review Committee will factor in the general conduct of the athlete and any positive contributions the athlete has made to the community. After weighing the various elements, the Review Committee will decide whether to reject an athlete's application.

Rejected Applications

The percentage of rejections is very low. If an athlete's application to enter a FM League championship is rejected, the athlete will receive a standardised letter informing him/her of the decision. The letter will be the only communication FM League will make on the matter, and the letter will not contain any feedback or reasons. Appeals and inquiries will not be entertained. FM League's officials are bound by confidentiality not to discuss the Review Committee's decisions.

Code of Conduct for Athletes

1. General Misconduct

- 1.1. Criminality. An athlete must not commit criminal acts or acts of moral turpitude.
- 1.2. Corruption. An athlete must not: (i) attempt to influence the result of any event, whether run by FM League or not, in an effort to change competitors' placings, whether for the benefit of the athlete or someone else; (ii) knowingly benefit from others' attempts to change competitors' placings; or (iii) enter or remain in an event in which the athlete has received assurances of a beneficial placing.
- 1.3. Deception. An athlete must not lie. In any submissions or statements made to FM League and its officials, the athlete must provide the complete truth without omissions. If an athlete requires Parental Consent, the athlete must inform his/her parents of his/her participation and get full and informed consent.
- 1.4. Disrespect. An athlete must not show disrespect to or disparage FM League, its officials, sponsors, or judges.
- 1.5. Rule Violation. An athlete must not break or undermine any of FM League's rules or policies.

2. Disqualifying Conditions

- 2.1. 30-Day Rule. An athlete must not enter any other physique-related competition, whether run by FM League or not, any time 30 days before to 30 days after an FM League championship that he/she competed in.
- 2.2. Over-Competing. An athlete must not compete so frequently as to harm his/her long-term athletic development.
- 2.3. Conflict of Interest. An athlete must not have any contractual obligations, interests, or relationships that conflict with the athlete's entering an FM League championship. An athlete must declare any potential conflicts.

3. Bad Role Model

- 3.1. Supporting Unethical Behaviour. An athlete must not promote or support organisations, groups, or teams whose members or leadership predominantly and publicly oppose FM League's Code of Conduct or general ethical rules.
- 3.2. Poor Sportsmanship. An athlete must not demonstrate poor sportsmanship in his/her treatment of other athletes, in his/her actions, and in his/her online and offline communications.
- 3.3. Pornography. An athlete must not be involved in the creation, distribution, or promotion of pornography.
- 3.4. Dangerous Training. An athlete must not promote training and dieting methods or "ego lifting" that may be dangerous for impressionable youths that have insufficient training guidance to follow.

4. Misrepresentation and Fraud

- 4.1. Trophy Chasing. An athlete must not enter any event held in Singapore run by another organiser where:
 - 4.1.1. The event name includes any of the following words or combinations of words: "Mr Singapore"; "National"; "Nationals"; "Physique War"; "Muscle War"; "Showdown"; or substantially similar variants
 - 4.1.2. The event crowns National Champions for Singapore or champions on a national level. This does not include events that are advertised as solely regional or international, including events that purport to crown regional or international champions.
 - 4.1.3. The event awards a title named "Mr Singapore".
- 4.2. Misrepresenting Titles. An athlete must not misrepresent the titles won in competitions, whether run by FM League or not. This includes omitting category, class or placing information in a way that suggests he/she won a more competitive title.
- 4.3. Photographic Fraud. An athlete must not use, display, or promote photography or support those who produce photography that is digitally altered to misrepresent an athlete's physique. Altering the skin, face or background elements is acceptable. An athlete must not:
 - 4.3.1. Be willingly photographed by any organisation, group, or individual that is associated with such photography;
 - 4.3.2. Have any posts or promote any posts that display such photography whether of themselves or other athletes on any online or offline location they control;
 - 4.3.3. Promote or be publicly associated with the brand, name, or likeness of any organisation, group, or individual that is associated with such photography.

Rules in red are explained in the Addendum.

Addendum: Explanation of Rules

Rule 2.1. 30-Day Rule.

This applies only to physique-related competitions like bodybuilding, physique, bikini, figure, sports model, pageants, etc., where the appearance of the physique is a major criterion. These competitions require rigorous dieting and body conditioning. Other sporting competitions like powerlifting, running, cycling, rowing, dancing, CrossFit, etc. are not covered by this rule. To calculate the 30 days, the day of the event is Day 0. The day before and after is Day 1. Then count each day both forward and backward until and including Day 30. This is the entire period covered by the 30-Day Rule. For athletes entering any local-level or national-level FM League event this rule applies to events worldwide. For athletes entering the *FM League Asia Championship* this rule applies to events held in Singapore but not those held outside Singapore.

Rule 3.1. Supporting Unethical Behaviour.

This includes accepting sponsorship to be part of groups that primarily or exclusively sponsor athletes that have violated the Code.

Rule 4.1. Trophy Chasing.

In addition to actual placings, championship titles are an important way for the community to recognise the achievements of athletes. However, there is a proliferation of copycat events that award titles substantially similar to much more established and competitive events run by FM League. This is a form of **counterfeiting** that devalues the achievements of better athletes and cheapens titles across the entire community. There have even been instances of individuals who do not even compete being “awarded” titles similar to FM League’s titles, which they then proceed to use to market themselves.

Rule 4.2. Misrepresenting Titles.

Some athletes list titles in a way that suggest they won an overall title rather than a class title. FM League has a standard format for its championship titles, which athletes should use whenever they list their title, especially on social media. The standard format is:

[Championship] [Year] – [Division] [Category] [Class] – [Placing]

Examples of acceptable variants of the format with shortened championship names:

- Muscle War 2019 – Men’s Bodybuilding Juniors Lightweight – 3rd
- Physique War 2019 – Men’s Physique Beach Seniors Class D – 1st
- Physique War 2019 – MPB Teens Overall Champion *(division abbreviation used)*
- Showdown! 2019 – MPB Juniors ‘H’ – 1st *(division abbreviation used; word “class” omitted)*
- Nationals 2019 – Men’s Bodybuilding Open Over 85kg – 2nd *(Nationals has specific class labels like Over 85kg or Below 172cm and not A/B/C or ‘Lightweight’)*
- Nationals 2019 – Men’s Physique Beach Open Below 172cm – 1st

There is an exception to the format. The **overall** winners of Open and Junior categories in divisions at Nationals are simply:

- Mr Singapore 2019 and Mr Singapore Junior 2019 *(but not Mister Singapore 2019)*
- 2019 National Champion, Women’s Figure
- 2019 National Junior Champion, Men’s Physique Beach

In addition:

- Do not use the word “winner”. It is vague. The 1st place winner is either “1st” or “Champion”.
- For other placings, do NOT use the words “Runner Up”. Use “2nd” and not “1st Runner Up”.
The use of “runner up” is confusing and is not correct for a championship format like FM League’s. It is meant for elimination formats like the FIFA World Cup or Wimbledon, where two finalists go head-to-head, or beauty pageants where the runner-up takes over publicity duties if the winner steps down. Our sport and format does not fall into any of these categories.

Rule 4.3. Photographic Fraud.

Photographic Fraud involves any photo that is altered to misrepresent an athlete’s physique, in a way that is material according to the aesthetic judging criteria of our sport. Alterations that would NOT be material are changes to skin tone, the face, the background, lighting, etc. Generally, ANY change to the physique is material and rises to misrepresentation. Athletes using such misrepresentation to increase their fan base and exposure with the aim of gaining financial benefits, fame, or other advantages are engaging in photographic fraud; the general public is usually unaware of or unable to identify such photographic fraud perpetrated by athletes.

This rule extends to any situation where an athlete willingly or knowingly allows him or herself to be photographed in competition wear by a Flagged Photographer, such as when a Flagged Photographer is the official photographer for an event the athlete enters. The rule does not extend to situations where an athlete is unwillingly or unknowingly photographed, such as when a Flagged Photographer is in the general audience taking photos and is unaffiliated with the event.

An exception to this rule is made for genuine commercial opportunities for athletes, though such opportunities are rare in Singapore. Athletes should contact FM League if they need clarification on their specific situation.

Addendum: Flagged Groups

Definitions

A **Flagged Photographer** is any organisation, team, group, studio, or individual that produces photography (for artistic purposes or otherwise) that **misrepresents the physique**, in a way that is material to the aesthetic judging criteria of our sport, **for at least a proportion of its photographic works**. As such, even unaltered photography from a Flagged Photographer cannot be used by athletes if they include the brand, name or likeness, or can be associated with that Flagged Photographer as this constitutes promotion. FM League makes no judgment on the intentions of any Flagged Photographer. However, their work product allows athletes to easily commit photographic fraud. As such, a blanket ban is imposed on all such photography. Individuals who wish to be photographed by or use photography from a Flagged Photographer are free to do so, as long as they understand that they are also making a choice not to be part of FM League.

A **Flagged Group** is any organisation, team, or group whose members or leadership **predominantly and publicly oppose the Code of Conduct** or general ethical rules. A determination is made based on a review of all public statements and social media postings by the group's members. In some cases where a Flagged Group is a group of sales reps for a company, FM League has no issue with the company itself, unless the company has actively encouraged its sales reps to publicly oppose the Code or general ethical rules, which is unlikely. (These are often very small companies that do not have time to be concerned about the personal conduct of their sale reps within the athlete community, only the sales they can help drive for the business.) It is entirely reasonable for individuals to want to be part of a group especially if there are financial benefits, as long as they understand that they are also making a choice not to be part of FM League.

List

Below is a list of groups flagged under the Code. There is normally a grace period of two to six months between when a group is announced and the Effective Date. This gives athletes sufficient notice to decide whether to continue to be part of a group.

Name	Type	Primary Operating Countries or Areas	Effective Date Added to List	Effective Date Removed from List
Apasionese (Photography Studio)	Flagged Photographer	Singapore	1 June 2016	n/a
Sales Reps of GS Fitness & Supplement	Flagged Group	Malaysia	1 January 2017	n/a
Sales Reps of Muscletics (Apparel Seller)	Flagged Group	Singapore	1 October 2017 †	n/a
Sales Reps of Couz-Nutri (Supplement Seller)	Flagged Group	Singapore	1 October 2017 †	n/a

† To take effect as of this date in the future.

Things to keep in mind

Keep in mind that this list is NOT exhaustive. Some groups may be too small or new to be identified. Athletes should notify FM League if they see any groups they believe should be added to this list and FM League will investigate accordingly.

FM League does not notify companies when it flags a group linked to them. Listing the related group (e.g. their sales reps) is in no way intended to change the operating practices of the company or have any impact on them in the marketplace. Indeed, individuals that violate the Code in order to raise their marketability (e.g. by posting photoshopped photos that get them more followers) may be more valuable in helping a company drive sales. FM League's determination is of no commercial consequence, having relevance only for ethical behaviour that affects the athlete community it serves.

This list is published purely for **transparency** for the community, so that athletes can know which groups FM League considers flagged under the Code. Along with the examples and explanations in the Addendum, these disclosures make the Code as clear and objective as possible. What athletes choose to do with this information is their prerogative.