

UIAA AntiDoping Commission

Factsheet on World AntiDoping Code

What is the World Anti-Doping Code?

The World Anti-Doping Code (Code) is the first document to harmonise regulations regarding Anti Doping in sport across all sports and all countries of the world. The Code provides a framework for Anti-Doping policies, rules, and regulations for sport organisations and public authorities.

As part of an extensive and unprecedented consultation process, WADA solicited comments from its stakeholders throughout the Code's development incorporating their suggestions into the document. More than 1000 delegates of sports organisations and governments gave their backing to the Code at the World Conference on Doping in Sport in Copenhagen, Denmark, in March 2003. It entered in force on January 1, 2004. A new version of the code came into force on January 1, 2009.

What new rules or procedures has the Code put in place?

The Code clarifies the responsibilities of stakeholders and brings harmonisation where rules or policies varied between different sports and countries. For example, the organisations that sign the Code have to accept the WADA List of Prohibited Substances and Methods. The signatories must also put in place a process that allows athletes with documented medical conditions to request a therapeutic use exemption (TUE), which if granted allows the use of banned substances.

The Code includes articles that are mandatory relating, for example, to sanctions and hearings. Other articles, such as those dealing with consequences to teams, leave some latitude to signatories. The Code works in conjunction with the List of



Prohibited Substances and three other International Standards aimed at bringing harmonisation among Anti-Doping organisations: testing, laboratories, and TUEs. These Standards have also been the subject of lengthy consultation among WADA's stakeholders and are mandatory for all signatories of the Code. In addition, WADA has developed and will continue to develop models of best practice/guidelines. These models and guidelines provide state-of-the-art solutions to stakeholders in different areas of Anti Doping but are not mandatory.

How do sports organisations implement the Code?

Signatories must make sure that their own rules and policies are in compliance with the mandatory articles and other principles of the Code. Most International Federations of Olympic sports, the International Olympic Committee, the International Paralympic Committee, all National Olympic Committees, all National Paralympic Committees, and many other sports organisations implemented the Code prior to the 2004 Olympic Games in Athens.

How do governments implement the Code?

Many governments cannot be legally bound by a non-governmental document such as the Code. Governments have accordingly drafted, pursuant to the Code, an International Convention under the auspices of UNESCO, the United Nations body responsible for education, science, and culture, to allow formal acceptance of WADA and the Code. The UNESCO-led International Convention against Doping in Sport was unanimously adopted by the 33rd UNESCO General Conference in Paris in October 2005. UNESCO Member States are now working to ratify it according to their respective constitutional jurisdictions.

Another important part of the government process occurring separately from the UNESCO Convention is the Copenhagen Declaration, the political document that allows states to signal their intention to formally recognise and implement the Code. It is expected that those states that sign the Copenhagen Declaration will also sign the UNESCO Convention.



What happens if a sports organization or a government does not accept the Code?

WADA reports cases of non-acceptance to its stakeholders, including the International Olympic Committee (IOC), who have jurisdiction to impose sanctions. The Olympic charter has been amended to state that adoption of the Code by the Olympic movement is mandatory. Only sports that adopt and implement the Code can be included and remain in the program of the Olympic Games. WADA will also report non-compliance of governments to the IOC prior to the 2006 Winter Olympic Games. If a country does not ratify the International Convention against doping in sport, it may be subject to sanctions from the IOC and from other sports organisations, including losing the right to host Olympic Games.

What is the situation of professional leagues and sports organisations outside the Olympic movement in relation to the Code?

Members of these leagues must comply with the Code when they take part in events or tournaments under the jurisdiction of organisations that have implemented it, for example the National Basketball Association or National Hockey League players playing at the Olympic Games or at World Championship. WADA has contacted many of these leagues and, with the support of governments and other sports organisations, hopes that all of them will accept and implement the Code in order to have one single standard for all athletes in all sports and in all countries.

What can WADA do to apply the Code?

WADA closely monitors doping cases and has the right to appeal to the Court of Arbitration for Sport for cases under the jurisdiction of organisations who have implemented the Code. WADA also has powers of intervention in ensuring that Therapeutic Use Exemptions (TUEs) are consistently granted. WADA's role in the TUE process is two-pronged: the Agency reserves the right to monitor and review any TUE granted by a federation or Anti-Doping agency; and athletes who requested a TUE and were denied can ask WADA to review that decision. If WADA determines that a denial of the TUE did not comply with the International



Standard, the Agency can reverse the decision.

What further responsibilities does the Code give to WADA?

In addition to stressing its role of coordination in the different areas of the fight against doping in sport and to giving the Agency the responsibility to monitor compliance, the Code gives WADA several new responsibilities. These include the accreditation of the laboratories in charge of the analysis of samples; the preparation and review of the annual List of Prohibited Substances and Methods; and the implementation of ADAMS (Anti-Doping Administration & Management System), a web-based database management system that coordinates Anti-Doping activities and helps stakeholders meet their responsibilities under the Code. Furthermore, WADA continues its important work in terms of education, awareness, communications, Independent Observers programs, and coordinating and funding research.

Will there be changes in the Code in the next few years?

The Code is a living document and changes may occur in the future. Article 23.6 of the Code states that: "WADA shall initiate proposed amendments to the Code and shall ensure a consultative process to both receive and respond to recommendations and to facilitate review and feedback from athletes, signatories and governments on recommended amendments.

Amendments to the Code shall, after appropriate consultation, be approved by a two-thirds majority of the WADA Foundation Board including a majority of both the public sector and Olympic Movement members casting vote. Amendments shall, unless provided otherwise, go into effect three months after such approval. Signatories shall implement any applicable amendment to the Code within one year of approval by the WADA Foundation Board."

