

## Emotional Misconduct Information Sheet

Emotional Misconduct includes:

- **Verbal acts:** repeated and excessive verbal attacks for no productive reason, such as name-calling, body-shaming, or ridiculing someone for reasons not related to performance
- **Physical acts:** being repeatedly or severely physically aggressive, such as throwing a tennis racquet at someone or punching walls near them
- **Acts that deny attention or support:** such as ignoring or isolating someone for long time periods, or routinely excluding them from activities
- **Stalking:** intentional and repeated behaviors (in person or using technology) that would reasonably make someone feel scared (for themselves or others) or very upset, such as following, monitoring, observing, threatening, or excessively messaging them
- **Criminal conduct:** any behavior described as emotional abuse or misconduct under federal or state law, such as child abuse or child neglect

Someone's conduct may be considered Emotional Misconduct even if they did not cause (or mean to cause) harm.

Emotional Misconduct does not include techniques and behaviors that are professionally accepted in tennis. Emotional Misconduct does not serve any productive training or motivational purposes. For example, a tennis provider may ask their tennis students to settle down and listen to instructions when explaining a tennis drill – this would not be considered Emotional Misconduct.

### What are examples of Emotional Misconduct?

- A coach punches a hole in the wall in front of their player after a tough loss
- An athlete, after a breakup, sends multiple threatening texts to their ex-partner and repeatedly shows up to their practices after being asked to stop
- A JTT captain arbitrarily isolates one JTT player from the rest of the team during multiple practices

### Motivation and Support: A healthier way to respond

- Behaviors involving Emotional Misconduct are often used to control, intimidate, demean, or harm another person. This can damage their self-esteem
- Behaviors based on motivation and support can increase athlete self-esteem, build trust and camaraderie, and encourage them to reach their fullest potential
- Motivation and support help athletes improve their performance and enjoy tennis without fear of harm. Emotional Misconduct can make athletes want to leave the sport of tennis

### Scenarios

*C.J. is a tennis player who has recently won a national championship. An article and photo about C.J.'s tennis success is posted on a tennis forum.*

- **Emotional Misconduct:** A tournament director at a facility repeatedly mocks C.J.'s expression in the photo in front of other players that a tournament he runs.
- **Motivation and Support:** The tournament director congratulates C.J. and sends the article to the director of the tennis facility since C.J. often practices at the facility.

*Olivia is a wheelchair tennis player that practices with other wheelchair tennis players. When she tears a ligament in her shoulder, her doctor says she cannot compete in a match for at least eight weeks.*

- **Emotional Misconduct:** Her coach then excludes her from all team activities, including practices and the end-of-season party.
- **Motivation and Support:** Her coach encourages her to travel with the team to their matches and gives her a shout-out at the end-of-season party for staying engaged.