



last update: January 2012

## **Westdale Fencing Club Athlete Travel Policy**

Competitions are a vital part of athlete development. Before entering an out-of-town competition, an athlete should have entered most of the local competitions appropriate for their skill level and age, and should be training at an appropriate level. It is advisable that you discuss your competition schedule with your (or your child's) coach at the beginning of each season. Since athletes develop at different rates, you should be prepared to make changes during the year. If you would like to add a tournament to your schedule please discuss this with the coach before making arrangements. We discourage athletes who have not properly trained from participating in out-of-town competitions. We will not prevent athletes from entering any competition that they choose. However, any athlete who enters an event or events against the wishes of a coach must do so in the anticipation of not getting the support of coaching staff, or access to club equipment, while at the event. Such athletes will also need to make their own travel arrangements.

For those athletes travelling as part of a Westdale Fencing Club group, the following rules apply:

1. Travel costs (transportation, accommodation and meals) for coaches and any additional staff required (i.e. chaperones/drivers) are heavily subsidized by the club through program fees. In certain situations, travelling athletes may be asked to make an additional contribution. Such situations will be identified ahead of time.
2. Travel costs are typically divided evenly amongst all athletes. Expenses paid by the club are payable within a week of receiving an invoice from the travel co-ordinator. Interest (\$12 per week) will be charged on overdue accounts, except by prior arrangement.
3. Athletes are representing Westdale Fencing Club at all times when training, competing and travelling. We expect them to behave appropriately, and treat not only their teammates and coaches with respect, but also others that they encounter during travel, such as flight attendants, hotel and restaurant staff, fellow competitors and their coaches, referees, and competition officials. Any behaviour that negatively affects the reputation of Westdale Fencing Club (i.e. under age drinking, horseplay at the venue or hotel, disrespect to officials, competitors, or coaches, theft) may result in the athlete being withdrawn from any events and sent home as soon as possible. The parent will be billed for any of these additional expenses due to the behaviour of their child. Any athlete who suffers this punishment will be on probation for a 12 month period following the incident.
4. Parents are welcome to travel with the team. However, please be aware that athletes are generally expected to stay with their teams the night before they fence. Athletes are also expected to participate in team dinners, practices and such. Please confirm all travel arrangements with the Head Coach prior to departure.
5. Since competitions often occur during the school year, we strongly encourage our athletes to bring homework to do while travelling or at the hotel / venue.

6. Do not make jokes about guns, bombs, drugs, weapons, or other such items when travelling as you could face problems with security personnel. There is a very real chance of detainment and/or prosecution for what might appear to be a "harmless" comment.
7. For international trips, please pack sensibly, and do not carry inappropriate items in carry-on baggage. For domestic trips, space is often tight, so please pack light. Unless you are refereeing or coaching, it should not be necessary to bring more than 2 bags (including your fencing bag) on most trips.
8. Athletes under 15 yrs of age are expected to travel with their parents. All athletes under the age of 19 must travel with chaperones. These may be other parents, or older fencers, as deemed appropriate by the Head Coach in consultation with the parents of all athletes travelling. It is the responsibility of parents of athletes who wish to travel to organise appropriate chaperones for their charges.
9. Unless travelling with both parents, for international trips, all athletes under the age of 19 require a letter signed by both parents indicating that they give consent for the athlete to travel across the border, stating the purpose of the trip. Such a letter is often requested by US and European border security.
10. Athletes are responsible for bringing their own travel documents, and for ensuring that they apply for any necessary visas in plenty of time. Athletes are also responsible for their own tournament registrations. Information regarding deadlines can generally be found on the WFC, OFA, CFF or USFA websites. If in doubt, ask your coach!
11. Westdale Fencing Club keeps a central database of travel insurance, health insurance and emergency contact information for all of our competitive fencers. Please make sure that we have accurate information on file prior to departure, just in case we should ever need it. You may want to write a letter authorising Westdale Fencing Club to make emergency medical decisions on you or your child's behalf in case you or your next of kin are not readily contactable in cases of emergency. Such a letter is not a requirement for travelling with us, but if you choose to write such a letter, please make sure that the coaching staff have a copy before departure.
12. When travelling as part of a Westdale Fencing Club group, all athletes are expected to ask permission to leave the hotel or venue from a coach before doing so. Whether travelling as part of a group, or independently, when not actually fencing, all members of WFC are expected to support their team mates and the coaching staff.
13. All athletes are expected to follow curfews set by the coaches and chaperones. These will vary depending on which events are being fenced the next day, and what the start times are. Athletes who are not in their rooms by curfew may be withdrawn from any events and sent immediately home at their own expense.

14. When travelling, we often eat as a large group. Many restaurants charge an automatic gratuity for large groups as part of the meal. Even if this charge is not added onto the bill, we will generally tip 15% because of the extra work involved in serving such a large group. Make sure that your child has enough money to cover this added expense. We do try to make arrangements to eat as inexpensively as possible, but it is often difficult to control expenses when travelling.
15. Westdale Fencing Club has a zero tolerance policy with regards to the use of any drugs that are not prescribed by a physician and underage consumption of alcoholic beverages (according to both the province in which the athletes reside and the location of the competition). Chaperones and drivers who are of legal drinking age (according to the province/state in which the activity takes place) are also expected to refrain from consuming alcohol when travelling as part of a Westdale Fencing Club group. Excessive drinking by any athlete or staff member is strictly prohibited. Anyone found to be in violation of this policy will be immediately sent home at their (or their parents') expense and will be on probation for a 12 month period following the incident.
16. Any athlete on probation whose behaviour is deemed inappropriate by the coaching staff will be banned from subsequent trips for a 12 month period, and may be asked to leave the club.

**I agree to abide by the above-mentioned rules, and understand that failure to do so may result in my being placed on probation, or being asked to leave the club.**

**I agree to indemnify Westdale Fencing Club in respect of any costs and expenses occurred by the club or its officials for or on behalf of the athlete, or as a result of anything done by the athlete.**

**I accept all normal risks of participation in fencing events and of travelling for that purpose, and will not hold Westdale Fencing Club, or its representatives liable for any loss, damage, injury or expense suffered.**

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent or Guardian:** \_\_\_\_\_