

## **Anti-Doping Awareness in Sports**

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**Lecture -19**

### **The Doping Control Staff**

Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. Welcome back to Week Four of this course on Anti-Doping Awareness for Sports. Today, we'll be dealing with Lecture Four of Week Four, which is titled The Doping Control Staff. I'll be covering this lecture as per the following outline: definitions, roles and responsibilities, criteria for selection of each member of the staff, code of conduct, athlete notification and sample collection procedure, behavioral best practices, and we will conclude with a take-home message.

Let's begin by defining who is a DCO. A DCO, or Doping Control Officer, is an official who has been trained and authorized by the anti-doping organization with delegated responsibility for the on-site management of a sample collection session.

Who is a chaperone? A chaperone is an official who is trained and authorized by the ADO to carry out specific duties, including one or more of the following: notification of the athlete selected for sample collection, accompanying and observing the athlete until arrival at the doping control station, and/or witnessing and verifying the provision of the sample, where the training qualifies him or her to do so.

Roles and responsibilities of the DCO: Generally, the DCO is the official responsible for the entire on-site management of a sample collection session. The DCO plays a critical role in protecting the rights of athletes to compete in dope-free sport. The DCO is responsible for all steps in the sample collection session. During the results management process, the DCO's management of the sample collection session may be reviewed. Therefore, it is essential that procedures are completed correctly to avoid a result being overturned due to procedural error.

DCOs must ensure that any incidents that could compromise the sample collection session are documented and the ADO is informed immediately. If a DCO is asked to provide testimony in a hearing, he or she must ask: Can I recall the particular test? Can I

recall the specific mission? Can I defend the procedures conducted and the decisions made during that testing mission? An important message for DCOs is: document what you do, and do what you document.

Now let's discuss the criteria for DCO selection. The individual must have attained the legal age of majority in their country and must not be a minor. The DCO must participate in individual or small group training sessions for initial certification. They should demonstrate the ability to communicate effectively in both the national language and in English. They must be able to follow instructions, work under demanding conditions, and solve problems quickly and effectively. DCOs should have knowledge of national and international sporting communities and must act in a respectful and professional manner. Their demeanor should always be courteous, respectful, and professional. DCOs should be capable of maintaining confidentiality and should demonstrate sensitivity to athletes' emotions and special needs. They must be able to meet the irregular and demanding schedules of doping control duties, which may occur at any hour. Preferably, they should possess a valid driver's license and a vehicle. They must inform the ADO of any potential conflicts of interest. They should also be capable of training other sample collection personnel and educating athletes on doping control procedures.

Code of conduct: DCOs must demonstrate professional and courteous behavior while representing the ADO at sample collection sessions. They must understand that their presence at a session is a position of trust, and this authority must not be abused. If offered a gift, they must report it to the ADO. DCOs must not speak to the media at any time on behalf of the ADO or about any matter concerning the doping control process. They must not ask athletes for autographs or photos, nor request food or beverages at events. DCOs must not enter unauthorized areas of the venue—although typically, they are provided with an "infinity pass" that grants full access. They must not gamble on any sporting event where they are present, request or accept event memorabilia, or accept gifts from athletes or sports officials. They must not keep personal records of test data or disclose confidential information to third parties. Over-familiarity with athletes is prohibited—such as attending their social events. DCOs must not drink alcohol at events, must wear neutral, unbranded clothing while on duty, and must never give ADO equipment or documents to third parties without approval. They are also responsible for reporting any irregularities or potential conflicts of interest.

DCO accreditation is handled by the anti-doping organization, which is responsible for both accreditation and re-accreditation. Accredited DCOs will be issued authorization documents, including an accreditation card and a doping control pass. DCOs are evaluated continuously to maintain quality standards. Accreditation is valid for a specific term and may be revoked at any time by the ADO.

Now coming to the recruitment criteria for chaperones. Chaperones must not be minors. They must meet the gender requirements of the sample collection session and be able to communicate effectively in the national language or English. They must be physically fit, able to follow instructions, work under pressure, and solve problems effectively. Their behavior should be respectful and professional at all times. Like DCOs, chaperones must maintain confidentiality and demonstrate sensitivity to athlete emotions and needs. They should be able to fulfill the demanding schedules of doping control duties. Chaperones must not be involved in sport administration or be related to any athlete undergoing doping control. They are required to complete specific training and submit a Chaperone Responsibility Form.

Chaperones, too, must adhere to a strict code of conduct. They must behave professionally and courteously during sessions, recognizing their position of trust. If offered a gift, it must be reported to the ADO. They must not engage with the media, ask for autographs, or request food or beverages. They must not enter unauthorized areas or gamble on sports events. They may not accept memorabilia, gifts, or keep test data. Confidentiality must be maintained at all times. They must not develop personal relationships with athletes or attend their private events. Alcohol consumption while on duty or in ADO attire is strictly prohibited. Giving away ADO materials without permission is not allowed. They must also report conflicts of interest and any irregularities during testing.

Regarding athlete notification: The chaperone will be provided with a doping control form. At the appropriate time, the chaperone will approach the athlete and notify them of their selection for doping control. In the case of a minor or disabled athlete, the chaperone must notify a responsible third party such as a coach or team doctor. The athlete must be informed that they are required to arrive at the doping control station within the stipulated time, and they are allowed to bring a representative or interpreter. They must also be reminded to bring photo identification, and made aware of the consequences of non-compliance.

The athlete must sign the doping control form acknowledging their selection and their rights and responsibilities. Any unusual behavior must be immediately reported to the DCO. The chaperone will stay with the athlete until either the testing process is complete or responsibility is handed over to another chaperone or DCO. The chaperone must maintain visual contact with the athlete at all times and ensure the athlete does not urinate before sample collection.

Delays in reporting to the doping control station may be permitted for valid reasons, such as participating in a victory ceremony, media duties, further competition, cooling down, receiving medical treatment, finding a representative, obtaining photo ID, or other

exceptional circumstances. However, if continuous chaperoning cannot be guaranteed, the request for delay can be rejected.

Chaperones must not handle or select the athlete's beverages. They must report any suspicious behavior to the DCO. If sample collection is to be witnessed, the chaperone must be of the same gender as the athlete. Only the designated chaperone and the athlete are allowed in the restroom. For minors or disabled athletes, the DCO will brief the chaperone about specific procedures.

During sample provision, the athlete must pull up their shirt to mid-torso, roll up their sleeves to the elbows, and pull down trousers to mid-thigh. The chaperone must directly observe the passing of the urine into the collection vessel. The athlete must be asked to wash their hands prior to sample provision. The chaperone will print and sign their name on the doping control form to confirm that direct, unobstructed observation occurred.

Behavioral best practices for doping control staff include being courteous and professional at all times. Staff must be sensitive to the athlete's condition, clearly explain the process, maintain an appropriate appearance, and always be punctual. Procedures must be followed as per the DCO manual. Tobacco use in or around the testing area, near athletes, or while in ADO attire is strictly prohibited. Venues are smoke-free and this must be respected. Chaperones must not consume alcohol before or during their duties. No staff member should attend an ADO-related event under the influence of alcohol or other substances. Wearing ADO clothing while consuming alcohol is also prohibited.

Doping control staff are strictly prohibited from placing bets on any event in which they are involved in testing activities.

Take-home message: Doping control has serious legal implications. Doping control staff are recruited and trained according to strict criteria. Sample collection requires specialized training and proper documentation. Staff must strictly adhere to all procedures, rules, and regulations and promptly report any deviations. Always follow best practice behavior, every time.

These are my references, ladies and gentlemen. I seem to have finished. Thank you very much for listening, and thank you for continuing with the course. I look forward to seeing you during the next lecture. Thank you, and Jai Hind.