



DEVELOPING YOUR CLUB'S COMMITMENT STATEMENT ON DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION AND ACCESSIBILITY

[A step-by-step guide for clubs and volleyball organizations](#)

A commitment statement on diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility (DEIA) is a public promise. It tells your members and community what your club stands for, what you will do to remove barriers to taking part, and how people can raise a concern.

Volleyball BC has its own [Commitment Statement on DEIA](#). In it, we commit to encourage clubs and other volleyball organizations to adopt our statement or to develop their own, because creating an inclusive and accessible environment is a responsibility of all partners. This guide shows you how, one step at a time.

A note on "Board"

We recognize that not every club has a Board. Some are for-profit businesses, or are run by an owner or a small leadership team. If that is your club, please read "organization leadership" wherever this guide says "Board".

WHAT DEIA MEANS

These are the definitions used in Volleyball BC's Commitment Statement. Using the same words helps clubs and Volleyball BC speak the same language.

Diversity	Having people and communities with a variety of personal characteristics, especially equity-deserving groups, as part of a group or organization.
Equity	Giving people and communities access and support based on their needs.
Inclusion	Accepting people and communities with different characteristics into a group or organization.
Accessibility	Helping as many people as possible to take part in a meaningful way in programs, events, volunteering or work. In Volleyball BC's statement, accessibility focuses on people within the disability community.
Equity-deserving groups	Groups that have historically been excluded, discriminated against, or given limited or no access to taking part. This can include, but is not limited to, women, low-income families, Indigenous peoples, racialized persons, seniors, people with disabilities, newcomers to Canada, and members of the 2SLGBTQIA+ community.

WHY HAVE A COMMITMENT STATEMENT?

A commitment statement is more than words on a website. Done well, it:

Welcomes people in	It shows current and future members that your club is open, accessible and safe for everyone, whatever their situation.
Reaches people who have been left out	It makes your club more attractive to people who have faced discrimination or barriers, in sport or elsewhere in their lives.
Keeps everyone accountable	It reminds members, coaches, volunteers and leaders what your club has promised, and holds the club to it.
Attracts partners and funding	Community organizations and sponsors with similar values are more likely to work with you, and it may make your club more attractive to funders and grant programs.
Connects you to the wider sport system	It lines your club up with Volleyball BC and with provincial and national sport policies on inclusion.
Supports wellbeing	Feeling included and supported goes hand in hand with good mental health for athletes, coaches and volunteers.

Adapted in part from [Inclusive Sport Design](#).

Words need action

People can tell the difference between a statement that is lived and one that sits on a shelf. Research by [Catalyst](#) (2024) found that people are far more likely to see these commitments as genuine when an organization follows through, holds itself accountable and shares its progress openly. The steps in this guide are built around that.

What you will need

Volleyball BC's DEI Club Audit and Action Tool	Finds your club's strengths and gaps. Your "Needs work" areas become your commitments.
Commitment Statement Template for Clubs	The editable Word template that goes with this guide.
Recommended Training for a More Welcoming Club	Training to help your Board, coaches and volunteers put your commitments into practice.

*The audit tool and training list are part of Volleyball BC's [Mental Health Toolkit](#).

CHOOSE YOUR OPTION

There is more than one way to make this commitment. Choose the option that fits your club's size and the volunteer time you have.

	Option A: Adopt Volleyball BC's statement	Option B: Short club statement	Option C: Full club statement
Best for	Clubs that want to act quickly, or have little volunteer time	Most small and medium clubs	Larger clubs with staff, several programs or their own facilities
You produce	A Board decision to adopt our statement, plus a short action list	A one-page club statement	A full statement, adapted from Volleyball BC's version
Typical time	1 to 2 months	1 to 2 months	3 to 6 months

Your route through the six steps

Every option uses the same six steps. Options A and B take a lighter route through Steps 2 to 4.

Step	Option A	Option B	Option C
1. Get started	Board agrees and names a lead	Board agrees and names a lead	Board agrees, names a lead and forms a small working group
2. Check where you are	Complete the audit	Complete the audit	Complete the audit, plus review club documents and membership
3. Listen	Optional	Quick check-in with members	Wider conversations, including community partners
4. Write	Action list only	Fill in the one-page template	Agree the basics, then fill in the full template
5. Approve and share	Board passes the sample motion	Board approves	Board approves
6. Live it and review	Yes	Yes	Yes

Whichever option you choose, Steps 2 and 6 matter most. A statement backed by a few real actions is worth more than a long statement with none.

STEP

1

Get started

A commitment statement speaks for the whole club, so it needs your Board behind it from the start.

What to do

1. **Put DEIA on your next Board agenda.** Share this guide and Volleyball BC's Commitment Statement.
2. **Choose your option:** A, B or C.
3. **Name a lead** who will keep the work moving.
4. **Set a target date** for approval, such as a Board meeting or your annual general meeting (AGM).

Option C: also form a working group

Invite three to six people with a mix of roles (Board, coaches, parents, athletes, volunteers) and backgrounds, including people with lived experience of barriers in sport.

You are done when: your Board has agreed to go ahead, chosen an option and named a lead.

STEP

2

Check where you are

Find your strengths and gaps, so your commitments respond to what is really happening in your club.

What to do

1. **Complete Volleyball BC's DEI Club Audit and Action Tool.** It covers six areas:

1. Accessible and welcoming club	3. Affordability	5. Gender equity, cultural and abilities diversity
2. Transportation	4. Working with community groups	6. Harassment-free and safe environment

2. **Tick "Yes!" or "Needs work"** for each question. Be honest: the audit is for your club's use only.
3. **Choose two to four "Needs work" areas** to focus on. These become your commitments in Step 4.

Option C: also look deeper

- Compare your membership with your community's [Census Profile](#). Ask: who is not here yet?
- Review your bylaws, registration forms, fees, uniform policy and website for barriers and non-inclusive language.

You are done when: you have a short list of priority areas.

STEP**3****Listen**

The people who face barriers are best placed to tell you what they are. Asking also builds trust.

Options A and B: quick check-in

Ask three to five questions at a team or parent meeting, or in a short anonymous online survey.

For Option A, this step is optional, but it will help you choose your actions.

Option C: wider conversations

Also hear from coaches, officials, volunteers and people who have left the club.

Talk with local community organizations, such as newcomer services, Indigenous organizations, disability sport groups and 2SLGBTQIA+ groups.

Sample questions

- What makes you feel welcome at our club?
- Has anything made it harder for you, your family or friends to join or to stay?
- Who in our community are we missing? What might help them join?
- What is one thing our club should start, stop or keep doing?

Good practice

- **Make it easy:** keep it short, allow anonymous answers, and offer more than one language.
- **Protect privacy:** only collect what you need, and share results in summary form.
- **Close the loop:** tell people what you heard and what you will do about it.
- **Share the load:** ask for advice and recognize people's time. Don't expect people from equity-deserving groups to do the work for you.

You are done when: you know what your members think, and you have told them what you heard.

Write

Turn what you learned into clear promises. The template means you are not starting from a blank page.

What to do

1. **Open the Commitment Statement Template for Clubs** and choose your option (A, B or C).
2. **Fill in the yellow fields** and delete the guidance boxes.
3. **Write three to six commitments** from your priority areas, using the table on the next page. Give each one a lead, a date and a way to measure it.

Option C: agree the basics before you write

- **Scope:** who the statement applies to, and which programs and events it covers.
- **Definitions:** use Volleyball BC's, which are already in the template.
- **Rules you already follow:** check it fits with the [BC Human Rights Code](#), Volleyball BC's [Code of Conduct and Ethics](#) and [Discipline and Complaints Policy](#), and your own bylaws.

Writing tips

- **Say “we will”,** not “we strive to”.
- **Be specific.** “By September 2027, we will offer ten subsidized registrations each season” is stronger than “We will make volleyball affordable.”
- **Only promise what you can deliver.** Three things done well beat ten on paper.
- **Make it easy to read:** plain language, clear headings, at least 12-point font, and current, respectful terms such as “equity-deserving groups” and “2SLGBTQIA+”.
- **Consider reconciliation.** If you include a territorial acknowledgement, check the wording with the local Nation or Nations, and back it up with action. viaSport BC's [Truth, Reconciliation and Sport](#) page is a good place to start.

FROM AUDIT TO COMMITMENT

Choose the rows that match your priority areas, and change the wording to fit your club.

Audit area	Sample commitment	How you might measure it
1. Accessible and welcoming club	We will welcome every new member with a welcome package and a buddy, and share key information in plain language and in the languages spoken in our community.	Documents translated; new member feedback; first-year members who return
2. Transportation	We will plan training with transportation in mind, and help each team set up a safe carpool system that follows the Rule of Two.	Carpool system in place for each team
3. Affordability	We will reduce cost as a barrier through [subsidized spots / payment plans / a uniform exchange], and help families apply for KidSport and Jumpstart funding.	Number of subsidized registrations
4. Community groups	We will build partnerships with [local organizations] and run at least [one] free “give it a go” session each season.	Partnerships formed; people at open sessions
5. Gender equity, cultural and abilities diversity	We will work toward leaders, coaches and volunteers who reflect our community, actively recruit women and gender-diverse coaches, and offer a flexible uniform policy.	Women and gender-diverse coaches; leadership make-up (voluntary, in summary)
6. Safe environment	We will make sure every member knows how to raise a concern, respond promptly to every report of discrimination, and ask [our coaches] to complete [recommended training].	Coaches trained; members who know how to raise a concern

You are done when: you have a complete draft.

STEP

5

Approve and share

Make it official, then make sure people know about it.

What to do

1. **Test the draft** with a few members. Is it clear and easy to read? Would it make you feel welcome?
2. **Have your Board approve it**, record the decision in your minutes, and add the approval date and next review date. For Option A, use the sample motion in the template.
3. **Share it widely:**
 - on your website, linked from your registration page
 - in welcome packages and coach and volunteer onboarding
 - at start-of-season team meetings, in your newsletter and on social media
 - at your training venue, with a summary in the languages spoken in your community

Share it with us (optional)

You don't have to send your statement to Volleyball BC, and we don't require it. But we would love to see it! We want to recognize and celebrate clubs that are making volleyball more welcoming. Send your statement to ceo@volleyballbc.org.

You are done when: your statement is approved and published.

STEP

6

Live it and review

A statement only works if people see it in action, year after year.

What to do

1. **Turn each commitment into an action** using the Action column of the audit tool: what, who, how and when.
2. **Book training** for your Board, coaches and volunteers from Recommended Training for a More Welcoming Club. Taking a course together lets you talk it through afterwards.
3. **Respond promptly to every concern**, and make sure no one is penalized for speaking up.
4. **Check progress at Board meetings** at least twice a year, and **report to members** each year, including what didn't work.
5. **Repeat the audit every year**, and **review your statement** at least every two years.
6. **Tell us about barriers** your club can't solve on its own. We gather this from clubs to look for solutions across the province.

You are done when: it is never quite done, and that is the point.

QUICK CHECKLIST

Print this page and tick off each item as you go. Items marked (C) are for Option C only.

1. Get started

- ☐ Board discussion held
- ☐ Option chosen
- ☐ Lead named
- ☐ Target date set
- ☐ Working group formed (C)

2. Check where you are

- ☐ Audit completed
- ☐ Priority areas chosen
- ☐ Membership and club documents reviewed (C)

3. Listen

- ☐ Quick check-in held (B), or wider conversations held (C)
- ☐ What we heard shared back

4. Write

- ☐ Template option chosen
- ☐ Commitments written, each with a lead, date and measure
- ☐ Scope, definitions and policies checked (C)

5. Approve and share

- ☐ Draft tested with members
- ☐ Board approval minuted
- ☐ Published and shared
- ☐ Shared with Volleyball BC (optional)

6. Live it and review

- ☐ Actions under way
- ☐ Training booked
- ☐ Progress reported to members
- ☐ Audit repeated each year
- ☐ Statement reviewed every two years

Common pitfalls to avoid

- Writing the statement alone, or copying another club's without discussion
- Promises with no owner, date or measure
- Publishing the statement, then forgetting about it
- Collecting personal information you don't need

RESOURCES

Resource	Why it helps
Volleyball BC	
Commitment Statement on DEIA	Our own statement, which you can adopt or adapt
Code of Conduct and Ethics	The behaviour expected of everyone in BC volleyball, including the ban on discrimination
Discipline and Complaints Policy and Report a Complaint	How complaints about discrimination are filed and handled
Framework for Safety and Inclusion	Actions VBC is taking to integrate safety and inclusion across the organization
Mental Health Toolkit	Includes an overview of the toolkit. For the full version, visit our secure Club Director's page.
Barrier Reporting Mechanism	Report barriers to participation and accessing volleyball to VBC.
Writing a statement	
Inclusive Sport Design: How to write an inclusion commitment statement	Practical steps for community clubs, and ideas for promoting your statement
Coaching Association of Canada: Developing EDI Policies	What to include in a policy, and how to put it in place and review it
Catalyst: Six Actions to Create Genuine DEI Policies	What makes people see a commitment as genuine
Further learning	
viaSport BC: Diversity, Equity and Inclusion	BC sport resources, including a gender equity self-assessment tool
BC Human Rights Tribunal: Personal characteristics	The characteristics protected under the BC Human Rights Code
viaSport BC: Truth, Reconciliation and Sport	Background on the sport-related Calls to Action
Statistics Canada: Census Profile	Information about your community, to compare with your membership