

# Houston Striders

## Code of Conduct



Approved by Striders Board of Directors and Adopted on

August 13, 2017

### Houston Striders Mission

*"Houston Striders Inc. is a non-profit, citywide running club organized to support the fitness and training goals of runners and walkers at all levels, while promoting resources, education, networking and fellowship through a variety of programs, events and volunteer opportunities."*

Member



## Houston Striders Code of Conduct

### Why do we have a Code of Conduct?

The mission of the Houston Striders Running Club is to provide the community with an organized venue in which to promote the sport of running and the benefits we believe it provides to all members, regardless of age or ability. These benefits include, but are not limited to, physical activity, which contributes to a healthy lifestyle, friendship, and social interaction as well as community outreach and support.

The Code of Conduct is created for the safety and benefit of the Houston Striders, its members and guests. It acts as a reminder of the standards of behavior that we can all share. It is not meant to dictate all interpersonal relationships and interactions between members or between members and the community. Instead, the purpose of this policy is to set forth the basic principles of decency we expect members to follow and adhere to so that members can achieve their running goals in a safe and fun environment.

### Definitions

**Members:** Members of the Houston Striders running club include all dues paying individuals and families as defined under the Membership Policy.

**Guests of Striders:** Includes all guests (non-dues paying members) of a Houston Strider member (adult or minor). Guests are expected to follow the Code of Conduct but are not required to sign the member waiver. It is the responsibility of the Houston Strider member to ensure the safety of their guests (especially minors) when attending events.

**Houston Strider Events:** Includes all activities, programs, training, volunteer opportunities, and meetings organized by the club.

### Club Code of Conduct

For the safety and continued enjoyment of Club members, the Houston Striders running club has a code of conduct that we expect all members to follow.

1. When joining Striders' events, members should be aware that children might be present, and ensure they dress appropriately and do not use language likely to upset or offend.
2. Runners should be age 16 or above to participate in training sessions on the road or cross-country. Younger runners may participate in sessions if accompanied by a parent.

3. Parents are responsible for the safety and observance of their children (minors) when joining Striders events.
4. Comments made verbally, on our social media pages – Facebook, Twitter and/or website should not be abusive, offensive or derogatory and that if they are, the Board reserves the right to delete these types of postings and exclude the author. The Club recognizes that many runners make use of social media in a personal capacity. While they are not acting on behalf of the Striders Running Club, members must be aware that they could risk damaging our reputation if these are not appropriate. All members are therefore requested to ensure that they continue to recognize and respect this.
5. On training nights, all members should take equal responsibility for ensuring that no runners are left behind at the back of the group and should take turns in going to the back of the field for slower runners.
6. On all training nights when dark, members should wear fluorescent vests or other suitable clothing to ensure they can be clearly seen.
7. All members will follow the traffic and pedestrian laws while training and not take unnecessary risks with traffic.
8. All members should try to volunteer or assist with at least one of the races that the Club organizes each year.
9. All members shall always show respect to our fellow club members and show appreciation for the volunteers who give their time to help at the Club events or races.
10. All members shall acknowledge the accomplishments and efforts of others, encouraging all teammates and opponents to excel while keeping in mind you represent the club as an ambassador to the community at large.
11. When competing in all races for the Club, it is encouraged that Members wear a Striders shirt or singlet. This is not a requirement, but a great way to show pride in our Club.
12. All Members shall respect and comply with the rules and regulations of competitions that they may participate in or assist with as an official.
13. Alcohol may be available at Club events, therefore, all adult members shall control their conduct and ensure moderation is adhered to. At all times, members shall conduct themselves in a manner that will ensure the safety of themselves and others so as to not reflect negatively on the club and its

members. This includes the right to intervene and provide transportation as needed. At no time will any alcoholic beverage be provided to minors.

14. Members shall conduct themselves in a manner that will ensure a comfortable and welcoming club environment. Members are expected to interact with all persons in a manner that avoids behavior that could be construed as discrimination or sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is defined as “Unwanted sexual advances, or visual, verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature.” Members are expected to respect the age, religion, ethnic background, gender, and sexual orientation of other members. Members are to recognize that the club operates as a sport and social club, however also are to understand that discrimination or unwanted and/or continued advances toward other members will not be accepted and that all members have the right to an environment free from all forms of discrimination, including sexual harassment.
15. Members are responsible to ensure that this Code of Conduct is followed and are expected to report any inappropriate actions or behavior to a club officer immediately.
16. All members are required to electronically sign a waiver. Additionally, failure to follow the Code of Conduct may lead to a member’s expulsion from the Houston Striders.

## **Violations to the Code**

Any reported violation of this Code shall be presented to the Striders President, who shall investigate the circumstances of the allegations and report the findings to the Board of Directors.

The Board of Directors shall review the findings of the President at its next scheduled meeting to determine whether further action is necessary. The Board, in its discretion, may fashion a remedy depending on the severity of the Code of Conduct violation. Sanctions may include, but are not limited to, a verbal warning, a written warning, referral of the matter to proper law enforcement, or the cancellation of Striders membership. The Board shall allow the accused member an opportunity to be heard, the accused may petition/address the either in writing or in person, prior to any cancellation of any Striders membership.

## Member Release and Waiver (e-signature accepted via Striders website)

*The Houston Striders Running Club believes in promoting healthy and safe running habits so we urge all members to take time, be careful and get to know your limits. Most of all, exercise common sense and be safe. All members of the Houston Striders Running Club must read and accept these terms of membership. Please read them carefully. They will remain on this website for your reference.*

This is an important legal document which may have significant consequences to you or those related to you. Read carefully and make sure that you understand it before signing. Release and waiver in consideration of the acceptance by the Houston Striders running club of my application for entry to the club and any associated training programs provided.

I agree that I am a member of the Houston Striders, Inc., and I know that running in and volunteering for organized group runs, social events, and races with this club are potentially hazardous activities, which could cause injury or death. I will not participate in any club organized events, group training runs or social events, unless I am medically able and properly trained, and by my electronic acceptance, which serves as my signature, I certify that I am medically able to perform all activities associated with the club and am in good health, and I am properly trained.

I agree to abide by all rules established by the club, including the right of any official to deny or suspend my participation for any reason whatsoever.

I attest that I have read the rules of the club agree to abide by them. I assume all risks associated with being a member of this club and participating in club activities that may include falls, contact with other participants, the effects of the weather, including high heat and/or humidity, traffic and the conditions of the road, all such risks being known and appreciated by me. I understand that bicycles, skateboards, baby joggers, roller skates or roller blades, animals, and personal music players are not allowed to be used in club organized activities and I agree to abide by this rule.

Having read this waiver and knowing these facts and in consideration of your accepting my membership, I, for myself and anyone entitled to act on my behalf, waive and release the Houston Striders, Inc., the city of Houston, and the Road Runners Club of America, all club sponsors, their representatives and successors from all claims or liabilities of any kind arising out of my participation with the club, even though that liability may arise out of negligence or carelessness on the part of the persons named in this waiver.

I grant permission to all of the foregoing to use my photographs, motion pictures, recordings or any other record for any legitimate promotional purposes for the club.

Electronic signature via Striders website accepted.

I HEREBY AFFIRM THAT I HAVE READ AND FULLY UNDERSTAND THE ABOVE STATEMENTS.

\_\_\_\_\_ (Participant Signature) \_\_\_\_\_ (Date)

\_\_\_\_\_ (Signature of legal guardian if participant is a minor)