



Sports for All Policy Abu Dhabi

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1. Definitions

Emirate: Emirate of Abu Dhabi.

DCD: Department of Community Development.

Sports Council: Abu Dhabi Sports Council.

Physical Activity: Any bodily movement produced by skeletal muscles that requires energy expenditure, including, without limitation, any physical exercise that can be performed for personal benefit or in the context of sports competitions, regardless of skill level.

Sports: All forms of physical or mental activities practiced by members of society or sports entities, whether to become professionals or as hobbies, with the aim of enhancing fitness and overall health, participating in friendly or official tournaments, or for entertainment purposes.

Sports Entities: Any non-governmental sports entity registered with the General Authority of Sports or licensed by the Sports Council and operating in the field of sports. Sports entities encompass federations, associations, clubs, and sports companies and establishments.

Sports Sector: An integrated sports system aimed at enhancing fitness and overall health, as well as advancing participation in international and local sports tournaments and championships, among others. The sports sector involves public and private, for-profit and non-profit entities, dedicated to delivering services for the sports sector and managing affairs of athletes and sports champions across all community segments and sports entities, as well as operating in the field of local and international sports tournaments and championships.

Sports Event: Any sports activity, competition, or training involving the participation of amateurs or professionals, and held in designated sports venues, such as sports complexes or centers, as well as other sites that may be allocated for the same purpose, such as beaches, and desert and mountainous areas, provided that the public is permitted to attend or watch the event.

Heritage Sports: Traditional and popular sports that form an integral part of Abu Dhabi's heritage.

Sports Professionals: All individuals with technical skills employed in the sports sector, such as coaches, physical education instructors, and lifeguards.

Volunteering: Any individual or group activity aimed at achieving benefits for others, without receiving financial or job-related compensation.

Discrimination: Any bias, discrimination, limitation, exclusion, or favoritism directed towards individuals or groups based on religion, confession, faith, sect, race, color, or ethnicity.

Person with Disabilities: Any individual suffering from a total or partial, temporary, or permanent physical, sensory, mental, communicative, educational, or psychological disability or limitation, to an extent that hinders their ability to meet their typical needs within the context of individuals without disabilities.

Child: Any human being born alive and whose age is less than 18 years old.

2. Introduction

2.1. Purpose of this Policy

This Policy is issued to encourage and foster community members' participation in the practice of all forms of sports activities in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi.

2.2. Policy Scope of Application

This Policy shall apply to:

- Sports Entities in Abu Dhabi.
- Individuals overseeing the organization of Sports Events and their venues in in the Emirate.
- Sports professionals in the Emirate.

2.3. Policy Objectives

This Policy aims to:



Encourage the members of society in the Emirate to practice all kinds of Sports to enhance overall health.



Set basic standards for encouraging and promoting community involvement level in Sports activities in Abu Dhabi, regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, social or economic status, and mental or physical disability.



Identify challenges that hinder certain members of society from participating in Sports activities and strive to find solutions to these challenges in coordination with stakeholders to safeguard individuals' right to engage in Sports.



Encourage members of society to learn about and engage in Heritage Sports.

3. Key Policy Themes

3.1 Physical Activity Guide for Community Segments

DCD seeks to foster an active community in Emirate, involved in practicing sports activities based on the guidelines set by the World Health Organization (“WHO”) for physical activity. It also aims to encourage members of society to engage in physical activities regularly, thus contributing to preventing and combating diseases, namely cardiovascular diseases, strokes, diabetes, many types of cancer, hypertension, and obesity, as well as to enjoy the benefits of physical activity in terms of mental and psychological well-being. WHO offers guidance on recommended physical activity for the overall health of various age and population segments, as outlined in the following recommendations:

a. Adults aged between 18 and 64 years old:

1. They should practice at least 150–300 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic physical activity throughout the week.
2. As an alternative, they should practice at least 75–150 minutes of vigorous-intensity aerobic physical activity or an equivalent combination of moderate- and vigorous-intensity activity throughout the week.
3. They should also practice muscle-strengthening activities at moderate or greater intensity that involve all major muscle groups on 2 or more days a week, as these provide additional health benefits.
4. They may increase moderate-intensity aerobic physical activity to more than 300 minutes, do more than 150 minutes of vigorous-intensity aerobic physical activity, or practice an equivalent combination of moderate- and vigorous-intensity activity throughout the week for additional health benefits.
5. They should limit the amount of time spent being sedentary and replace sedentary time with physical activity of any intensity (including light intensity) as these provide health benefits.
6. They should work on reducing the detrimental effects of high levels of sedentary behavior on health, where all adults and the elderly should aim to do more than the recommended levels of moderate- to vigorous-intensity physical activity.

b. Children and teenagers aged between 5 and 17 years old:

1. They should practice at least an average of 60 minutes per day of moderate-to-vigorous intensity, mostly aerobic physical activity, throughout the week.
2. They should incorporate vigorous-intensity aerobic and physical activities, as well as muscle-strengthening activities targeting both muscles and bones in their routine, at least 3 days a week.
3. They should limit the amount of time spent being sedentary, particularly the amount of recreational screen time.

c. WHO has also provided physical activity recommendations for Children under 5 years old, adults over 65 years, pregnant and postpartum women, and individuals with chronic diseases. These recommendations can be found on the WHO's website.

3.2 Enabling Community Sports Activities Through Infrastructure

1. To encourage engagement in Sports for a new, healthier lifestyle across the Emirate, stakeholders must meet the current and future needs of society. This can be made possible by providing sustainable, practical, and comprehensive sports facilities, aligned with the standards set for sports facilities by the Department of Municipalities and Transport.
2. Stakeholders seek to raise physical activity levels in the Emirate upon considering the needs of all community segments, including Person with Disabilities (people of determination), women, and other segments requiring special care.

3.3 Sports Sustainability

Sports activities must not cause negative impact to the environment. Moreover, sustainable development must be considered upon engaging in sports activities, namely those practiced in urban, rural, and aquatic areas. All developers and construction contractors for Sports Entities and facilities must submit and obtain approvals for their construction plans that hold a positive environmental impact. They must adopt innovative approaches to encourage community engagement in sports, such as jogging and cycling.

3.4 Sports Volunteering

1. Volunteers may assist in Sports Events by carrying out various specialized and non-specialized tasks, including timekeeping, organization, and management tasks. At times, they may also conduct more specialized tasks, such as officiating community sports competitions or offering medical aid.
2. Volunteers may also provide help in Sports Events in terms of various other aspects, such as:
 - Offering administrative assistance within Sports Entities.
 - Offering sports training services to members of society, either as coaches or through offering training sessions; and
 - Assisting schools and universities in training their sports teams and organizing sports activities, including holding sports festivals and competitions.
3. All volunteers, whether individuals or legal persons engaging volunteers, must refer to the Volunteering Policy in Abu Dhabi for volunteering in Abu Dhabi, following the legislation in force.

3.5 Corporate Social Responsibility

DCD and the Authority of Social Contribution (Ma'an) shall coordinate with stakeholders to activate social contributions and encourage investment in the social sector through cooperation with companies for spreading and promoting physical activities and expanding access to develop multi-sectoral sustainable participation within the community.

3.6 Community Sports Events

1. Stemming from their positive impact on social cohesion and improvement of the overall health of members of society, DCD encourages holding all types of community Sports Events. DCD also recognizes that Emirate members of society could innovate creative ideas, including the organization of a community sports event, such as a friendly sports game or tournament, or community championship. Nonetheless, organizing such Sports Events requires compliance with the legislation in force, licensing from the competent entities, if needed, ensuring the event's safety and security, and advertising the event through specialized channels to boost participation.
2. All of Abu Dhabi's facilities, where local or international Sports Events are held, must comply with the legislation in force. They must also take all appropriate measures to maintain the sports facility and event's safety, namely in terms of observing the rules for the sports audience's protection and ensuring their best behavior.

4. Community Sports Beneficiaries

4.1 Equality in Sports

All individuals in Emirate enjoy equal rights to practice sports activities and access sports facilities and events without being subject to any discrimination.

4.2 Sports for All

All categories listed under the Public Policy Development Guide for the Social Sector in the Emirate are entitled to engage in sports activities in line with the National Social Sector Plans. In this regard, DCD coordinates with the Sports Council and stakeholders to foster sports engagement for all the members of society in Emirate, including community segments requiring support, such as:

- Persons with disabilities (People of Determination).
- Senior citizens.
- Orphans and children of unknown parentage.
- Substances abusers.
- Former convicts.
- Migrant Workers.
- Low-income households.
- Victims of abuse.
- Women, including divorcees and widows.
- Abu Dhabi's Community, including nationals and foreigners of all age segments and living conditions.

4.3 Sports for Children

Children in Abu Dhabi are entitled to engage in sports activities to enhance their health and fitness and for recreational purposes. This right is safeguarded by Federal Law No. (3) of 2016 on Child Rights (Wadeema's Law), stipulating various key provisions guaranteeing all aspects of the rights of the Child, namely the right of children to take part in all age-adequate sports programs and activities aimed at fostering the development of their personality and acquiring necessary skills, provided that such programs and activities are aligned with the legislation in force and the public order of the State.

4.4 Sports for Persons with Disabilities (People of Determination)

Persons with Disabilities are entitled to engage in Sports and access sports facilities and events without being subject to discrimination. All Sports Entities and Sports Event organizers must comply with the requirements and standards set forth by legislation in force to accommodate Persons with Disabilities.

4.5 Sports for Women

Women are entitled to practice sports to develop a generation of empowered women who regularly exercise. DCD contributes to creating a women-empowering environment to practice physical activity at designated times or sites dedicated to women. It also seeks to instill a culture fostering women's sports among women and within society, upon considering social values and traditions.

4.6 Sports for the Elderly

Senior citizens are entitled to practice sports and physical activities. Relevant entities are working on encouraging the public and private sectors to engage the elderly in initiatives related to age-adequate physical activity, thus adopting a healthier lifestyle. Moreover, families form an integral element of an ecosystem that would assist in the safe practice of physical activities and sports among senior citizens.

4.7 Sports for other Special Status Categories

1. The categories below are entitled to engage in Sports and physical activities that benefit their physical and mental health:
 - Individuals admitted into rehabilitation centers, including those recovering from addictive substances; and
 - Individuals incarcerated in Emirate and delinquent juveniles.
2. DCD shall cooperate and coordinate with stakeholders in proposing the necessary policies to encourage these special status categories to practice sports activities and ensure they take part in physical education programs, in order to improve their overall health.

4.8 Heritage Sports

1. The Emirate boasts many heritage sports activities forming an integral part of the state cultural heritage as a whole. These heritage sports include, without limitation, the following:
 - Falconry
 - Equestrianism
 - Free diving
 - Racing and hunting with Saluki dog
 - Shooting
 - Yacht racing
 - Camel racing
2. Emirate encourages the practice of Heritage Sports and deploys efforts aimed at finding the means for promoting such practice among members of society based upon the grounds below:
 - Heritage Sports in Emirates form an integral element of the national identity and a source of pride for the state.
 - Heritage Sports seek the preservation of the Emirati cultural heritage in favor of future generations.
 - Efforts seek to expand the scope of practicing heritage sports among Emirate

members of society of all ages, regardless of social composition.

- Emirate residents and visitors could take part in Heritage Sports, thus contributing to instilling social cohesion among members of society as a whole and fostering mutual respect.
3. DCD works to encourage and promote the practice of Heritage Sports among all Emirate's members of society. Toward this end, it cooperates and coordinates with all public and private stakeholders to identify means for achieving such an objective. These means include, without limitation, the following:
- Dedicating sports clubs specifically for Heritage Sports.
 - Preparing and disseminating introductory materials on Heritage Sports and their types, where such publications would offer a historical overview of such sports, their practice, tools, and principles, namely in terms of the number of players and age requirements, among other information and details explaining all aspects of these sports and their associated health benefits.
 - Integrating Heritage Sports teaching and practice under physical education curricula at the level of primary education.
 - Hosting Heritage Sports competitions.
 - Hosting cultural events promoting Heritage Sports, including exhibitions, conferences, and festivals, among others.
 - Establishing cultural centers and libraries, as well as other similar establishments, to be related to Heritage Sports.
 - Preserving the legacy of Heritage Sports, such as artifacts and memorabilia, documenting related significant relevant historical events, and encouraging the celebration of Heritage Sports achievements and champions.
 - Taking part in international initiatives related to promoting the state's Heritage Sports and preserving them as part of the State's cultural heritage.

5. Sports Anywhere

5.1 Sports at the Workplace

1. DCD coordinates with the Sports Council and stakeholders for devising plans and providing means and mechanisms for encouraging Emirate workplaces to enhance the overall health of their employees. These include, without limitation, the following:
 - Encouraging the adoption of Abu Dhabi Technical Standards for Active Workplaces, which take into account enhancing physical activity and improving the overall health of the individuals in the workplace.
 - Publishing and disseminating introductory materials on the importance of physical activity for employees and risks associated with a sedentary lifestyle.
 - Classifying workplaces by their physical activity requirements application levels.
 - Adopting guidelines for physical activity at the workplace, including sharing practical advice for integrating physical activity into the daily work routine.
 - Facilitating the practice of sports activities by employees or integrating physical activity into the work culture.
 - Introducing more flexible policies in the workplace, thus enabling the practice of physical activities, such as sports.

5.2 Sports at Home

Encouraging consistent practice of physical activities year-round in indoor areas, such as at home or in specialized sports centers.

5.3 Sports at School

DCD shall coordinate with stakeholders in Emirate to ensure that Sports form an integral part of curricular and extra-curricular activities, thus contributing to fostering physical and mental well-being among students and ensuring students' participation in all competitive and non-competitive opportunities. In addition to the aforementioned, DCD shall encourage public and private schools to enable the community's access to their sports facilities, according to the policies and regulations approved by stakeholders in this respect. It shall also ensure that parents assume their role in fostering their Children physical activity.

6. Entry into Force

This Policy shall enter into force as of its date of publication in the Official Gazette.

Disclaimer: This translation is provided for convenience only and is unofficial. In the event of any discrepancies between the Arabic and English versions of the policy, the Arabic version shall prevail."

United Arab Emirates - Emirate of Abu Dhabi
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