



## Corporate Plan for the 2026-2027 Fiscal Year

March 1, 2026

## SPORT DISPUTE RESOLUTION CENTRE OF CANADA (SDRCC)

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We respectfully acknowledge that the Centre's office is located on the traditional and unceded territory of the Kanien'keha:ka (Mohawk) people. The Centre is committed to continuing its understanding of and respect for the presence, values, teachings, and the immense contribution by the Indigenous peoples to shaping what is now called *Canada*.

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## Table of Contents

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<b>Background and Governance</b>	<b>1</b>
Statutory Mandate	1
Clientele	1
Governing Legislation	1
Organizational Structure	2
Arbitrators and Mediators	3
<b>Interim Report on Activities 2025-2026</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Multi-Year Strategy and Objectives for 2024-2028</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Objectives and Planned Initiatives for 2026-2027</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Budget 2026-2027</b>	<b>8</b>

### **STATUTORY MANDATE**

*An Act to Promote Physical Activity and Sport* (S.C. 2003, c. 2) (the “Act”) received Royal Assent on March 19, 2003. The Act sets out the Government’s policy on sport as including the fair, equitable, transparent and timely resolution of disputes in sport. The Act provided for the creation of the Sport Dispute Resolution Centre of Canada (the “Centre”). The Centre opened on April 1, 2004, with a mission to provide the sport community with a national alternative dispute resolution service for sport disputes as well as expertise and assistance regarding alternative dispute resolution.

### **CLIENTELE**

Sport Canada’s Sport Support Program requires that all national sport organizations, multisport service organizations and Canadian sport centres and institutes (together the “federally funded sport organizations”) have an internal dispute resolution mechanism. If not resolved internally, disputes with respect to national team athletes and coaches are administered by the Centre.

The dispute resolution services rendered by the Centre may also be offered for other matters on a consensual basis. All federally funded sport organizations, and anyone affiliated with them, including their members, may agree to refer a dispute to the Centre and benefit from the Centre’s services, provided they meet certain criteria adopted by the Centre.

Under the procedural rules outlined in the Canadian Sport Dispute Resolution Code, the Dispute Resolution Secretariat provides its services through four divisions:

**Ordinary Tribunal:** The first division, created in April 2004, serves as a final appeal mechanism for sports-related decisions rendered by organizations that, through the normal course, are subject to an internal appeal. It most often deals with team selection and athlete carding, but it also is used to resolve disputes pertaining to eligibility, general discipline, governance, and many others.

**Doping Tribunal:** Since June 2004, this specialized division serves as the first instance for the adjudication of doping violations asserted by Sport Integrity Canada (SIC) against Canadian athletes or other persons. It is also the division responsible for ruling on challenges of provisional suspensions imposed by SIC.

**Safeguarding Tribunal:** This new division was created in 2021 as part of the safe sport movement in Canada. It serves as the first instance for hearings pertaining to violations and sanctions for maltreatment, including harassment, abuse and discrimination. Its rules allow for procedural accommodations to protect victims and vulnerable witnesses.

**Appeal Tribunal:** Formerly named the Doping Appeal Tribunal, this division continues to hear appeals of doping-related decisions, while also serving as an appeal mechanism for decisions of the Safeguarding Tribunal pertaining to sanctions.

For sport-related disputes arising in non-federally funded sport organizations the Centre’s services may, under certain conditions, be accessed through the Centre’s fee-for-service program.

The Centre’s education and prevention services, tools and resources are made available to all members of the Canadian sport community.

### **GOVERNING LEGISLATION**

The Act establishes the Centre as a not-for-profit corporation and outlines its structure, mission, powers and rules of operation. Given the intention to make the Centre arm’s length from government, the Act states that the Centre is not an agent of His Majesty, a departmental corporation or a Crown corporation.

## ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

The Act specifies that the Centre shall be composed of a dispute resolution secretariat and a resource centre but leaves it to the Centre to define its operations, duties and functions, to ensure that it is responsive to the evolving needs of the sport community in order to better enhance capacity in the Canadian sport community.

Pursuant to the Act, the affairs and business of the Centre are managed by a Board of Directors consisting of 12 directors appointed by the Minister responsible for sport, as well as the Executive Director (or Chief Executive Officer) of the Centre, who is an *ex officio* director. In December 2003, the Minister appointed the inaugural directors after consultation with the sport community. The guidelines cited in the Act provide for a Board comprised of individuals who: a) are committed to the promotion and development of sport; b) have the experience and capability to enable the Centre to achieve its objectives; c) are representative of the sport community; and d) are representative of the diversity and linguistic duality of Canadian society.

The role of the Centre's Board is to provide strategic direction, to approve its strategic plan and the policies necessary for its implementation, and to ensure that the Centre's management has the necessary resources to deliver on its performance objectives.

### **Members of the Board of Directors during the 2025-2026 fiscal year:**

*Current Directors as of February 26, 2026:*

- Alice Strachan, Interim Chairperson (*pending reappointment*)
- Pierre Chabot
- Katie Damphouse (*pending reappointment*)
- Kevin Kelly (*pending reappointment*)
- Heather Kemkaran-Antymniuk
- Danielle Lappage (*pending reappointment*)
- Nick Lenehan (*pending reappointment*)
- Dorianne Mullin
- Francis Ménard (Chief Executive Officer, *ex officio*)

*\* The Centre is still awaiting correspondence from the federal Minister responsible for Sport regarding the renewal of four Board members whose first terms ended on November 30, 2024; one Board member whose first term ended on July 1, 2025; and the appointment of four new Board members to replace those whose mandates expired on July 1, 2025, including the Chairperson.*

### **Staff members as of February 26, 2026:**

- Francis Ménard, Chief Executive Officer
- Tanya Gates, Director of Operations
- Alexandra Lojen, Senior Manager, Tribunal
- Liddia Touch Kol, Resource Centre Manager
- Guillaume Boisseau, Case Manager
- Rachel Leblanc-Bazinet, Project Manager
- Michael Vamelkin, IT Technician
- Liane Mendelsohn, Administrative Support Consultant

The firm Baker Tilly was appointed by the Board of Directors as the independent auditor for the 2025-2026 fiscal year.

The Regroupement Loisir et Sport du Québec (RLSQ) provides accounting services to the Centre.

**Arbitrators and Mediators Appointed until April 30, 2029, by Province:**

**Alberta**

Brian Conway (Arbitrator)  
Matthew Letkeman (Mediator)  
Wilma Shim (Arbitrator)  
Leanne Young (Mediator / Arbitrator)

**British Columbia**

Kathleen Duffield (Mediator)  
Stephanie Fabbro (Mediator)  
Paul Denis Godin (Mediator)  
Ryan Goldvine (Arbitrator)  
Nicholas Greer (Mediator)  
Jenny Ho (Mediator / Arbitrator)  
Rose Keith (Mediator)  
Peter Lawless (Arbitrator)  
Hugh McCall (Mediator)  
JJ McIntyre (Arbitrator)  
Carol Roberts (Mediator / Arbitrator)  
Praveen Sandhu (Arbitrator)  
Paul Singh (Mediator / Arbitrator)  
Ashley Syer (Mediator)  
Robert Wickett (Arbitrator)

**Manitoba**

Kimberly Cork (Mediator)  
Jeffrey Palamar (Arbitrator)  
Jennifer Schulz (Mediator)

**New Brunswick**

Darlene Doiron (Mediator)

**Newfoundland and Labrador**

James Oakley (Mediator / Arbitrator)

**Nova Scotia**

David Merrigan (Arbitrator)  
Melanie Petrunia (Arbitrator)

**Ontario**

Bruce Ally (Mediator)  
Larry Banack (Mediator)  
David Bennett (Mediator / Arbitrator)  
Roger Bilodeau (Arbitrator)  
Jonathan Fidler (Mediator / Arbitrator)  
Dana Hirsh (Mediator / Arbitrator)  
Janice Johnston (Mediator / Arbitrator)  
Kumail Karimjee (Mediator / Arbitrator)

**Ontario (continued)**

Chloe Lester (Mediator / Arbitrator)  
Richard H. McLaren (Arbitrator)  
James Minns (Mediator / Arbitrator)  
Marcel Mongeon (Mediator / Arbitrator)  
Aaron Ogletree (Mediator / Arbitrator)  
Angela Peco (Arbitrator)  
Gordon E. Peterson (Mediator / Arbitrator)  
Treena Reilkoff (Mediator)  
Jay Rudolph (Mediator)  
Nadini Sankar-Peralta (Mediator / Arbitrator)  
Jay Sengupta (Arbitrator)  
Laurie Sherry (Mediator)  
Anne Sone (Mediator)  
Allan Stitt (Mediator / Arbitrator)  
Matthew Wilson (Mediator / Arbitrator)

**Quebec**

Marie-Claire Belleau (Mediator)  
Simon Blais (Mediator)  
Patrice M. Brunet (Arbitrator)  
Andrea Carska-Sheppard (Mediator / Arbitrator)  
Céline Chopin (Mediator)  
Sarah Daitch (Mediator)  
Hélène de Kovachich (Mediator)  
L. Yves Fortier (Mediator / Arbitrator)  
Annie Lespérance (Arbitrator)  
Peter Moraitis (Mediator)  
Clarisse N'Kaa Batera (Mediator)  
Éric Ouellet (Mediator / Arbitrator)  
Richard W. Pound (Arbitrator)  
Marianne Saroli (Arbitrator)  
Janie Soublière (Arbitrator)  
David Ward (Mediator)  
Patrick Zakaria (Mediator)

**Saskatchewan**

Kristin Anderson (Mediator)  
Maria Fortugno (Mediator)  
Tim Nickel (Mediator)  
Charmaine Panko (Mediator / Arbitrator)  
Tiffany Paulsen (Arbitrator)  
Ambrosia Varaschin (Arbitrator)

## **INTERIM REPORT ON ACTIVITIES 2025-2026**

### **Offering Meaningful Dispute Resolution Services**

- From April 1, 2025, to February 26, 2026, the Centre received 69 sport-related disputes. Among the 40 Ordinary Tribunal cases there were 28 related to team selection, of which seven involved urgent Olympic team selection matters, three athlete carding, and nine other disputes including one related to competition manipulation. Four anti-doping rule violation assertions were filed with the Doping division. The Safeguarding division received 23 maltreatment requests including three from the Canadian Safe Sport Program (CSSP), as well as two which were brought before the Appeal Tribunal.
- The Centre has improved access to its case law database by creating a collection on the Canadian Legal Information Institute (CanLII) website. All public decisions from 2023 to 2026 are now available, and previous decisions will be added gradually.
- Staff also implemented a decision template consistent with CanLII's prioritized standards for the benefit of SDRCC arbitrators.
- Discussions were also initiated regarding a partnership to develop a generative AI tool tailored specifically to the Centre, based on its jurisprudential database. The tool will provide free and open access to decision summaries and/or annotations of Code provisions, with a focus on a scalable and self-sustaining solution.

### **Building a Safer and Fairer Sport System**

- Staff conducted 32 presentations and workshops, and distributed dispute prevention and resolution tools and resources with the Centre's kiosk at seven sport community events.
- Five publications have been updated or developed, including the Access to SDRCC Services interactive tool, a new flowchart for SDRCC Safeguarding Tribunal Jurisdiction, the Mediation/Resolution Facilitation preparation tool, a Sport Dispute Prevention and Resolution for Athletes resource and Team Selection Guidelines and Tips for Athletes.
- A new Safe Sport tab was created on the SDRCC website so that key resources developed for the Abuse-Free Sport program continue to be available to the sport community. Safe Sport policy templates on education and awareness, hiring and screening, and interactions were added along with an implementation guide to show how the policies can be adapted for various levels of the sport community.
- Additional changes were made to the SDRCC website to simplify language and information on the File an Appeal page, and to review and update the NSO Appeal Policy page. A complete redesign of the site is in the early stages of development.
- Thanks to special funding received from Sport Canada the Sport Environment Assessment monitoring phase for the sports of cycling, gymnastics, and wrestling was executed to track the advancement and implementation of the Assessment recommendations.
- Six final reports from Abuse-Free Sport Research Grant recipients are expected to be submitted in March 2026, with an additional five reports due in March of 2027. Once completed and translated, these reports will be published on the SDRCC website.
- The Office of the Sport Integrity Commissioner (OSIC) operations were extended to July 31, 2025, to resolve cases received on or before January 31, 2025. The goal was to minimize disruption for sport participants, especially victims and survivors of maltreatment during the transition of the mandate to the Canadian Safe Sport Program.
- Prior to the closing of the OSIC, the OSIC team was able to ensure that all investigations were completed, all investigation reports were carefully reviewed and then sent to the Director of Sanctions and Outcomes (DSO). Fifty-six cases were transferred to the DSO of which only four remain open as

of February 26, 2026. The final tally for the entire operations of the OSIC was 708 cases processed, 255 cases within Abuse-Free Sport jurisdiction and 229 investigations.

- The Abuse-Free Sport legal aid services were also extended until July 31, 2025, and 18 parties received free legal advice under the program.

### **Ensuring Organizational Excellence and Sustainability**

- Interim Board Chairpersons were designated by Board resolution for 90-day periods. The current Interim-Chairperson mandate was subsequently extended, with the approval of the Secretary of State (Sport), until the appointment of new Board members and the designation of a new Chair.
- The Bylaws were reviewed and updated to align with the Sport and Physical Activity Act and to provide clarity regarding Board members who have applied to serve a second term continuing to serve until their application is considered by the Federal Minister responsible for Sport.
- Policies on Professional Conduct, Privacy, Official Languages, Conflict of Interest, and Discipline and Complaint Management were reviewed and updated.
- Following the resignation of the Centre's Chief Executive Officer, a recruitment and selection process was conducted by an external HR firm in conjunction with a selection committee designated by the Board. The hiring of a new Chief Executive Officer was completed in the Fall of 2025.
- Staffing levels declined significantly during the period. Fourteen positions were eliminated following the conclusion of the Abuse-Free Sport Program, and one Tribunal position, one Resource Centre position, and one administrative position were eliminated due to budget reductions.
- Training and certification on Mental Health Foundations and Mental Health Foundations for Leaders were offered to staff.
- Several initiatives recommended in the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan were implemented, including training for staff and roster members and the enhancement of an accessibility tool on the SDRCC website.
- The Centre is currently modernizing and optimizing the technologies used by staff to improve efficiency and reliability, including email management, internal communications, servers and file hosting, and telephone systems.
- The Centre carried out a secure data migration of all relevant OSIC program information to the Canadian Safe Sport Program of Sport Integrity Canada, ensuring data integrity and confidentiality.

### OUR VISION

A culture of fairness, integrity and respect is embraced in Canadian sport and beyond.

### OUR VALUES

These foundational values guide and inspire our actions and decisions.

- **Collaboration** - We actively foster collaboration within and outside our organization to leverage diverse perspectives and achieve collective goals.
- **Integrity** - We constantly strive to earn our clients' and partners' trust through transparency, competence and high standards of ethical conduct.
- **Fairness** - We are independent, impartial and respectful of all parties so our clients and partners can count on us to be fair.
- **Excellence** - We achieve our mission by being efficient, accessible, professional and compassionate.
- **Human Rights** - People are at the centre of what we do. As such, we are committed to upholding and promoting human rights, ensuring that our actions and decisions contribute to a just and equitable society.

### STRATEGIC PRIORITIES 2024-2028

The Centre's strategic priorities for the 2024-2028 period are:

- 1) **Offering Meaningful Dispute Resolution Services** - Deploy best-in-class dispute resolution services addressing current and evolving sports-related disputes.
- 2) **Building a Safer and Fairer Sport System** - Foster fairness, safety, equity and inclusion by enhancing the capacity of sport organizations and their people by promoting ethically-driven behaviours in Canadian sport.
- 3) **Ensuring Organizational Excellence and Sustainability** - Strengthen the capacity of the Centre to ensure organizational agility and sustainability, and the delivery of value-added services.

## Objectives and Planned Initiatives for 2026-2027

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### **Offering Meaningful Dispute Resolution Services**

#### Initiatives:

- Review and update the Canadian Sport Dispute Resolution Code to comply with upcoming anti-doping rule changes;
- Enhance tools and partnerships to promote access and understanding of SDRCC jurisprudence and Code provisions;
- Strengthen roster specialization and standardize the quality of dispute resolution services; and
- Initiate a dispute resolution market analysis and establish an expert working group to evaluate emerging needs and recommend pathways for expanding services.

### **Building a Safer and Fairer Sport System**

#### Initiatives:

- Expand awareness and access to SDRCC resources through outreach at key sport community events, including the 2027 Canada Winter Games, and the delivery of impactful workshops and webinars;
- Build knowledge and capacity across the sport system by assessing sport organizations' needs and collaborating, where appropriate, to develop tailored dispute prevention initiatives;
- Respond to emerging trends and issues in Canadian sport through the development of new dispute prevention tools and resources; and
- Improve accessibility and understanding of dispute resolution processes by modernizing resources for parties engaged in SDRCC proceedings.

### **Ensuring Organizational Excellence and Sustainability**

#### Initiatives:

- Ensure effective governance continuity by providing comprehensive orientation for newly appointed Board members, updating the Board committee structure and terms of reference, and providing professional development opportunities to all Board members;
- Foster a respectful, inclusive, and professional workplace culture that supports the well-being and engagement of employees, volunteers, and dispute resolution professionals;
- Strengthen organizational capacity to prevent abuse, harassment, and maltreatment by delivering mandatory training for all employees, volunteers, and consultants upon engagement, with refresher training provided as required; and
- Maintain strong governance, accountability, and compliance by regularly reviewing and updating the Centre's policies to ensure alignment with the Act, by-laws, and applicable agreements.

## BUDGET 2026-2027

The Centre gratefully acknowledges the Government of Canada’s support through the provision of \$6,000,000 in funding for the four-year period spanning 2025 to 2029. The Centre will apply robust financial and risk management practices to ensure the optimal, accountable, and sustainable use of funding.

In order to sustain the objectives and planned initiatives for 2026-2027, the proposed core funding budget is \$1,550,000 broken down as follows:

ADMINISTRATION & OPERATIONS	\$199,507
OFFICIAL LANGUAGES	\$43,960
SALARIES, FEES & BENEFITS	\$852,077
GOVERNANCE	\$31,500
STANDARD SERVICES	\$421,586
SAFETY IN SPORT	\$1,370

