New Zealand Ju-Jitsu Federation (NZJJF)

Health and Safety Policy for Ju Jitsu

BACKGROUND

Every coach and member have a responsibility to ensure the health and safety of themselves and of others whilst practicing Ju-Jitsu.

Ju-Jitsu is a Japanese martial art which employs a variety of blocking, striking, throwing, choking, kicking, joint locking and ground techniques. Ju-Jitsu is a contact martial art and its study does involve the acceptance of certain risks. Simulating both armed and unarmed attack situations can be physically demanding for both attackers and defenders and occasional injuries such as bruises and sprains are to be expected.

However, it is the aim of the NZJJF to ensure that so far as is reasonably practicable that training is always carried out in a safe environment and in a safe manner with suitable control, equipment and supervision exercised.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this document is to establish working guidelines for the operation of Ju-Jitsu clubs. It identifies areas of responsibility, procedures and plans that ensure Ju Jitsu is undertaken in a safe and responsible manner.

POLICY

The following recommendations are provided as guidelines for affiliated clubs to allow them to establish procedures and standards aimed at reducing the risks of accidents or incidents and further enhance the development and enjoyment of Ju-Jitsu.

If the number of injuries or incidents is too high, it could have an adverse impact on the popularity of Ju-Jitsu. Here are some of the more desirable repercussions of safe training environments:

- Increased retention rate
- More motivated members
- The coach retains the confidence of the parents and participants
- Smooth running classes which has a positive effect on other participants.
- A decrease in the perception that Ju-Jitsu is dangerous and increasing participation.

The NZJJF hopes that its member Clubs, and coaches will derive some inspiration from this policy to make Ju-Jitsu safer and more appealing by embracing Health and Safety practices in the dojo.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The NZJJF would like to thank Sensei Peter Jones of Kajuen Ryu for his help and guidance in the writing of this Policy

ADOPTED JANUARY 2020

REVIEWED JANUARY 2025

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COACHING

ETHICAL PRACTICE

A condition of NZJJF membership is that the applicant agrees to abide by the NZJJF "Code of Ethics" on becoming a member. All NZJJF-registered coaches are therefore bound by the Code of Ethics. (refer to Appendix 1).

QUALIFICATIONS OF COACHES

The NZJJF coaching courses provide the framework for assessing coaching competence and the ability to coach in a safe and effective way. It is felt by the NZJJF that competence to coach should be verified through evidence of coaching qualifications, it cannot be inferred solely from prior experience.

CLUB COACH

The Club Coach is the person ultimately responsible for activities on the mat in the dojo. NZJJF recommends that any Ju-Jitsu coach running a dojo/classes should have gained their **NZJJF C2 Club Coach qualification** as a minimum qualification.

A C2 Club Coach has learnt about risk management, safe teaching practices, has had a police check and has a first aid certificate. Their responsibility is to ensure that each participant is always supervised by a competent person and that no participants or groups are left on their own. Coaches should understand that adequate close supervision is the most effective means of preventing accidents.

NZJJF recommends that all black belt Club Coaches should have their black belt qualification verified and entered in the NZJJF Public Register.

ASSISTANT COACH

An Assistant Coach is a club member who acts as a coach in support of the Club Coach. NZJJF recommends that all Assistant Coaches should have gained their **NZJJF C1 Assistant Coach qualification**.

A C1 Assistant Coach has learnt about ethical coaching, effective communication, injury prevention and injury management. C1 coaches can operate as coaches under the guidance of a C2 coach. They are equipped to supervise ju-jitsu activities and help the Club Coach with coaching duties and people management.

Coaches have a responsibility to themselves and their students to maintain their own effectiveness, resilience and abilities, and to know when their personal resources are so depleted as to make it necessary for them to seek help and/or to withdraw from coaching, whether temporarily or permanently.

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CLASS SIZE

The NZJJF recommended class size maximum instructor to student ratio is 1:40 for adult students and 1:20 for junior students.

The support requirements of the students will be greater where there are students present that:

- are under 8
- are generally unruly and need discipline.
- have diagnosed behaviour problems e.g. ADHD [Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder]
- have some learning difficulty.
- are timid/ shy
- exhibit bullying behaviour
- won't train with all students

Students participating in throwing, falling practice or active (non-pattern based) movement excluding warm up and warm down should have a minimum of a 2-mat area ($4m^2$) per 2 participants.

Where necessary adequate space should be maintained between people or groups whilst on the mat.

COACHING CHILDREN

It is expected that all coaches teaching children's Ju-Jitsu classes abide by the NZJJF Child Protection Policy (see appendix 1) and it is recommended that they undergo specific Child Protection training, see NZJJF C2 Club Coach Qualification.

SYLLABUS

Where Coaches use a training and grading syllabus, it should be designed to develop the required competence in Ju-Jitsu for each grade in skills and techniques.

Coaches have a responsibility to ensure the safety of the students as far as possible within the limits of their control, and that activities being undertaken should be suitable for the age, experience and ability of the students and that appropriate control and restraint is exercised in relation to the application of techniques, for example; persons training or competing are not miss-matched in size or ability where this will give rise to danger.

Sportsmanship should be observed at all times, especially courtesy, mutual welfare and respect. Rules should be consistently enforced to ensure the safety of everyone during activities. A condition of being a NZJJF member club is agreement to abide by the NZJJF Code of Ethics (see appendix 1).

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CRIMINAL OFFENCES

The NZJJF feels that some criminal offences should prevent a person from taking part in or coaching Ju-Jitsu. An example would be that anyone convicted of abuse of children should not be allowed to be involved in coaching children.

The NZJJF recommends that all Ju-Jitsu club coaches have a criminal convictions check and this forms part of the requirements for passing the NZJJF C2 Club coach qualification (refer to Appendix 2).

STUDENTS

INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITY

Every student has a responsibility to ensure the safety of themselves and of others whilst practicing Ju-Jitsu. It is recommended that all students comply with the requirements of a dojo specific Individual Member Responsibility Agreement (refer to Appendix 4), as well as the clubs/associations Dojo Etiquette.

The NZJJF feels that it is everyones responsibility to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that training is carried out in a safe environment and in a safe manner. Suitable control and supervision should be exercised at all time.

MEDICAL

ATTENDANCE REGISTER

An attendance register should be taken of those attending each class, as this provides a way of confirming no-one remains in the building if it needs to evacuated in an emergency, and should also be the basis for ensuring financial health of the dojo.

HYGIENE

Each club should have their own Hygiene Policy which is displayed or available for members.

Participants should have short fingernails and toenails. Long hair should be tied back so that it does not interfere. Wounds should be covered properly to protect against infections but also to eliminate contact with blood and other body fluids.

The training uniform should be clean at all times. No unpleasant odours are to be present, and any blood or other stains should be cleaned up immediately.

To keep feet clean, it is strongly recommended that participants wear zori (sandals) or something similar when not on the mats.

No one should be allowed to participate if under the influence of drugs, alcohol or other intoxicants. All NZJJF members must abide by the NZJJF Anti-Doping Policy (see

Appendix 1).

SKIN DISORDERS

Persons with contagious skin diseases should not take part in any training or competition activities.

FIRST AID

At least one person with an appropriate and current First Aid qualification should be present in the dojo whenever training is taking place, preferably the coach(es) involved in conducting the classes. A suitable First Aid qualification forms part of the requirements for passing the NZJJF C2 Club coach qualification (refer to Appendix 2).

All injuries obtained during training should have an injury report form completed (refer to Appendix 2) and should be stored accordingly with regards to privacy. All reports should be reviewed by the coach(es) responsible, any trends analysed and appropriate strategies implemented to reduce injuries.

An appropriately stocked first aid kit should be readily accessible, and access to ice / cold packs should also be available. The NZJJF recommended contents of a club first aid kit can be found; http://www.nzjjf.org.nz/jujitsu/downloads/Note_15_3.pdf

There should be access to a telephone close to where the activity is being held. If not, a sign should clearly visible indicating the location of the phone, and local emergency numbers should be posted.

Persons feeling faint or nauseous should be accompanied when going to the toilet or changing rooms.

The NZJJF recommends the following reference text for guidance on injury management in the dojo;

1. P. Jones; Ninja Nurse!: The Essential Guide to Injury Management in Martial Arts. 1st edition, June 12, 2019. Paperback.

BLOOD SPILLAGES

Where possible blood spillages should be cleaned up by the person bleeding following any appropriate treatment or dressing of their cuts. In other cases suitable protective and disposable gloves should be worn and medi swabs from the first aid kit used to remove blood.

Large contamination of mats or floors should stop all training whilst the hazard is dealt with accordingly.

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PATHOLOGIES AND OTHER CHRONIC ILLNESSES

Coaches should be informed of any pathologies or chronic illnesses which can endanger the health or lives of participants whilst undertaking Ju-Jitsu training.

Ideally all participants should complete a pre-Health Check form before starting Ju-Jitsu so a coach can make an assessment of the suitability of the student undertaking training. The NZJJF recommended Individual Membership Assessment Form can be found in appendix 2. All completed forms should be stored with a thought to members' privacy. The forms of members participating in away-events (e.g. tournaments or seminars) should be taken by a coach to the event. In an emergency, the forms could provide vital information.

It is desirable that participants with risk factors receive medical clearance before taking part in Ju-Jitsu activities. When in doubt, coaches should check with a medical professional and take the necessary steps as advised.

CONCUSSION

Take no chances with suspected concussions. All concussions should be dealt with as per the NZJJF Concussion Policy (see Appendix 1.)

Note: Loss of consciousness through application of a strangulation technique DOES NOT result in concussion. Initial treatment (as per loss of consciousness through head impact) is the same, but the stand-down period does not apply. However, if unsure whether the trauma was due to head impact or strangulation, always err on the side of caution – treat it as a concussion until medically proven otherwise.

EMERGENCY MEDIVAC PLAN (EMP)

An emergency medivac plan (EMP) is a must for serious injuries. The prime objective of an EMP is to ensure that an injured athlete is entrusted to medical professionals as quickly as possible without aggravating the situation. We define serious injuries as heavy bleeding, respiratory arrest, extended loss of consciousness and head injuries, cardiac arrest, body temperature problems and possible lesions in the neck, rib and back areas.

The EMP should include a list of emergency numbers; identify a person responsible for applying the EMP and a person to assist him/her (a person on-call). The EMP should include emergency scenarios that take into account the various situations which can be encountered. Ideally an EMP simulation exercises should be performed once a year.

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ENVIRONMENT

Coaches should check the dojo environment, equipment, training surface and surrounding areas before and during each training session. If they observe something which could represent a risk to the safety of participants, they should take the necessary corrective measures or at the very least monitor this potential hazard. Any irregularity that cannot be corrected immediately should be reported to the owner, head coach or club committee and the situation remedied as soon as possible. See Appendix 5 – Health and Safety Checklist.

BUILDING WARRANT OF FITNESS

A building owner needs to renew a building's warrant of fitness (BWoF) every 12 months, signing, issuing and publicly displaying it to prove the building's life safety systems (called specified systems) have been maintained and inspected, thus ensuring their buildings are safe to use.

https://www.building.govt.nz/assets/Uploads/managing-buildings/bwof-guidance/bwof-guidance.pdf

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DOJO

The dojo should ideally meet the prescribed NZJJF Dojo Environmental Safety Standards when possible to reduce the risks from the training environment and equipment.

EMERGENCY EVACUATION PLAN (EEP)

An Emergency Evacuation Plan (EEP) and clearly stated muster points should be clearly visible. Members should be regularly made aware of the plan and EEP simulation exercises should be performed at least once a year. The EEP should include a list of emergency numbers and identify persons responsible for applying the EEP.(see Appendix 3)

TRAVEL

TRANSPORT

Clubs/Members that have to travel to any of their activities should follow responsible procedures. This includes areas such as traffic law, driver testing/qualifications, and driving in adverse conditions.

When travelling by vehicle the driver is responsible for the safety of his/her passengers and for the compliance with all relevant road or Traffic Regulations. Where mini buses are hired through a hire agency, the rules and codes of practice set out by the hire agency should be adhered to.

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When travelling overseas it is essential that Travel Insurance is obtained for the travelling Ju-Jitsuka.

Safety at visiting Dojo's will be the responsibility of the hosting Club Instructor or the person in control of the mat at that time.

FINANCIAL

CLUB FEES

Club fees should be set at a level that, at a minimum covers the operational running costs of the dojo and should be reviewed annually to ensure it maintains commensurate with outgoings.

FINANCIAL AUDITS

Ju-Jitsu entities that run as a business or as an incorporated society should produce annual accounts in line with the requirements of Inland Revenue/New Zealand Companies Office. This promotes sound financial management and helps to ensure successful and continued running of the Club / Association. **Note**: there is no requirement to provide any financial details to the NZJJF.

INSURANCE

Everyone in New Zealand is covered by ACC's no-fault scheme if they're injured in an accident at training. This includes children, beneficiaries and students. It doesn't matter if they're working, unemployed or retired. It also includes visitors to New Zealand. The cover ACC provide helps pay for the costs of recovery. This includes payment towards treatment, help at home and work, and help with loss of income whilst injured.

Each club should operate at a minimum with contents insurance as this protects the dojo contents. The dojo training space should operate with building insurance, and the building should have a current Building warrant of fitness (BWOF).

If your dojo is operating as a business then you'll need to ensure that ACC and Worksafe levies are paid for all coaching staff employed.

RISKS

RISK MANAGEMENT

Risk assessments form an important part of running Ju-Jitsu activities, minimising the risks of harm to all participants.

Risk assessments are a method of identifying the potential risks involved in teaching / practicing Ju-Jitsu and then listing the action you have taken / will take to minimise these risks.

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There are a number of generic risk assessments that have been produced by the NZJJF and these can be found in the NZJJF Risk Management Policy. It is hoped that all member clubs use the Risk Management Policy and Health and Safety Policy as a guideline for operation.

Appendices

The following resources provide useful further information regarding safety in Ju-Jitsu. It is suggested that they are used and referred to.

ADOPTED JANUARY 2020

REVIEWED JANUARY 2025

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Appendix One

NZJJF Concussion Policy

Sets out the requirements for dealing with concussion.
https://nzjjf.org.nz/NZJJF/jujitsu/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/NZJJF-Concussion-Policy-2018.pdf

NZJJF Anti-Doping Policy

All NZJJF competitors are bound by these rules, which comply with the World Anti-Doping Agency rules. http://www.nzjjf.org.nz/jujitsu/downloads/NZJJF_Anti_Doping_Policy_2006.pdf

NZJJF Code of Ethics

Sets out the requirements for the behaviour of a Coach teaching Ju-Jitsu.
https://nzjjf.org.nz/NZJJF/jujitsu/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/NZJJF_CoE_2012.pdf

NZJJF Child Protection Policy

Sets out the requirements to protect and safeguard the safety and welfare of children training in Ju-Jitsu.
https://nzjjf.org.nz/NZJJF/jujitsu/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/NZJJF-Child-Protection-Policy-2015.pdf

NZJJF Coaching Courses

Sets out the process for applying to the NZJJF to undertake their Ju-Jitsu specific coaching qualifications. http://nzjjf.org.nz/NZJJF/jujitsu/nzjjf-coaching-courses/

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Appendix Two

NZJJF Individual Membership Assessment Form:

The NZJJF membership assessment from is intended to help coaches obtain any information regarding students pre-existing conditions, risk factors and medications, as well as emergency contact details for the individual, before starting Ju-Jitsu.

http://nzjjf.org.nz/NZJJF/jujitsu/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/NZJJF-Membership-Assessment-Form.pdf

NZJJF Club coaches criminal convictions check:

NZJJF requires that an Instructor does not have a criminal record that would prevent him or her from coaching adults and / or children.

https://www.justice.govt.nz/assets/Documents/Forms/CRC-request-by-third-party.pdf

NZJJF Injury Reporting Form:

The NZJJF injury reporting form identifies the requirement to record accidents and injuries occurring during training sessions.

It is intended to provide an accurate record of any injured person's reported symptoms of injury, to be completed at the time of injury.

http://www.nzjjf.org.nz/jujitsu/downloads/IR_Form.pdf

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Appendix Three

Important health and safety contacts and information

What	Where/Who
	(insert relevant location or person's name here)
Trained First Aider	
First Aid Kit	
Hazard Register	
Accident Register	
Local GP Practice	
Fire Extinguishers	
Fire Exits	
Fire Wardens	
Assembly points in event of evacuation	

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Appendix Four: Individual Member Responsibility Example

Every member has a responsibility to ensure the safety of themselves and of others. You should comply with the following requirements, and the rules andetiquette of the Dojo.
It should be borne in mind that Ju Jitsu is a contact martial art and that its study does involve the acceptance of certain risks. Simulating both armed and unarmed attack situations can be physically demanding for both attackers and defenders. Occasional injuries such as bruises and sprains are to be expected.
However, it is the aim of this Club and The New Zealand Ju-Jitsu Federation to ensure that so far as is reasonably practicable that training is carried out in a safe environment and in a safe manner. Suitable control and supervision should be exercised at all time.

Every member should ensure that they will:
• Disclose to the Club Instructor any new medical condition, change in health status or injury that may affect or restrict their training.
• Keep toenails and fingernails are kept as short as possible.
• Not wear jewellery, watches, bracelets or hairpins whilst training.
• Not consume food or drink (including chewing gum) in the Dojo.
• Not smoke whilst in the Dojo or whilst wearing a gi.
• Not use full power kicks or punches to the head or heart whilst carrying out finishing off or weakening strikes.
• Maintain a high standard of personal hygiene.
• Keep their gi clean and in a good state or repair.
• Use only appropriate force when training and exercise restraint where required, especially when applying locks or strangles.
• Not consume alcohol prior to training.
• Obey the rules and etiquette of the Dojo.
• Follow the instructions of the club Instructor or his nominee, and in particular observe the command 'YAME!' that means STOP IMMEDIATELY.
• Follow the advice of other more experienced members where that advice relates to their safety.
• Draw to the attention of the Club Instructor anything that may affect the safety of people training.
• Not engage in free practice without the presence of an Instructor.
• Not attempt techniques that they have not been instructed to do so.
• Not leave the mat or the Dojo during training sessions without notifying the Club Instructor.
• Not carry illegal weapons in their training bags.
• Carry all weapons, particularly bokken, bo, jo, in suitable cases and avoid the attentions of people in the street.
• Maintain any personal training equipment or weapons that may be used within the club in a safe condition.
• Prior to commencing training or an attack shall ensure that the defender is ready and observe Dojo etiquette. E.g. rei before attacking
• Leave a suitable period between eating and the start of training.

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Appendix Five: Dojo Health and Safety Checklist.

FACILITIES:

Are floors free of slip/trip/fall hazards?	☐
Adequate ventilation?	☐
Minimum 2.4 meter clear ceiling height above training area	☐
Is the temperature comfortable?	☐
Are walls, floors and ceilings free of any visible damp or mold?	☐
Are electrical sockets and light fittings secure and undamaged?	☐
Adequate and safe lighting?	☐
Mat area at least 1 meter clear of any dangerous fixtures or fittings? If not, adequate padding to any obstacles to minimise risk?	☐
Glazed areas well clear of mat area (or adequately protected)?	☐
Clearly marked emergency exits	☐
Emergency exits and firefighting equipment are kept free from clutter?	☐
Separate male and female changing rooms?	☐
Clean and sanitary toilet and washing facilities?	☐
Is rubbish stored appropriately and disposed of regularly?	☐
Is all furniture in good repair? (nothing broken)	☐
Are fittings & shelving properly fixed for earthquake?	☐

EQUIPMENT AND MAT AREA:

Supplementary training equipment and protective equipment is well maintained and safe (e.g. crash pads, uchikomi bands, etc.)	☐
Mats in good order (no rips, tears, excessive soft patches)	☐
Training weapons are well maintained and safe to use.	☐
Sufficient prevention against mats from moving during training (no gaps)	☐
Mat area sufficient size for class numbers / activities	☐
Mat thickness and density appropriate for use	☐
Wooden floor or sufficiently cushioned concrete floor	☐
Mat surface not too “sticky” or “slippery”	☐
Visually defined safety warning 2 metres from all mat edges	☐
All electrical equipment is fit for purpose?	☐
Emergency Evacuation Plan (EEP) in place	☐

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EEP practiced	☐

MEDICAL:

At least 1 appropriately qualified First Aider available at each session	☐
First Aid Kit easily accessible	☐
First Aid Kit appropriately stocked	☐
Ice / cold packs easily accessible	☐
Telephone and emergency contact numbers easily accessible	☐
Emergency Medivac Plan in place	☐
EMP simulation practiced	☐
Member medical conditions, medication needs, and emergency contacts collected	☐
Member medical conditions, medication needs, and emergency contact stored safely to ensure confidentiality, but accessible when required	☐
Hygiene policy established, communicated to members, and enforced.	☐

COACHES:

All Club Coaches hold a NZJJF C2 Club Coach Coaching Qualification (or approved equivalent)	☐
All Assistant Club Coaches hold an NZJJF C1 Assistant Club Coach Qualification (or approved equivalent), or are actively working toward achieving the qualification	☐
All coaches have submitted a signed agreement to abide by the NZJJF Code of Ethics.	☐

ADOPTED JANUARY 2020

REVIEWED JANUARY 2025