



Policy	CGHA-005
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### **CGHA Respect and Accountability Policy and Procedure**

Clarington Girls Hockey Association (CGHA), prioritizes creating a safe, inclusive, and respectful environment for everyone involved. All stakeholders, including parents, coaches, players, executive members, and volunteers, must adhere to our organization's bylaws, policies, and guidelines, as well as those set by external governing bodies.

Our organization is committed to maintaining affiliations with esteemed organizations such as the Ontario Women's Hockey Association (OWHA), Ontario Hockey Federation (OHF), and Hockey Canada. The establishment of regulatory frameworks, rules, standards, and values is of utmost importance in shaping our organization and guiding our conduct. Our commitment to principles of fairness, integrity, and sportsmanship is demonstrated through strict adherence to both our own and their respective bylaws, policies, and guidelines. Our aim is to provide an environment that promotes respect, inclusivity, and positive development, with a primary focus on ensuring the safety and well-being of all individuals involved.

This policy clarifies the disciplinary process and actions taken for violations. It outlines the steps, procedures, and consequences associated with disciplinary action, emphasizing accountability and fair resolutions.

All stakeholders should familiarize themselves with our organization's bylaws, policies, and guidelines, as well as those of Hockey Canada, OWHA, OHF, and Ontario Not-for-Profit Corporations Act. Understanding rights, responsibilities, and obligations within our organization and the broader hockey community is essential.

By upholding the principles and regulations of our organization and governing bodies, we can foster personal growth, teamwork, and the enjoyment of the sport. Together, we can maintain the integrity of our organization and create a positive experience for all.

The CGHA recognizes the importance of maintaining a fair and objective disciplinary process while ensuring transparency and the integrity of the proceedings. To achieve this, the focus of

the disciplinary process will primarily be on documented evidence, firsthand accounts, and information directly relevant to the incident in question. However, the CGHA acknowledges that in some cases, external information, including reports from other executives or organizations, may be considered if it is deemed credible and pertinent to the investigation. Such consideration will be made in alignment with the principles of fairness and due process.

## **1. Scope**

- 1.1. Parents/Family Members: The policy applies to parents or guardians of players who participate in the organization. It covers their behaviour and conduct during games, practices, team events, and interactions with coaches, officials, and other parents.
- 1.2. Coaches/Managers: The policy applies to coaches involved in the organization. It covers their behaviour and conduct while coaching and interacting with players, parents, officials, and other coaches, both during games, practices and team events.
- 1.3. Players: The policy applies to players participating in the organization. It covers their behaviour and conduct during games, practices, team events, and interactions with coaches, officials, opposing players, and other participants.
- 1.4. Executive Members (Board): The policy applies to executive members of the organization, such as board members or committee members. It covers their behaviour and conduct in their roles and responsibilities and interactions with coaches, parents, players, officials, and other executive members.
- 1.5. Volunteers: The policy applies to volunteers who contribute to the organization. It covers their behaviour and conduct while engaging in their volunteer duties and interactions with coaches, parents, players, officials, and other volunteers.
- 1.6. Timekeepers and Referees: The policy applies to timekeepers and referees who are affiliated with the organization. It covers their behaviour and conduct while performing their duties during games and events and their interactions with players, coaches, and other participants.

## **2. Consideration of External Information and Anonymous Complaints**

- 2.1. Hearsay information originating from sources outside the CGHA will typically not be given significant weight unless it directly pertains to a violation of the OWHHA volunteer policy. Our primary focus during the disciplinary process is on concrete evidence, firsthand accounts, and information directly relevant to the incident under investigation. This approach is designed to protect against unfounded or unverified claims while upholding the principles of fairness and due process.
- 2.2. While we encourage individuals to provide their contact information when making a complaint, we understand that certain circumstances may necessitate anonymity. Anonymous complaints will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis, considering the nature of the complaint and the available evidence. The CGHA will assess the credibility and validity of each anonymous complaint to determine its relevance to the investigation.

## **3. Respect and Sportsmanship**

- 3.1. Treat all individuals with respect, fairness, and dignity, regardless of their role, background, or skill level.

- 3.2. Display good sportsmanship, showing respect for opponents, officials, and the integrity of the game.

*Examples of Acceptable Behaviour:*

- *Congratulating opponents on a good game, regardless of the outcome.*
- *Showing appreciation and respect towards referees, even when disagreements arise.*

*Examples of Unacceptable Behaviour:*

- *Engaging in verbal abuse or taunting toward opponents or officials.*
- *Displaying unsportsmanlike conduct, such as excessive celebrations or provoking opponents.*

#### **4. Positive Communication**

- 4.1. Communicate in a respectful, constructive, and appropriate manner.
- 4.2. Use language that promotes a positive and inclusive environment for all involved.

*Examples of Acceptable Behaviour:*

- *Offering constructive feedback to players, coaches, and officials in a respectful manner.*
- *Encouraging and supporting teammates and opponents throughout the game.*

*Examples of Unacceptable Behaviour:*

- *Engaging in derogatory, offensive, or abusive language towards others.*
- *Bullying, harassing, or engaging in negative gossip about individuals involved in the association.*

#### **5. Compliance with Rules and Regulations**

- 5.1 Adhere to the rules and regulations set forth by the association and all other governing bodies.
- 5.2 Follow instructions from coaches, officials, and association representatives.

*Examples of Acceptable Behaviour:*

- *Familiarize oneself with the rules and regulations of the association and the game.*
- *Respecting and abiding by the decisions and rulings made by officials, executives and coaches.*

*Examples of Unacceptable Behaviour:*

- *Intentionally disregarding or violating the rules of the game or the association.*
- *Arguing or disputing every decision made by officials, executives or coaches.*

#### **6. Compliance with Association Policies**

- 6.1. Abide by the association's code of conduct, bylaws, and policies.
- 6.2. Comply with administrative procedures and requirements, including registration, financial obligations, volunteer commitments and any other requirements.

*Examples of Acceptable Behaviour:*

- *Attending required meetings, orientations, and training sessions as outlined by the association.*
- *Fulfilling volunteer duties or responsibilities as agreed upon with the association.*

*Examples of Unacceptable Behaviour:*

- *Violating the association's code of conduct or policies, including financial irregularities or conflicts of interest.*
- *Neglecting or failing to fulfill assigned volunteer duties without proper communication or justification.*

## **7. Safety and Well-being**

7.1. Prioritize the safety and well-being of oneself and others involved in the association.

7.2. Follow safety protocols, use appropriate protective equipment, and report any concerns or incidents promptly.

*Examples of Acceptable Behaviour:*

- *Wearing mandatory safety equipment during practices and games.*
- *Reporting any potential safety hazards or incidents to the appropriate authority.*

*Examples of Unacceptable Behaviour:*

- *Intentionally endangering the safety of oneself or others through reckless actions.*
- *Failing to report or address safety concerns that could impact the well-being of participants.*

## **8. Violations**

### **8.1 Harassment or Bullying:**

- Verbal, physical, or emotional abuse towards others involved in the organization.
- Discrimination or derogatory comments based on race, gender, ethnicity, religion, or other protected characteristics.
- Intimidation or threats directed at others.

### **8.2 Unsportsmanlike Conduct**

- Excessive arguing with referees, officials, or opposing team members.
- Engaging in fights or physical altercations during games or events.
- Deliberate attempts to injure opponents.

### **8.3 Violation of Safety Guidelines:**

- Failure to follow safety protocols or guidelines established by the organization.
- Refusal to wear appropriate protective equipment.
- Endangering the safety of oneself or others through reckless behaviour.

#### 8.4 Violation of Association Policies or Bylaws:

- Breaching Code of Conducts, Policies or Regulations.
- Unauthorized use of association resources or funds.
- Failure to adhere to team or association guidelines.

#### 8.5 Disruptive Behaviour:

- Interfering with the operations of the organization or its events.
- Publicly criticizing or defaming the organization or its members on social media or other platforms.
- Engaging in actions that create a hostile or negative environment for others.

#### 8.6 Violation of Ethical Standards:

- Engaging in dishonest or unethical behaviour, such as cheating, match-fixing, or tampering with game results.
- Misuse of confidential information or insider knowledge.
- Conflict of interest situations that compromise fair play and integrity.

#### 8.7 Failure to Comply with Coaching or Volunteer Requirements:

- Failure to complete required certifications, training, or background checks.
- Breach of responsibilities or neglect of duties as a coach, volunteer, or executive member.

### 9. Issue Resolution and Disciplinary Process

**Step 1 - Receipt of Complaint** - The initial step in addressing any disciplinary matter involves the receipt of a complaint. The Ethics and Discipline Committee (EDC) or a designated body is responsible for receiving these complaints. It is expected that complaints are submitted within a reasonable period after the incident or violation occurs, ensuring that timely action can be taken.

**Step 2 - Initial Assessment** - Upon receiving a complaint, the EDC or designated body initiates the process by conducting an initial assessment. This assessment is crucial in determining the nature and severity of the complaint. Additionally, the EDC evaluates whether the matter falls within the jurisdiction and policies of the association. This step is carried out promptly, within 48 hours of receiving the complaint.

**Step 3 - Preliminary Evaluation** - As part of the preliminary evaluation, the EDC or designated body assesses the merits of the complaint. This entails a careful consideration of the details provided, including the nature of the violation and its alignment with the association's policies and values. Simultaneously, the individual in question is notified about the complaint and is provided with a copy to ensure transparency and fairness.

**Step 4 - Notification and Evidence Gathering** - Subsequent to the preliminary evaluation, the EDC or designated body proceeds with notifying the individual in question about the complaint. This notification process is conducted diligently within five working days of the initial assessment. The individual in question is granted an opportunity to respond to the complaint within a specified timeframe, typically five working days. They are also informed of their right to

present their case, provide relevant evidence, and identify any witnesses who can contribute to the matter. Additionally, thorough evidence gathering takes place, with all relevant documentation and evidence related to the complaint collected from both the complainant and the individual in question.

**Step 5 - Investigation** - The investigation phase marks a critical stage in the process. It is carried out by the EDC or designated investigators, ensuring a thorough examination of the matter. This investigation includes interviewing the complainant, the individual in question, and any witnesses who may have pertinent information. All supporting evidence, such as documents, emails, or video footage, is reviewed meticulously. Throughout this phase, strict confidentiality and impartiality are maintained, and detailed records are kept to document the investigation proceedings. This investigative process aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the situation, ultimately leading to an informed decision.

**Step 6 - Review and Deliberation** - The responsible party, led by the Ethics and Discipline Committee (EDC) or a designated entity, promptly undertakes a comprehensive review following the conclusion of the investigation. This encompassing assessment involves a thorough examination of all assembled evidence, statements, and pertinent documents. Factors such as the gravity of the violation, the credibility of involved parties, and any mitigating circumstances are thoughtfully considered. Guided by the association's established principles and past precedents, a decision is reached, and a detailed written statement is crafted. This statement elucidates the findings of the investigation and articulates the specific disciplinary measures to be imposed.

**Step 7 - Notification of Decision** - The Ethics and Discipline Committee (EDC) or a designated representative shall be responsible for informing the involved parties in writing of the decision within 5 working days following the completion of the review and deliberation process. This written communication will include a detailed explanation of the findings and the rationale behind the decision.

## **10. Range of Disciplinary Actions**

**Warning:** A warning serves as a formal notice to the individual that their behaviour or actions are not in compliance with the association's bylaws, policies, or code of conduct. It indicates that further violations may result in more severe disciplinary measures.

**Suspension:** Suspension involves the temporary removal of certain privileges or participation rights within the association. The duration of the suspension can vary depending on the severity of the violation and may range from a few games or practices to an entire season.

**Probation:** Probation places certain restrictions or conditions on the individual's continued involvement in the association. It serves as a period for close monitoring and evaluation of their behaviour and compliance with the association's codes and policies.

**Expulsion:** Expulsion is the most severe disciplinary action and involves the permanent removal of the individual from the association. It typically occurs in cases of severe or repeated violations that significantly undermine the integrity, safety, or values of the association.

## 11. Factors Considered when Determining Disciplinary Action

**The Severity of the Violation:** The nature and seriousness of the violation will be considered. Factors such as the impact on others, the potential harm caused, or the violation's alignment with the association's core values will influence disciplinary action.

**Past Behaviour and Record:** The individual's history of previous violations, if any, will be considered. Repeated offences or patterns of misconduct may lead to more severe disciplinary actions.

**Intent and Awareness:** The intent behind the violation and the individual's awareness of the association's rules and expectations will be assessed. Deliberate and willful actions may warrant stronger disciplinary measures.

**Impact on Others and the Association:** The impact of the violation on other participants, the association's reputation, or the overall atmosphere within the organization will be taken into consideration when determining the appropriate action.

**Age and Developmental Stage:** For youth participants, their age and developmental stage may influence disciplinary action, as well as the opportunity for education, growth, and rehabilitation.

**Mitigating Factors:** Any mitigating circumstances, such as immediate acknowledgement of wrongdoing, willingness to make amends, or active participation in restorative processes, may be considered when determining the disciplinary action.

## 12. Appeal Process

Responsibility for handling appeals lies with the Appeals Committee or an appointed body, distinct from the original decision-makers. This committee should consist of impartial members with no prior involvement in the initial decision-making process. Upon receipt of an appeal, the committee will offer the concerned individual the opportunity to submit a written appeal within a designated time frame, typically 5 working days. The appeal process considers the grounds presented and any additional evidence provided. Appeals may be made based on procedural errors, the introduction of new evidence not available during the initial investigation, or claims of bias or unfair treatment. The Appeals Committee will reach a final decision on the appeal within the specified timeframe.

It's important to emphasize that the Appeals Committee's decision is considered final and binding within the Clarington Girls Hockey Association (CGHA). However, some matters may also be eligible for appeal with the Ontario Women's Hockey Association (OWHA). Individuals

are encouraged to review OSHA policies and procedures for further details regarding the appeal process at the level.

### **13. Role of Director of Wellness and Safety**

The Director of Wellness and Safety will play a crucial role as a vital link between the EDC committee and the claimant. Their primary objective is to ensure that the claimant's concerns are not only heard but also addressed promptly and efficiently. The Director will provide the claimant with comprehensive information, support, and assistance, fostering an environment where they feel secure and protected from any potential retaliation.

Furthermore, the Director will uphold complete confidentiality and strictly follow the established process. It is important to note that while the claimant's concerns are taken seriously and treated with utmost confidentiality, maintaining anonymity is not guaranteed. The focus is on ensuring the claimant's well-being and addressing their concerns effectively.

### **14. Recordkeeping and Confidentiality**

The CGHA recognizes the importance of maintaining accurate records of disciplinary actions while upholding the highest standards of confidentiality. These principles ensure transparency, accountability, and fairness in our disciplinary procedures while respecting the privacy rights of all individuals involved.

### **15. Record Maintenance**

The CGHA will maintain comprehensive records of all disciplinary actions, including complaints, investigations, decisions, and appeals. A designated individual or committee will be responsible for securely storing and organizing these records in a centralized system. These records will include relevant details such as the nature of the violation, parties involved, investigation findings, imposed disciplinary measures, and any supporting documentation.

### **16. Accessibility of Records**

Access to disciplinary records will be granted to authorized individuals who require the information for legitimate purposes, such as the Ethics and Discipline Committee or relevant association officials. Access to records will be provided on a need-to-know basis and in compliance with applicable privacy laws and regulations. Information regarding disciplinary actions will be shared with the complainant, the person in question, and any involved parties directly affected by the decision, as per the association's policies and legal requirements.

### **17. Confidentiality**

Maintaining strict confidentiality is paramount throughout the disciplinary process to protect the privacy and reputation of all individuals involved. All parties, including the complainant, the individual in question, witnesses, and members of the disciplinary committees, are required to



maintain confidentiality regarding the details of the investigation, discussions, and decision-making. Unauthorized disclosure of confidential information will be treated as a serious violation of the association's policies, resulting in appropriate consequences.

## **18. Data Protection and Privacy**

The CGHA will implement appropriate data protection measures to safeguard disciplinary records against unauthorized access, loss, or misuse. Compliance with relevant privacy laws and regulations will be ensured. Individuals involved in the disciplinary process will be informed about how their personal information will be handled and protected. By adhering to these practices, the CGHA demonstrates its commitment to maintaining accurate records, upholding confidentiality, and safeguarding the privacy rights of all stakeholders involved in the disciplinary process.

## **19. Policy Review and Amendments**

The CGHA is committed to regularly reviewing and updating its policies to ensure their ongoing relevance, effectiveness, and alignment with best practices. Amendment Process: Proposed policy amendments can be submitted and thoroughly reviewed by the EDC committee.

## **20. Duty to Report**

All members, including stakeholders, participants, volunteers, coaches, and staff, have a duty to promptly report any instances of misconduct, violations, or concerns related to the organization's bylaws, policies, or guidelines. This duty to report encompasses any behaviour that is believed to be harmful, discriminatory, unethical, or contrary to the principles and values of the organization.

Reports should be submitted through the online Issue Resolution form. Timely reporting is essential to ensure a safe and inclusive environment for all individuals involved.

By fulfilling this duty to report, we collectively contribute to upholding the integrity, safety, and well-being of our organization and its members. Each report plays a vital role in addressing misconduct, preventing further harm, and fostering positive change.

## **21. Reporting Allegations of Criminal Activities**

The CGHA is committed to maintaining a safe and respectful environment within the organization. To uphold this commitment, we acknowledge our duty to promptly report any incidents of a criminal nature to the appropriate authorities. This duty to report is based on guidelines provided by Hockey Canada and the Office of Sport Integrity Commissioner (OSIC).

Reporting will be conducted in accordance with the duty to report as outlined by Hockey Canada and Abuse-Free Sport, through the OSIC. The CGHA will fully cooperate with law enforcement and other governing bodies during any criminal investigation.

This is an updated Bully and Bullying, Harassment and Abuse Policy.