

Policy Section	Change	Policy Version #	Date Approved	Effective Date
All	New Policy	0	2002	2002
All	Policy Revisions	0.1 – 0.7	2003-2011	2003-2011
All	Split Policy into sections 1.0 – 23.0, Appendix A – G	1	2012	2012
All	20.1 Definitions – Terms 20.2 Purpose 20.4.1.1 – Reporting a Complaint 20.4.9.3 20.4.9.4 20.4.10.1 Wording change to 20.3.1	2	2015	2015
All	Spelling, Punctuation	3	N/A	11/03/2017

## 20.0 COMPLAINTS AND DISCIPLINE POLICY

### 20.1 Definitions

The following terms have these meanings in this Policy:

- a) *Complainant*: The party alleging an infraction;
- b) *Days*: Days irrespective of weekends and statutory holidays
- c) *Respondent*: The alleged infracting party;
- d) *Members and Participants*: All categories of membership defined in the Ringette Alberta Bylaws, as well as all individuals employed by or engaged in activities with Ringette Alberta, including but not limited to clubs, athletes, coaches, officials, volunteers, managers, administrators, director and officers of Ringette Alberta, parents/guardians of athletes under 18, and any person performing paid or unpaid service to a Member of Ringette Alberta.

### 20.2 Purpose

Ringette Alberta is committed to providing an environment in which all Ringette Alberta Members are treated with respect characterized by the values of fairness, integrity, and open communication. Membership in Ringette Alberta, as well as participation in its activities, brings many benefits and privileges. At the same time, Members and Participants are expected to fulfill certain responsibilities and obligations, including, but not limited to, complying with Ringette Alberta’s policies, bylaws, rules and regulations, including the Code of Conduct. Irresponsible behavior by Members can result in severe damage to the integrity of Ringette Alberta. Conduct that violates these values may be subject to discipline pursuant to this Policy. Since sanctions may be applied, Ringette Alberta provides Members and Participants with the mechanisms outlined in this Policy so that complaints are handled fairly, expeditiously and affordably.

## 20.3 Applicability

- 20.3.1 This policy applies to all Ringette Alberta Members and Participants as defined above and to any discipline matters that may arise during the course of Ringette Alberta's business, activities, and events, including but not limited to Ringette Alberta Provincial Championships, Sanctioned Tournaments, Team Alberta activities, complaints between Group Members or Leagues, and other Ringette Alberta run development programs.
- 20.3.2 Complaints and discipline matters arising within the business, activities or events organized by entities other than Ringette Alberta will be dealt with pursuant to the policies of these other entities unless accepted by Ringette Alberta at its sole discretion.

## 20.4 Requirements

- 20.4.1 Reporting a Complaint
- 20.4.1.1 Any Member or Participant may report any complaint of an infraction to the Ringette Alberta Head Office. Such Complaint must be in writing and signed, and must be filed within fourteen (14) days of the alleged incident.
- 20.4.1.2 Anonymous complaints may be accepted upon the sole discretion of Ringette Alberta.
- 20.4.1.3 A Complainant wishing to file a complaint beyond the fourteen (14) days of the incident, decision or action that is being reported must provide a written statement giving reasons for an exemption to this limitation. The decision to accept, or not accept, the notice of complaint outside the fourteen (14) day period will be at the sole discretion of Ringette Alberta. This decision may not be appealed.
- 20.4.2 Upon receipt of a complaint, Ringette Alberta will assign a Case Manager to oversee the management and administration of complaints submitted in accordance with this Policy and such appointment is not appealable.
- 20.4.3 The Case Manager shall not have had any prior involvement either directly or by way of correspondence or conversations with the matter under complaint and has an overall responsibility to implement this Policy in a timely manner.
- 20.4.4 More specifically, the Case Manager has a responsibility to:
- 20.4.4.1 Determine whether the complaint is frivolous or vexatious and within the jurisdiction of this Policy. If the Case Manager determines the complaint is frivolous or vexatious or outside the jurisdiction of this Policy, the complaint will be dismissed immediately. The Case Manager decision to the

- acceptance or dismissal of the complaint may not be appealed;
- 20.4.4.2 Determine if the complaint is a minor or major infraction;
  - 20.4.4.3 Appoint a Panel, if necessary, in accordance with this Policy;
  - 20.4.4.4 Determine the format of the hearing;
  - 20.4.4.5 Coordinate all administrative aspects of the complaint;
  - 20.4.4.6 Provide administrative assistance and logistical support to the Panel as required; and,
  - 20.4.4.7 Provide any other service or support that may be necessary to ensure a fair and timely proceeding.
- 20.4.5 The Case Manager will inform the parties if the incident is to be dealt with as a minor infraction or major infraction and the matter will be dealt with according to the applicable section relating to the minor or major infraction.
- 20.4.6 This Policy does not prevent an appropriate person having authority from taking immediate, informal or corrective action in response to behaviour that constitutes either a minor or major infraction. Further sanctions may be applied in accordance with the procedures set out in this Policy.
- 20.4.7 Minor infractions
- are single incidents of failing to achieve the expected standards of conduct that generally do not result in harm to others, Ringette Alberta or to the sport of Ringette.
- 20.4.7.1 All disciplinary situations involving minor infractions will be dealt with by the appropriate person having authority over the situation and the individual involved (the person in authority may include, but is not restricted to, staff, officials, coaches, organizers, or Ringette Alberta decision makers).
  - 20.4.7.2 Procedures for dealing with minor infractions will be informal as compared to those for major infractions and will be determined at the discretion of the person responsible for discipline of such infractions (as noted above in point 7).
- This is provided that the Respondent being disciplined is told the nature of the infraction and has an opportunity to provide information

concerning the incident.

20.4.7.3 Penalties or measures for minor infractions, which may be applied singly or in combination, include the following:

- a) Verbal or written warning;
- b) Verbal or written apology;
- c) Service or other voluntary contribution to Ringette Alberta;
- d) Removal of certain privileges of membership or participation for a designated period of time;
- e) Suspension from the current competition, activity or event; or
- f) Any other sanction considered appropriate for the offense.

20.4.7.4 Minor infractions that result in discipline will be recorded and maintained by Ringette Alberta. Repeat minor infractions may result in further such incidents being considered a major infraction.

#### 20.4.8 Major infractions

are instances of failing to achieve the expected standards of conduct that result, or have the potential to result in harm to other persons, to Ringette Alberta or to the sport of Ringette.

20.4.8.1 Examples of major infractions include, but are not limited to:

- a) Repeated Minor Infractions;
- b) Intentionally damaging Ringette Alberta property or improperly handling Ringette Alberta monies;
- c) Incidents of physical abuse;
- d) Pranks, jokes or other activities that endanger the safety of others, including hazing;
- e) Disregard for the bylaws, policies, rules, regulations and directives of Ringette Alberta;
- f) Conduct that intentionally damages the image, credibility or reputation of an Individual, Ringette Alberta or the sport of Ringette;
- g) Behaviour that constitutes harassment, sexual harassment or sexual misconduct; or
- h) Abusive use of alcohol, any use or possession of alcohol by minors, use or possession of illicit drugs and narcotics.

20.4.8.2 Major infractions will be decided using the disciplinary procedures set out in this policy, except where a dispute resolution procedure contained within a contract or other formal written agreement takes precedence.

20.4.8.3 Major infractions occurring within competition may be dealt with immediately, if necessary, by an appropriate person having authority. In such situations, disciplinary sanctions will be for the duration of the competition, training, activity or event only. Further sanctions may be applied but only after review of the matter in accordance with the procedures set out in this Policy. This review does not replace the appeal provisions of this Policy.

#### 20.4.9 Procedure for Major Infraction Hearing

20.4.9.1 If the complaint for a major infraction will require a hearing before a Panel, the Case Manager will appoint the Panel, which will consist of a single Adjudicator, to hear the appeal. In extraordinary circumstances, and at the discretion of the Case Manager, a Panel of three persons may be appointed to hear and decide the complaint. In this event, the Case Manager will appoint one of the Panel's members to serve as the Chair.

20.4.9.2 The Case Manager will determine the format of the hearing, which may involve an oral hearing in person, an oral hearing by telephone web conference or other appropriate electronic means, a hearing based on written submissions or a combination of these methods. The hearing will be governed by the procedures that the Case Manager and the Panel deem appropriate in the circumstances, provided that:

- a) The Parties will be given appropriate notice of the day, time and place of the hearing. The time of the hearing shall be established such that, as much as possible, parties are not required to take time from their employment to participate;
- b) Copies of any written documents which the parties wish to have the Panel consider will be provided to all Parties in advance of the hearing;
- c) The parties may be accompanied by a representative, advisor or legal counsel at their own expense;
- d) The Panel may request that any other individual participate and give evidence at the hearing;

e) Decisions will be by majority vote.

20.4.9.3 Where the Respondent acknowledges the facts of the incident, he or she may waive the hearing, in which case the Panel will determine the appropriate disciplinary sanction. The Panel may hold a hearing for the purpose of determining an appropriate sanction.

20.4.9.4 If the Respondent chooses not to participate in the hearing, the hearing will proceed in any event.

#### 20.4.10 Decision

20.4.10.1 In fulfilling its duties, the Panel may obtain independent advice.

20.4.10.2 After hearing the matter, the Panel will determine whether an infraction has occurred and if so what appropriate sanction will be imposed. The Panel's written decision, with reasons, will be distributed to all parties, the Case Manager and Ringette Alberta. The decision will be considered a matter of public record unless decided otherwise by the Panel.

#### 20.4.11 Sanctions

20.4.11.1 The Panel may apply the following disciplinary sanctions singly or in combination, for major infractions:

- a) Verbal or written reprimand;
- b) Verbal or written apology;
- c) Service or other voluntary contribution to Ringette Alberta;
- d) Removal of certain privileges of membership;
- e) Suspension from certain Ringette Alberta teams, events and/or activities;
- f) Suspension from all Ringette Alberta activities for a designated period of time;
- g) Withholding of prize money;
- h) Payment of the cost of repairs for property damage;
- i) Suspension of funding from Ringette Alberta or other funding;
- j) Expulsion from Ringette Alberta;
- k) Other sanctions as may be considered appropriate for the offense.

20.4.11.2 Unless the Panel decides otherwise, any disciplinary sanctions will commence immediately. Failure to comply with a sanction as determined by the Panel will result in automatic suspension until such time as compliance occurs.

20.4.11.3 A written record will be maintained by Ringette Alberta at their head office for major infractions that result in a sanction.

#### 20.4.12 Criminal Convictions

A Member's conviction for any of the following *Criminal Code* offenses will be deemed a major infraction under this Policy and will result in expulsion from Ringette Alberta and/or removal from Ringette Alberta competitions, programs, activities and events upon the sole discretion of Ringette Alberta:

- a) Any child pornography offences;
- b) Any sexual offences;
- c) Any offence of physical or psychological violence;
- d) Any offence of assault; or
- e) Any offence involving trafficking of illegal drugs.

#### 20.4.13 Confidentiality

20.4.13.1 The discipline and complaints process is confidential involving only the Parties, the Case Manager and the Panel. Once initiated and until a decision is released, none of the Parties will disclose confidential information relating to the discipline or complaint to any person not involved in the proceedings.

#### 20.4.14 Appeals

20.4.14.1 The decision of the Panel may be appealed in accordance with the Ringette Alberta Appeal Policy.

## 20.5 References

Appendix A - Rates and Fees