



Yellowknife Minor Hockey Association

## Disciplinary Process Policy

Approved: April 30, 2025

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Yellowknife Minor Hockey Association (YKMHA) is committed to ensuring a safe, fair, and respectful environment for all players, coaches, officials, volunteers, and spectators. This policy outlines the disciplinary process for addressing violations of the **YKMHA Code of Conduct** and related policies.

This process aligns with Hockey Canada's rules and guidelines, including Hockey North and Hockey NWT regulations, to ensure fair and consistent enforcement of discipline while promoting player safety and sportsmanship.

### 2.0 DISCIPLINARY PROCESS OVERVIEW

Discipline within YKMHA follows a structured process to ensure transparency and fairness. The process consists of five key steps:

1. Informal Resolution by Coaches and Team Officials
2. Incident Identification & Reporting
3. Preliminary Review & Investigation
4. Disciplinary Decision & Sanctions
5. Appeals & Grievances Process
6. Record Keeping & Follow-Up

### 3.0 INFORMAL RESOLUTION BY COACHES & TEAM OFFICIALS

#### 3.1 Role of Coaches in Discipline

Coaches and team officials play a crucial role in maintaining discipline and respect within their teams. Many minor behavioural issues can be resolved at the team level through an informal approach before escalating to the formal disciplinary process.

#### 3.2 Informal Corrective Actions

Before escalating a behavioural concern, a coach or team official may take the following informal steps:

- Verbal Reminder: Addressing the player or parent immediately about inappropriate behaviour and reinforcing expected conduct.
- Bench Warning: Sitting a player for a shift or period due to inappropriate actions (e.g., excessive penalties, unsportsmanlike conduct).

- **Team Meeting:** Holding a discussion with the player and, if necessary, their parents, to address and correct the behaviour.
- **Written Warning:** Providing a documented warning to the player and/or parent, noting that further violations will be escalated to the Director of Ethics and Discipline.
- **Temporary Suspension from Team Activities:** If necessary, a short-term restriction from non-game activities (e.g., missing a practice) as a cooling-off period.

Coaches should document repeated informal discipline actions and notify the Director of Ethics and Discipline if the issue persists.

### **3.3 When to Escalate to Formal Discipline**

If informal measures fail to correct the behaviour, or if the misconduct is serious (e.g., physical altercation, abusive language, repeated infractions), the coach must submit a formal complaint to the YKMHA Director of Ethics and Discipline. At this point, the formal discipline process will begin.

## **4.0 INCIDENT IDENTIFICATION & REPORTING**

### **4.1 Who Can Report a Violation?**

A violation of the **YKMHA Code of Conduct** may be reported by:

- Players, coaches, or team officials
- Game officials (referees, linespersons)
- Parents or spectators
- League administrators or volunteers

### **4.2 How to Report a Violation**

A violation must be reported in writing and submitted to the YKMHA Director of Ethics and Discipline via:

- Email: [discipline@ykminorhockey.ca](mailto:discipline@ykminorhockey.ca) (CC: [adminassistant@ykminorhockey.ca](mailto:adminassistant@ykminorhockey.ca))
- Game reports from officials
- Formal complaints submitted by a team's governor or coach

A report must include:

- The date, time, and location of the incident
- A detailed description of what occurred
- The names of individuals involved and any witnesses
- Any video evidence or additional documentation (if available)
- The name and contact details of the individual submitting the report

Anonymous complaints will not be considered, except in exceptional cases where anonymity is required for safety reasons, as determined by the YKMHA Executive Committee.

## **5.0 PRELIMINARY REVIEW & INVESTIGATION**

### **5.1 Review Process**

Upon receiving a complaint, the YKMHA Director of Ethics and Discipline will:

- Acknowledge receipt of the complaint within 48 hours.
- Assign an impartial Discipline Committee to review the case, ensuring no conflict of interest exists.
- Conduct an initial assessment to determine if the complaint falls within the scope of YKMHA policies and warrants further investigation.
- Gather evidence, including:
  - Statements from the complainant and respondent.
  - Statements from witnesses, including players, coaches, officials, and spectators where relevant.
  - Reviewing game officials' reports if applicable.
  - Examining any available video footage, in accordance with the **YKMHA Video Review Policy**, or photographic evidence.
  - Reviewing the individual's past disciplinary record within YKMHA.
- Allow the respondent an opportunity to provide their version of events, ensuring fairness in the process.
- Hold an interview or hearing if necessary, depending on the severity and complexity of the case.
- Deliberate on findings and determine if formal discipline is necessary.

If the violation involves an on-ice incident, the Director of Ethics and Discipline will review the referee's official report and apply **Hockey Canada's Minimum Suspensions** where required, based on infractions noted in report. Additional discipline may be imposed by a Discipline Committee, as outlined above, if the conduct is deemed egregious.

The review process must be completed within 7 days, unless exceptional circumstances require an extension, in which case all involved parties will be notified.

## 5.2 Investigation Guidelines

- The Discipline Committee must conduct all interviews in a professional, objective, and unbiased manner.
- All involved individuals will be reminded of confidentiality requirements.
- In cases involving minors, interviews must be conducted in the presence of a parent, guardian, or team official.
- If a complaint is deemed malicious or unfounded, disciplinary action may be taken against the complainant.

## 5.3 Interim Measures

Pending the completion of the investigation, YKMHA may impose temporary conditions to ensure safety and fairness, such as:

- Restricting access to YKMHA events.
- Implementing a temporary suspension.
- Requiring supervised participation.

- Assigning additional training or mentorship (e.g., requiring a player or coach to review a conduct policy).
- Temporarily reassigning coaching or team roles if necessary.

These interim measures do not indicate guilt but are precautionary actions to uphold a safe environment. Failure to comply with interim measures may result in additional sanctions.

## 6.0 DISCIPLINARY DECISION & SANCTIONS

### 6.1 Decision Process

Following the completion of the investigation, the YKMHA Discipline Committee will:

- Review all collected evidence including statements, reports, and any supporting documentation.
- Assess the severity of the infraction, considering whether it is a first-time or repeat offense.
- Apply ***Hockey Canada's Minimum Suspensions*** where required.
- Determine if additional sanctions are warranted based on aggravating or mitigating factors.
- Ensure consistency with past decisions to maintain fairness in enforcement.
- Vote on the final disciplinary decision, ensuring that any committee members with conflicts of interest recuse themselves.
- Document the decision and rationale for future reference.

The decision must be issued within 5 days of completing the investigation, unless circumstances require an extension.

### 6.2 Possible Sanctions

- Disciplinary actions may include, but are not limited to:
- Verbal Warning – A discussion with the individual about their behaviour.
- Written Reprimand – A formal documented warning.
- Game Suspensions – Enforced as per ***Hockey Canada's Minimum Suspensions*** or extended based on the severity of the offense.
- Indefinite Suspension – Applied for serious offenses such as abuse of officials, physical violence, or egregious conduct.
- Expulsion from YKMHA – For extreme violations where the individual is deemed unfit to participate in YKMHA activities.
- Mandatory Education or Training – Requiring completion of courses related to respect in sport, coaching ethics, or conflict resolution.
- Orders for restitution, rectification, or payment of damages when applicable.
- Denial of access to YKMHA activities for a defined period, up to two years in severe cases.

For further details on the recommended disciplinary measures based on the type and severity of the offense, refer to ***Appendix 1 – Disciplinary Sanctions Table***

### 6.3 Notification of Sanctions

The disciplined individual will receive a written notice outlining:

- The nature of the violation.
- The sanction(s) imposed.
- The rationale for the decision.
- Their rights regarding appeal.
- Any next steps required for reinstatement, if applicable.

Failure to comply with an imposed sanction may result in further disciplinary action, including extended suspension or permanent expulsion from YKMHA activities.

## 7.0 APPEALS & GRIEVANCES

### 7.1 Right to Appeal

Any individual who has been subject to a disciplinary decision has the right to appeal under the following conditions:

- The appeal is based on a procedural error (e.g. bias, failure to follow due process).
- The appeal provides new evidence that was not available during the initial investigation.
- The severity of the sanction is disproportionate to the offense (evidence provided).
- The appeal does not dispute the fairness of a ***Hockey Canada Minimum Suspension or Appendix 1 – Disciplinary Sanctions Table***, which are non-negotiable.

### 7.2 Filing an Appeal

To initiate an appeal, the appellant must:

- Submit a written appeal request within 5 days of receiving the disciplinary decision.
- Address the appeal to the YKMHA President, copying the Discipline Committee Chair or Director of Ethics and Discipline.
- Include the following details in the appeal:
  - The date, time, and location of the original incident.
  - A detailed explanation of why the appeal is being filed.
  - Any new evidence or documentation supporting the appeal.
  - The desired outcome (e.g., reduction of suspension, case re-evaluation).
- Pay a \$100 appeal fee, refundable if the appeal is successful.
- The appellant will be provided with copies of the investigation report and relevant evidence.

### 7.3 Appeal Review Process

Upon receiving an appeal, the following steps will be taken:

- **Step 1:** The Discipline Committee, or Director of Ethics and Discipline, will acknowledge receipt of the appeal within 48 hours.
- **Step 2:** An Appeal Panel will be appointed, consisting of three impartial individuals not involved in the initial decision.
- **Step 3:** The panel will review all documentation and, if necessary, conduct further interviews.
- **Step 4:** The panel will determine whether to:

- Uphold the original decision (no change).
- Modify the sanction (e.g., reduce suspension duration).
- Overturn the decision (dismiss the sanction).
- **Step 5:** A written decision will be provided to the appellant within 7 days of the appeal investigation, unless circumstances require an extension.

#### **7.4 Finality of Decision**

- The decision of the Appeal Panel is final within YKMHA.
- If further recourse is required, the appellant may submit an appeal to Hockey North or Hockey Canada, following their respective procedures.
- Appeals will not be considered if they are based purely on dissatisfaction with the outcome rather than substantive grounds.

#### **7.5 Grievance Process**

If an individual feels that they have been treated unfairly but the issue does not involve a formal disciplinary action, they may file a grievance. This includes concerns about:

- Coaching decisions affecting fair play.
- Team selection concerns.
- Treatment by other YKMHA members that does not violate the Code of Conduct but is still concerning.

#### **Grievance Filing Procedure**

1. Submit a written grievance to the YKMHA President or a Board Member.
2. The Board of Directors will review the grievance and determine if a resolution is required.
3. If necessary, the involved parties will be asked to meet for a mediation session.
4. If unresolved, the Board may take appropriate action to ensure fairness

#### **7.0 RECORD KEEPING & FOLLOW-UP**

- All disciplinary records, including appeals and grievances, will be maintained for a minimum of five (5) years.
- Confidentiality will be maintained, and access to records will be limited to relevant YKMHA officials.
- Records will include written warnings, suspensions, expulsion notices, appeal decisions, and grievance resolutions.
- The YKMHA Board of Directors will conduct periodic reviews of disciplinary trends to ensure fairness and consistency in enforcement.

#### **8.0 FINAL STATEMENT**

YKMHA is committed to upholding the integrity and values of minor hockey by ensuring a safe and respectful environment for all participants. This ***Discipline Process Policy*** provides a clear framework for handling misconduct, appeals, and grievances while aligning with Hockey Canada's standards.

For any questions or to submit a disciplinary report, appeal, or grievance, contact [discipline@ykminorhockey.ca](mailto:discipline@ykminorhockey.ca).

## APPENDIX 1 – DISCIPLINARY SANCTIONS TABLE

The following table outlines the disciplinary measures for specific offenses, adapted from the original YKMHA Code of Conduct (2018). This table provides minimum sanctions, which may be adjusted based on the severity of the offense and past conduct.

### First Level Offenses (Minor Misconduct)

#### Examples:

- Horseplay
- Refusing to Participate
- Lateness or Unexcused Absence
- Messing up the Dressing Room
- Swearing
- Other Minor Transgressions

Offense Count	Sanction
First Offense	One Period Suspension
Second Offense	Two Periods Suspension
Third Offense	One Game Suspension

### Second Level Offenses (Major Misconduct)

#### Examples:

- Fighting
- Insubordination
- Hindering Others from Participating
- Harassment of Others
- Other Major Transgressions

Offense Count	Sanction
First Offense	Minimum One-week Suspension
Second Offense	Minimum Two-week Suspension
Third Offense	Minimum One-month Suspension



### **Third Level Offenses (Severe Misconduct)**

#### **Drugs or Alcohol**

Any member found in possession of or under the influence of drugs or alcohol while participating in an Association event or activity shall be suspended as follows:

<b>Offense Count</b>	<b>Sanction</b>
First Offense	Minimum One-month Suspension
Second Offense	Minimum Six-month Suspension

#### **Theft**

Any member proven to have committed theft while participating in an Association-related event or activity shall be suspended as follows:

<b>Offense Count</b>	<b>Sanction</b>
First Offense	Minimum One-month Suspension
Second Offense	Minimum Six-month Suspension

- The person must reimburse the cost of the stolen item and submit a written apology to the affected party before reinstatement.

#### **Vandalism**

Any member proven to have committed vandalism while participating in an Association-related event or activity shall be suspended as follows:

<b>Offense Count</b>	<b>Sanction</b>
First Offense	Minimum One-month Suspension
Second Offense	Minimum Six-month Suspension

- The cost of damages will be recovered from the persons involved.

#### **Assault**

Any member proven to have committed an assault while participating in an Association-related event or activity shall be suspended as follows:

<b>Offense Count</b>	<b>Sanction</b>
First Offense	Minimum One-month Suspension

Second Offense	Minimum Six-month Suspension
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**Additional Notes:**

- These sanctions represent minimum penalties; more severe action may be taken at the discretion of the YKMHA Discipline Committee or Director of Ethics and Discipline depending on the severity of the misconduct.
- **Hockey Canada's Minimum Suspensions** will apply for all on-ice infractions and take precedence where applicable.
- Individuals receiving indefinite suspensions may apply for reinstatement by submitting a formal appeal to the YKMHA Board of Directors.
- Expulsion from YKMHA may be considered in cases of extreme misconduct.
- Sanctions may also be imposed under other YKMHA policies, including but not limited to the **Parent Code of Conduct**, **Coach Code of Conduct**, and **Communication Policy**, as referenced in the **YKMHA Code of Conduct**.