



# Cape Breton County Minor Hockey Association

## Discipline Policy

**Updated: October 2024**

The Cape Breton County Minor Hockey Association (CBCMHA) is dedicated to providing a hockey program that promotes the importance and understanding of work ethic, sportsmanship, discipline, teamwork, and the fair treatment of others by providing a positive and enjoyable experience in a safe and respectful environment.

The Discipline Policy is divided into two distinct categories, each with its own disciplinary framework (as supported by Section 3: **Complaint and Investigation Procedures**):

- 1. Code of Conduct Violations**
- 2. Fair Play Violations**

The Discipline Committee will review and apply the appropriate disciplinary actions based on the relevant category.

### **1. Discipline for Code of Conduct Violations**

**Any individual (including players, parents, guardians, coaches, board members and spectators) who contravenes the CBCMHA Code of Conduct is subject to the following disciplinary action.**

- **1st Offense:** Suspended/Banned for 7 days from all CBCMHA hockey functions, including home and away games, tournaments, and practices.
- **2nd Offense:** Suspended/Banned for 14 days from all CBCMHA hockey functions, including home and away games, tournaments, and practices.



- **3rd Offense:** Suspended indefinitely from all CBCMHA hockey functions, including home and away games, tournaments, and practices, pending a review by the CBCMHA Discipline Committee.

If an individual physically assaults a coach, bench staff, official, board member, arena staff, or spectator, the individual will be immediately suspended from all CBCMHA hockey functions, pending a review by the CBCMHA Discipline Committee.

### **Disciplinary Committee Discretion**

While this policy outlines a clear and structured disciplinary process, the CBCMHA Discipline Committee reserves the right to govern and apply the discipline policy over any matter it, or any member, deems inappropriate or in contravention of the Code of Conduct. This includes, but is not limited to, incidents or behaviors that may not be explicitly listed in the policy.

Although the penal system describes progressive discipline steps (e.g., 1st Offense, 2nd Offense, etc.), the Discipline Committee retains the authority to deviate from this progression if it deems the nature of the incident warrants more severe measures. In such cases, the Discipline Committee may impose penalties up to and including indefinite suspension, even on a first offense, when it considers the conduct to be of a serious or egregious nature.

Furthermore, the Discipline Committee retains the authority to deviate from the progressive discipline steps for what it deems to be minor complaints or vexatious complaints. It is the expectation that minor complaints are addressed at the team level. Escalation to the Discipline Committee should occur only if offenses are repeated or there is lack of consequences at the team level. Complaints deemed to be vexatious by the Discipline Committee will be dismissed. Complainants lodging vexatious complaints may be subject to discipline.



## **Discipline Guide for Players**

It should be noted that positive reinforcement is the preferred approach for discipline. This Discipline Guide should be used only when positive avenues have been exhausted (see above).

This Discipline Guide serves as a general framework for addressing various levels of misconduct. It is intended to provide guidance to players, parents, and coaches, but it should not be construed as a rigid set of rules. The Discipline Committee retains full discretion in interpreting and applying the guidelines, as written or otherwise, relative to any potential code of conduct violations. The Committee reserves the right to modify or depart from the Guide as deemed appropriate under the circumstances.

### **Offense Levels - Players**

#### **Level 1 Offense:**

- Horseplay
- Refusing to participate
- Lateness or unexcused absence
- Messing up the dressing room
- Swearing
- Other minor misbehavior

#### **Level 2 Offense:**

- Fighting (off-ice, practices, dressing rooms)
- Insubordination to Coaching Staff
- Harassment of arena staff or others
- Hindering others from participating
- Other major misbehavior

#### **Level 3 Offense:**

- **Drugs/Alcohol:** Any player found in possession of drugs or alcohol or under the influence at any CBCMHA sponsored event.
- **Theft:** Any player proven to have engaged in thievery at a CBCMHA sponsored activity or venue.



- **Vandalism or other illegal misbehavior:** Any player proven to have engaged in vandalism or other illegal misbehavior at a CBCMHA sponsored activity or venue.

## **Player Suspensions**

A player may be suspended for infractions incurred during, prior to, or after any game or practice for disrespect or abuse towards any CBCMHA member, parent, player, official, arena staff, or CBCMHA board member. A player may also be suspended for unsuitable conduct on or off the ice, stealing property, or destroying/mishandling property belonging to others.

All suspensions will be handled by the Discipline Committee and will be reported to the Board of Directors. All suspensions are subject to appeal to Hockey Nova Scotia and/or Hockey Canada.

## **2. Fair Play Violations**

### **Fair Play Acknowledgment**

The CBCMHA recognizes that Fair Play Violations are viewed as separate from Code of Conduct Violations and are governed under their own policy. While the Code of Conduct addresses behavior and respect, the Fair Play Policy emphasizes playing opportunities, player development and respect as integral components of fair play. CBCMHA supports its coaches in applying the Fair Play Policy to ensure a positive experience for all players, while giving coaches the discretion needed to manage these situations effectively. It should be noted that in some instances violations of the Fair Play Policy may also violate the Code of Conduct, and vice versa.

### **Fair Play Policy Committee Discretion**

The Fair Play Policy is designed to promote a culture that prioritizes player development and equal opportunities. While the policy sets clear expectations, the CBCMHA Discipline Committee retains the discretion to address any Fair Play violations as needed. The Committee recognizes that coaching decisions must sometimes adapt to different game scenarios and individual player needs. To ensure consistency with our player development values, the



Committee may interpret and apply the Fair Play Policy as it deems appropriate, including adjusting penalties or issuing directives when a situation falls outside the policy's intended purpose or negatively impacts player growth and development.

### **3. Complaint and Investigation Procedures**

The CBCMHA requires all members to observe a 24-hour cool down period before addressing any complaints or issues. Major incidents impacting a child, volunteer or spectator's safety are not subject to the cool down period and should be reported immediately. Please see Section 7 of the Code of Conduct for complaint or dispute resolution procedures. Final decisions will be communicated in writing, and all complaints must be submitted within 14 days of the incident. The Committee's decisions are final unless overturned through an appeal to Hockey Nova Scotia or Hockey Canada.

#### **Twenty-Four Hour Cool Down Period & Complaint Procedure**

1. All members of the association must abide by the 24-hour cool down period rule. When 24 hours have passed, the member may then initiate contact to solve the problem.
2. All members of CBCMHA with a complaint or problem must follow the complaint procedure as outlined in the standard team rules:
  - a. Observe the 24-hour cool down period.
  - b. Speak to the team manager/parent representative (approved by the Head Coach).
  - c. Speak to the Coach together with the Parent Representative.
3. If a satisfactory resolution is not obtained by following the procedure, the member may approach the Discipline Committee, in writing via the designated email account (countyminorhockeydiscipline@gmail.com). The committee will then review the complaint.
4. All parties involved have the option of requesting an in-person meeting with the Discipline Committee to present their complaint.
5. All responses will be made in writing. The Discipline Committee will not deal with hearsay.



6. All decisions of the CBCMHA Discipline Committee are final. No exceptions will be granted unless the decision is reversed by Hockey Nova Scotia or Hockey Canada through an appeal at the complainant's expense.
7. All letters of complaint must be received by the Discipline Committee no later than 14 days following the incident. Letters will not be accepted after this period.

### **Complaint Investigation and Resolution Process**

When a complaint is made, CBCMHA has a duty to conduct an investigation to determine whether or not the complaint is founded. The following principles apply:

- **Respect Confidentiality:** All parties involved shall be treated with respect and have their concerns handled confidentially.
- **Notice:** All parties affected by the allegation must be informed of the important issues and given enough information to participate in the investigation.
- **Fair Hearing:** All parties affected shall be given a reasonable opportunity to present their point of view and to respond to facts presented by others.
- **Impartiality:** The decision-maker will consider what each person has communicated and must act impartially when considering the matter.
- **Balance of Probabilities:** The Discipline Committee's decision only needs to be reasonably certain that the allegation is (or is not) founded.
- **Communication of Outcome:** All complaints shall receive a written reply (e.g., email) to communicate the outcome following final investigation and Board briefing. The complainant will be informed of the sanction imposed; however, the decision will not be made public.