



**Policies and Procedures of the Abbotsford Minor Hockey Association (AMHA)**

Policy 11

# AMHA Safe Sport, Discipline & Dispute Resolution

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Replaces AMHA Policies: P-11 Abuse & Harassment, P-12 Discipline, and P-13 Dispute Resolution

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## 1. Introduction & Purpose

### 1.1 Commitment to Safety

The Abbotsford Minor Hockey Association (AMHA) is committed to providing a safe, inclusive, and welcoming environment free from all forms of Maltreatment, Bullying, and Harassment. This policy applies to all participants, including players, parents, volunteers, Team Officials, referees, employees, and Directors.

### 1.2 Alignment with Governing Bodies

AMHA members are expected to abide by the conduct policies of our governing bodies, including BC Hockey and Hockey Canada. In the event of a discrepancy between this policy and the [BC Hockey Maltreatment, Bullying and Harassment Protection and Prevention Policy \(2025\)](#) (<https://www.bchockey.net/member-info/regulations/bc-hockey-policy-manual>), the BC Hockey standards shall prevail.

### 1.3 Scope and Application

This policy applies to all AMHA members and parents, regardless of the capacity in which they are attending a sanctioned event (e.g., as a spectator, volunteer, or Official's Parent).

The policy applies in the following circumstances:

- **Sanctioned Activities:** During all AMHA-sanctioned activities and events, including games, practices, and travel.
- **Facilities:** At all facilities used for these activities, explicitly extending to locker rooms, spectator areas, and parking lots.
- **Off-Ice and Online:** To any conduct outside the hockey environment (including social media and online platforms) if the conduct is related to AMHA activities and negatively impacts the safety, well-being, or reputation of the AMHA or its members.

## 2. Definitions

### 2.1 Maltreatment, Bullying & Harassment

AMHA adopts the definitions provided by BC Hockey and the Government of British Columbia (BC):

- **Maltreatment:** Volitional acts or omissions that result in harm or the potential for physical or psychological harm. This includes physical, psychological, and sexual maltreatment .

- **Bullying:** Characterized by acts of intentional harm, repeated over time. The combined use of negative aggression and power, occurring when individuals direct verbal, physical, social aggression, or electronic (cyberbullying) at another.
- **Harassment:** A course of unwanted comments or behaviors known or ought reasonably to be known to be unwelcome that creates an intimidating, humiliating, hostile, or offensive environment, including sexual harassment and abuse of power. Harassment includes discriminatory comments that are prohibited by human rights legislation (e.g., racism, slurs, gossip, disabilities, and cultural identity).

## 2.2 Key Roles

- **Complainant:** A Participant or observer who makes a report of an incident.
- **Respondent:** An individual alleged to have engaged in a violation of this Policy.
- **Safe Sport Officer:** The person(s) designated by the President to handle reports of Abuse and Harassment.

## 3. Codes of Conduct

All AMHA members must adhere to the [Policy 15: AMHA Codes of Conduct](#) (<https://abbotsfordminorhockey.ca/amha/policies>) and the [BC Hockey Code of Conduct](#) (<https://www.bchockey.net/member-info/regulations/bc-hockeypolicy-manual>).

- Code of Conduct - General
- Code of Conduct - Parents/Supporters
- Code of Conduct - Team Officials
- Code of Conduct - Players
- Board Member Code of Conduct

## 4. Reporting & Duty to Report

### 4.1 Reporting Child Abuse

Any Participant who has reasonable grounds to suspect that a Minor is suffering or may have suffered from child abuse must immediately report the suspicion to the Ministry of Child and Family Development (MCFD) [Reporting child abuse in B.C. – 1-800-663-9122 - Province of British Columbia](#) (<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/public-safety/protecting-children/reporting-child-abuse>) and/or the local police in cases of immediate danger.

- **Do not investigate:** Participants should not investigate or attempt to validate the allegation before reporting.
- **Notify AMHA:** After reporting to authorities, advise the Safe Sport Officer that a report has been made.

## 4.2 Reporting Policy Violations

For non-criminal violations (Bullying, Harassment, Code of Conduct):

- **Duty to Report:** All Participants have a duty to report Maltreatment, Bullying, or Harassment as soon as practical.
- **Submission:** Incidents should be reported to the Division Director or the Safe Sport Officer.

## 5. Managing Conflicts & Discipline Process (Informal & Team Level)

### 5.1 Informal Resolution

AMHA encourages members to resolve conflicts informally where appropriate (e.g., disagreements, minor interpersonal conflicts).



- **Stage 1:** Member-to-member direct communication. If unresolved or not feasible proceed to Stage 2.
- **Stage 2:** Use the Team Manager or Head Coach as a neutral third party.

- **Stage 3:** Discussion with the Division Director
  - **Safe Sport Officer Support:** A Team Official may contact the Safe Sport Officer for guidance on informal resolution.

## 5.2 Team-Level Discipline

Coaches are responsible for maintaining team discipline.

- **One-Game Suspension:** A coach may suspend a player for one (1) game for disciplinary reasons. When a second suspension is required, follow the multi-game suspension process. This decision is **not** subject to formal appeal under the [Dispute Resolution](#) section.
- **Multi-Game Suspension:** If a coach wishes to suspend a player for more than one game:
  1. The coach must inform the Division Director immediately.
  2. The Division Director shall determine the further suspension in consultation with the Executive Committee.
  3. Two (2) Team Officials must meet with the Player and Parent to advise of the decision.

## 6. Formal Discipline & Investigation Process

If informal resolution is not possible, or the incident is serious, the Formal Resolution Process is initiated.

### 6.1 Intake & Investigation

- **Submission:** A formal complaint is submitted to the Safe Sport Officer.
- **Fact Finding:** The Safe Sport Officer or a designated investigator will gather facts by interviewing the Complainant, Respondent, and witnesses.
- **Independent Investigation:** For serious harassment complaints, the President may retain an outside investigator.

### 6.2 Disciplinary Committee / Panel

- **Appointment:** The President will appoint a panel of three (3) impartial persons (the "Panel") to evaluate the evidence regarding the complaint.
- **Process:** The Panel may review documents or convene a hearing where parties can present evidence.
- **Timeline:** The Panel shall endeavor to deliver a written decision within five (5) days of concluding the hearing.

### **6.3 Immediate Suspension**

In serious cases, the Executive Committee may impose an immediate, temporary suspension pending the outcome of the investigation.

## **7. Sanctions & Remedies**

### **7.1 Progressive Discipline**

AMHA employs progressive discipline but reserves the right to impose significant sanctions for a single serious offense.

### **7.2 Types of Sanctions**

The Panel may impose:

- **Verbal or Written Warning and/or Apology.**
- **Education:** Requirement to undertake remedial courses.
- **Probation:** A set period where further violations result in immediate loss of privileges.
- **Suspension:** Suspension from participation for a set time or number of games.
- **Expulsion:** Recommendation to the Directors that a Member be expelled from AMHA.

### **7.3 Factors for Sanctioning**

Sanctions will be determined based on:

- Severity of the maltreatment/harassment.
- Power imbalances (e.g., Coach-Player relationship).
- Age of individuals involved.
- Prior history of offenses.

## **8. Dispute Resolution & Appeals**

### **8.1 Appeal Request**

A Participant affected by a formal decision (e.g., a suspension >1 game) may request a review.

- **Timeline:** The request must be submitted within 48 hours of the decision.
- **Grounds for review:** A review will only be granted for specific grounds, such as lack of authority, failure to follow procedure, bias, or a patently unreasonable decision.

## **8.2 Appeal Process**

- **Appeals Committee:** The President will appoint an Appeals Committee of three (3) individuals not previously involved.
- **Decision:** The Appeals Committee may uphold, vary, or set aside the original decision.
- **Finality:** The decision of the Appeals Committee is final and binding.

## **8.3 False/Vindictive Complaints**

Any Complainant found to have made a complaint in a knowingly false or vindictive manner will be subject to disciplinary action.