

5.5 HARASSMENT POLICY

Harassment is defined as comment or conduct (through any medium) directed towards an individual or group, which is offensive, abusive, racist, sexist, degrading or malicious.

Harassment may occur between peers (eg: player to player in the same age group, parent to official, coach to coach) or between someone in a position of power or authority and an adult in a subordinate position (eg: coach to player, sports administrator to employee).

5.5.1 Types of behaviour that constitute harassment include, but are not limited to:

- Written or verbal abuse, threats or outbursts;
- The display of visual material which is offensive or which one ought to know is offensive;
- Unwelcome remarks, jokes, comments, innuendos or taunts about a person's looks, body, attire, age, race, religion, sex or sexual orientation;
- Leering or other suggestive or obscene gestures;
- Condescending or patronizing behaviour which is intended to undermine self-esteem, diminish performance or adversely affect working conditions;
- Practical jokes that cause awkwardness or embarrassment, endangers a person's safety or negatively affect performance;
- Any form of hazing or bullying;
- Unwanted physical contact including touching, petting, pinching or kissing;
- Unwelcome sexual flirtations, advances, requests or invitations;
- Physical or sexual assault;
- Threats of retaliation against an individual who reports harassment

5.5.2 Sanctions

Any complaints of harassment deemed not to be frivolous or vexatious by the Ontario Ringette Association President or delegate will be considered a Major Infraction complaint and would be subject to the applicable sanctions (as per Sports Administration – Discipline and Complaints Policy).

5.6 Bullying Policy

Bullying involves a person expressing their power through the humiliation of another person.

Bullying occurs between people at any age. It is inappropriate behaviour that is typically cruel, demeaning and hostile toward the bullying target.

The actual issue of bullying is not addressed by the law, except when the behaviour does become a criminal issue – e.g. extortion, physical assault etc.

5.6.1 Bullying can be broken down into four types:

- Physical – ex. hit or kick victims; take/damage personal property
- Verbal – ex. name calling; insults; constant teasing
- Social - ex. try to cut off victims from social connection by convincing peers to exclude or reject a certain person
- Cyber – ex. use electronic sources including, but not limited to: Facebook, twitter, texting, etc. to accomplish the bully's aims

5.6.2 Types of behaviour that constitute bullying include, but are not limited to:

- Unwarranted yelling and screaming directed at the target;
- Continually criticizing the target's abilities;
- Blaming the target for mistakes;
- Making unreasonable demands related to performance;
- Repeated insults or put downs of the target;
- Repeated threats to remove or restrict opportunities or privileges;
- Denying or discounting the target's accomplishment;
- Threats of physical violence;
- Actual physical violence

5.6.3 **Sanctions**

Any complaints of bullying deemed not to be frivolous or vexatious by the Ontario Ringette Association President or delegate will be considered a Major Infraction complaint and would be subject to the applicable sanctions (as per Sports Administration – Discipline and Complaints Policy).

5.7 **Hazing Policy**

Hazing refers to any activity expected of someone joining a group (or to maintain full status in a group) that humiliates, degrades or risks emotional and/or physical harm, regardless of the person's willingness to participate.

Hazing is a broad term encompassing any action or activity which does not contribute to the positive development of a person; which inflicts or intends to cause physical or mental harm or anxieties; which may demean, degrade or disgrace any person regardless of location, intent, or consent of participants; any action or situation which intentionally or unintentionally endangers an athlete for admission into or affiliation with any team.

Any instance where an athlete is pressured by his or her teammates to participate in an activity with which the athlete is uncomfortable is considered to be an incidence of hazing.

5.7.1 **Three Categories of Hazing**

- **Subtle** – Actions that are against accepted and organization standards of conduct, behaviour and good taste. An activity or attitude directed toward an athlete or an act which ridicules, humiliates, and/or embarrasses.
 - Ex. Deception, assigning demerits, implied threats, deprivation of privileges
- **Harassment** - Anything that causes anguish or physical discomfort to an athlete, any activity directed toward an athlete which confuses, frustrates or causes undue stress.
 - Ex. Verbal abuse, threats, wearing embarrassing attire, sleep deprivation, sexual simulations
- **Violent** – Any form of action that may cause physical punishment or any action that may cause bodily harm and/or touching in private places and/or de-clothing of an athlete.
 - Ex. Forced alcohol/drug consumption, beating/paddling or assault, branding, burning, public nudity, and/or bondage

5.7.2 Sanctions

Any complaints of hazing deemed not to be frivolous or vexatious by the Ontario Ringette Association President or delegate will be considered a Major Infraction complaint and would be subject to the applicable sanctions (as per Sports Administration – Discipline and Complaints Policy).

5.8 COACHES

In addition, Coaches have additional responsibilities. The athlete-coach relationship is a privileged one and plays a critical role in the personal as well as athletic development of their athletes. Coaches must understand and respect the inherent power imbalance that exists in this relationship and must be extremely careful not to abuse it. Coaches will at all times:

5.8.1 Ensure a safe environment by selecting activities and establishing controls that are suitable for the age, experience, ability and fitness level of athletes, including educating athletes as to their responsibilities in contributing to a safe environment;

5.8.2 Prepare athletes systematically and progressively, using appropriate time frames and monitoring physical and psychological adjustments while refraining from using training methods or techniques that may harm athletes;

5.8.3 Avoid compromising the present and future health of athletes by communicating and co-operating with sport medicine professionals in the diagnosis, treatment and management of athletes' medical and psychological problems;

5.8.4 Under no circumstances provide, promote or condone the use of drugs or performance-enhancing substances;

5.8.5 Accept and promote athletes' personal goals and refer athletes to other coaches and sports specialists as appropriate and as opportunities arise;

5.8.6 At no time engage in an intimate or sexual relationship with an athlete under the age of 18 years and at no time engage in an intimate or sexual relation with an athlete over the age of 18 if the coach is in a position of power, trust or authority over the athlete.

5.9 **ATHLETES**

In addition, Athletes who have been selected to a representative team of Ontario Ringette will have additional responsibilities to:

5.9.1 Report any medical problems in a timely fashion, where such problems may limit the athlete's ability to travel, train or compete;

5.9.2 Participate and appear on time in all competitions, practices, training sessions, events, activities or projects;

5.9.3 Properly represent themselves and not attempt to enter a competition for which they are not eligible, by reason of age, classification or other reasons.

5.9.4 Adhere to Ontario Ringette's rules and requirements regarding clothing and equipment.

5.10 **PARENTS/GUARDIANS AND SPECTATORS**

In addition, Parents/Guardians of Ontario Ringette Members and Spectators at events will:

5.10.1 Encourage athletes to play by the rules and to resolve conflicts without resorting to hostility or violence;

5.10.2 Never ridicule a participant for making a mistake during a performance or practice;

5.10.3 Provide positive comments that motivate and encourage participants continued effort;

5.10.4 Respect the decisions and judgments of officials, and encourage athletes to do the same;

5.10.5 Never question an official's or Ontario Ringette professional staffs' judgment or honesty;

5.10.6 Respect and show appreciation to all competitors and to the coaches, officials, professional staff and other volunteers.