

OBJECTIVE

To provide a “Conduct Management framework” for Fort McMurray Minor Hockey Association (FMMHA) and the Wood Buffalo Hockey League (WBHL).

INTRODUCTION

Improper conduct is detrimental to the development of players, coaches, officials and volunteers in minor hockey and can be directly linked to many quality participants exiting the game. Further to this point is the struggle that Minor Hockey Associations encounter in dealing with improper behavior in a proper and timely fashion.

The intended result of this Manual is to provide a clear understanding of defining, identifying and dealing with unacceptable behavior through a fair and consistent process. The Code of Conduct/Pledge Forms for Coaches, Parents, Players and Officials, in Appendix A outline unacceptable/acceptable guidelines for the membership.

CONTENTS

The FMMHA Game and Conduct Manual includes the following:

1.0 FORT MCMURRAY MINOR HOCKEY ASSOCIATION PHILOSOPHY

2.0 OBJECTIVES OF THE FMMHA GAME AND CONDUCT MANUAL

3.0 DEFINITION OF UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR

4.0 COMPLAINT HANDLING PROCEDURE

4.1 Implementation Trigger

4.2 Reporting Process

4.3 Responsible Reporters

4.3.1 On/Off Ice Officials

4.3.2 Directors, Spectators, Players

4.4 Enforcement

4.5 Appeal Process

5.0 IMPLEMENTATION

5.1 Incorporation into Bylaws

5.2 Introducing the Program

5.3 Other Notifications and /or Partnerships

5.4 Pledge Forms and/or Code of Conducts

Appendices

Appendix A - Pledge Forms

Appendix B - Incident Report Form

Appendix C - Discipline Guidelines

Appendix D - Hockey Alberta Abuse & Harassment Description

1.0 Association Philosophy

FMMHA's philosophy in its development and administration of minor hockey programs is to:

1. promote hockey as a means of providing an enjoyable and rewarding learning experience for players, to improve and maintain their fitness level and to lead an active life;
2. provide opportunities for players to learn the fundamental skills of hockey and acquired sport skills that will be the cornerstone of their future athletic development;
3. promote and develop sportsmanship, fair play, pride, self worth and confidence and learn life skills by participating in an organized team sport activity;
4. provide opportunities for coaches to improve their skills and abilities to teach players and become role models in the community;
5. offer Minor Hockey Players the opportunity to participate in a recreational hockey program by operating the Wood Buffalo Hockey League from Initiation to Midget, ensuring all players have an equal opportunity to participate, play and develop their skills; and
6. establish and enforce policies, procedures and rule governing the operations of all Minor Hockey in the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo.

The FMMHA Game and Conduct Manual's aim is to remind all participants in minor hockey that it is up to everyone to set a good example.

The FMMHA Game and Conduct Manual provides support and confirmation to the majority of our excellent volunteers, coaches, officials and parents who have always practiced and subscribed to the fundamental principles of fun, respect and positive development of the Game. We see this program as a vehicle to assist them to further these values and make the Game even better and more enjoyable.

2.0 FMMHA Game and Conduct Manual Objectives

The FMMHA Game and Conduct Manual was initiated to address issues of inappropriate conduct and is not intended to replace existing processes for handling rule infractions, referee's calls, general hockey rules, etc.

The FMMHA Game and Conduct Manual will play a significant role in the development of a young person's values, morals, social maturity, physical fitness and mental fitness. The program aims to promote acceptable behavior which provides:

- Respect for persons
- Protection from harm
- Development of ethical conduct towards others
- Notions of justice, fairness, equity
- Caring attitudes
- Freedom to enjoy and to flourish
- Respect for the game

Every participant at FMMHA activities must abide by these principles. A participant is defined as (but not limited to) a player, coach, official, or spectator. The FMMHA Game and Conduct Manual is not intended to be a new process for complaints about officiating or general hockey rules. The objective is to promote and ensure acceptable behavior.

3.0 Definition of “Unacceptable Behavior”

All forms of unacceptable behavior will NOT be tolerated by FMMHA. An individual is displaying unacceptable behavior if they are verbally or physically harassing and/or abusing a game participant (player, coach, spectator or official). When there is a situation of "unacceptable behavior", the responsibilities of FMMHA coaches, spectators and on-ice officials are as set out herein. The focus is on achieving the objectives outlined in Section 2.0. Confrontation should be avoided and reporting is encouraged, as it is an important step in attaining the objectives of the FMMHA Game and Conduct Manual.

4.0 Complaint Handling Procedure

FMMHA has established a procedure to handle complaints which includes complaint triggers, reporting process, and enforcement process.

4.1 Implementation Trigger

The reporting of unacceptable behavior by a director, spectator, coach, player or official is the triggering event of the complaint handling procedure. This reporting process will govern the person(s) responsible for investigating the complaint. The methods of enforcement will vary dependent on the severity of the event.

4.2 Reporting Process

If an incident occurs which meets the definition of unacceptable behavior and in the opinion of a player, spectator, coach, official or administrator, is serious enough to warrant a formal complaint, then an Incident Report Form (Appendix B) **must** be completed.

FMMHA has a Vice-President Operations/WBHL Governor who is elected by the Association to receive and investigate complaints as part of the role. This individual remains independent. If this Vice-President/WBHL Governor feels he/she may not be able to deal objectively with the complaint due to personal involvement or other conflict, an alternate will be designated by the President.

The expectation is to report and investigate the incident at the team and Division level first (i.e. parent to coach, coach to Division Director). The Division Director will then, after further investigation, submit the compiled investigation findings and the Director's recommendations to the League Governor for review, further investigation, if necessary, and decision.

The Incident Report Form will be submitted to the League Governor either through the Division Director, by e-mail to vpops@fmmha.com or through the FMMHA Office at Frank LaCroix Arena. All submitted incident reports will be reviewed by the League Governor to ensure the appropriateness of the response and consistency of enforcement within the Association.

While the process to handle complaints outlined above is encouraged, if the situation dictates or the reporter is uncomfortable submitting the complaint to the coach or Division Director, the complaint may be submitted directly to the League Governor.

4.3 Responsible Reporters

4.3.1 On/Off Ice Officials

If, in the opinion of an official (on-ice or off-ice), an individual is verbally or physically harassing or abusing a game participant (coach, player or official), the official will call a stoppage of play, identify the offending individual and through discussion with one or both coaches, request that the offending individuals cease this unacceptable behavior. If the behavior continues, the official will document the offense or action on a game incident report form or the back of the game sheet. A copy of the write-up on the game sheet will be forwarded to the League Governor. This will trigger the complaint handling process.

4.3.2 Directors, Spectators, Players

If in the opinion of a Director, spectator, or player an individual is verbally or physically harassing or abusing a game participant (coach, player, official, or spectator), an incident report form is to be completed and forwarded to the League Governor. This will trigger the complaint handling process.

4.4 Enforcement

Within FMMHA, the following individuals have the power to assess discipline within the Association:

- 1) the Vice President Operations / League Governor,
- 2) another member of the FMMHA Executive, delegated by the League Governor, in his absence, and
- 3) the President (though the President is not typically engaged in the complaint handling process unless the League Governor's decision is appealed).

Part of this process also includes the right of the facility to support the necessary discipline, which may include restricting a participant from entering a facility during an FMMHA event.

After investigation, the FMMHA League Governor shall have the power to suspend summarily any player, coach, trainer, manager, official or spectator of any team under the auspices of the Association for any conduct on or off the ice which in the sole discretion of the League Governor is deemed to be unbecoming or detrimental to the game. The League Governor shall have the power to prevent summarily any spectator from viewing any game or other activity or entering a facility to view such game or activity under the auspices of the Association for any conduct which in the sole discretion of the League Governor is deemed to be unbecoming or detrimental to the game. Further, the League Governor shall have the power to suspend summarily the player, coach, team official or the team to which the spectator is attached. This authority may be delegated to such Association directors and officials as the League Governor may designate, depending on the nature of the incident. The power and delegation granted to the League Governor allows for effective and quick action against conduct unbecoming or detrimental to the Game and its participants, as well as action against the team of the contravening spectator. The Association is prepared to enforce these provisions as required and they are an integral part of the reporting and enforcement initiatives.

4.5 Appeal Process

To ensure a complaint has been handled with impartiality and fairness, FMMHA has an appeals process in cases there is a perception that an incident has been mishandled or discipline improperly applied.

Upon receiving a request for an appeal of the League Governor's decision, the FMMHA President will hear any appeals related to the discipline or actions undertaken as a result of the outcome of an investigation. Appeals should be heard as soon as is practical (within 7 days of appeal submission). The appeal must contain a clear and concise summary of the grounds for the appeal. Notice of the appeal must be submitted to the President of the FMMHA within five (5) days from the date of notification of discipline. If the appeal is denied, further appeals can be made to Hockey Alberta under the normal appeals process.

5.0 Implementation Process

5.1 Incorporation into Bylaws

As outlined in section 4.4 Enforcement, those with the authority to discipline are specified in the FMMHA's Bylaws, the governing documents of the Association:

POWER OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

43. For the purpose of carrying out the objects of the Fort McMurray Minor Hockey Association, the Executive Committee shall manage the affairs of the Association, and shall implement all the resolutions, exercise all the powers and do all such acts and things as may be exercised or done by the Association and are not by these Bylaws expressly directed or required to be done at a meeting of the members or otherwise. The powers and duties of the Executive Committee include, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, the following:

d. to establish and define the Rules and Regulations of the FMMHA, solely, finally, absolutely and exclusively, to the exclusion of any interference from any other body, subject always to the constitution, bylaws and rules and regulations of the Alberta Amateur Hockey Association and the Canadian Hockey Association;

h. to interpret and enforce the Rules and Regulations of the FMMHA, Hockey Alberta and Hockey Canada for the betterment of hockey in the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo;

j. to impose and enforce penalties upon the members, hockey teams, players, coaches, officials or other persons for violation or breaches of the Bylaws, Rules and Regulations of the FMMHA, Hockey Alberta or Hockey Canada, or for any violation or breach of a decision or ruling of the FMMHA;

5.2 Introducing the Program

FMMHA introduced the FMMHA Game and Conduct Manual at the beginning of the 2010/11 hockey season. The program will be explained to coaches and on-ice officials who can then discuss the program with their teams. Referees can remind coaches and players of the program's objectives before each game if they chose, or mention the details whenever they see a need to remind participants of the program.

At the start of the season (2010/11) a meeting will be held with all team management and representatives of the officials to present the program. At this presentation, FMMHA will:

- Detail the objectives
- Outline the expectations
- Lay out the consequences
- Explain the team's responsibilities
- Explain the Association's responsibilities
- Explain the distribution & collection method that will be used

The teams will be given packages with the Fair Play Pledge forms (Appendix A) and a program outline. These will be distributed to the Parents, Players, Coaches and Officials for completion. Once complete they will be collected and returned to the Association.

5.3 Other Notifications and/or Partnerships

Notification of the FMMHA Code of Conduct, in effect, will be given to:

- Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo Parks and Recreation
- FMMHA Staff

5.4 Pledge Forms and/or Code of Conducts

FMMHA has established a set of guidelines for acceptable and unacceptable behavior that the members must adhere to. The Code of Conducts provides the foundation and accountability of the membership when enforcing a sanction becomes a reality. The Pledge Forms are attached in the Appendices of this manual. FMMHA has elected to make the signing of the forms mandatory and it should be very clear to all members that whether the pledge form is signed or not, all members are still subject to the consequences for unacceptable behavior as the Program is consistent with the Bylaws and Regulations of Association and must be followed as a condition of membership.

Appendix A – Codes of Conduct

FORT MCMURRAY MINOR HOCKEY ASSOCIATION (FMMHA) PARENTS PLEDGE

It is the intention of this pledge to promote proper behavior and respect for all participants within FMMHA. All parents must sign this pledge before being allowed to participate in hockey and must continue to observe the principles of Fair Play.

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR PARENTS (ACKNOWLEDGMENT INITIALS)

1. I will not force my child to participate in hockey. _____
2. I will remember that my child plays hockey for his or her enjoyment, not mine. _____
3. I will encourage my child to play by the rules and to resolve conflict without resorting to hostility or violence. _____
4. I will teach my child that doing one's best is as important as winning so that my child will never feel defeated by the outcome of the game. _____
5. I will make my child feel like a winner every time by offering praise for competing fairly and hard. _____
6. I will never ridicule or yell at my child for making a mistake or losing a game. _____
7. I will remember that children learn by example. I will applaud good plays and performances by both my child's team and their opponents. _____
8. I will never question the official's judgment or honesty in public. I recognize officials are being developed in the same manner as players. _____
9. I will support all efforts to remove verbal and physical abuse from children's hockey games. _____
10. I will respect and show appreciation for the volunteers who give their time to hockey for my child. _____

I agree to abide by the principles of this CODE as set and supported by FMMHA.

I also agree to abide by the rules, regulations and decisions as set for FMMHA.

PRINT NAME _____ DATE _____

SIGNATURES:

PARENT _____ PARENT _____

FORT MCMURRAY MINOR HOCKEY ASSOCIATION (FMMHA) PLAYERS PLEDGE

It is the intention of this pledge to promote proper behavior and respect for all participants within the FMMHA. All players must sign this pledge before being allowed to participate in hockey and must continue to observe the principles of Fair Play.

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR PLAYERS (ACKNOWLEDGMENT INITIALS)

1. I will play hockey because I want to, not because others or coaches want me to. _____
2. I will play by the rules of hockey and in the spirit of the Game. _____
3. I will control my temper - fighting or "mouthing-off" can spoil the activity of everyone. _____
4. I will respect my opponents. _____
5. I will do my best to be a true team player. _____
6. I will remember that winning isn't everything - that having fun, improving skills, making friends and doing my best are also important. _____
7. I will acknowledge all good plays and performances - those of my team and my opponents. _____
8. I will remember that coaches and officials are there to help me. I will accept their decisions and show them respect. _____

I agree to abide by the principles of this CODE as set and supported by FMMHA.
I also agree to abide by the rules, regulations and decisions as set for FMMHA.

PRINT

NAME _____ DATE _____

SIGNATURE:

PLAYER _____ TEAM _____

FORT MCMURRAY MINOR HOCKEY ASSOCIATION (FMMHA) COACHES PLEDGE

It is the intention of this pledge to promote proper behavior and respect for all participants within the FMMHA. All coaches must sign this pledge before being allowed to participate in hockey and must continue to observe the principles of Fair Play.

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR COACHES (ACKNOWLEDGMENT INITIALS)

1. I will be reasonable when scheduling games and practices remembering that young athletes have other interests and obligations. _____
2. I will teach my athletes to play fairly and to respect the rules, officials, opponents and teammates. _____
3. I will ensure all athletes receive equal instruction, discipline, support and appropriate, fair playing time. _____
4. I will not ridicule or yell at my athletes for making mistakes or for performing poorly. I will remember that children play to have fun and must be encouraged to have confidence in themselves. _____
5. I will make sure that equipment and facilities are safe and match the athlete's ages and ability. _____
6. I will remember that children need a coach they can respect. I will be generous with praise and set a good example. _____
7. I will obtain proper training and continue to upgrade my coaching skills. _____

I agree to abide by the principles of this CODE as set and supported by FMMHA.
I also agree to abide by the rules, regulations and decisions as set for FMMHA.

PRINT

NAME _____ DATE _____

SIGNATURE:

COACH _____ TEAM _____

**FORT MCMURRAY MINOR HOCKEY ASSOCIATION (FMMHA)
OFFICIALS PLEDGE**

It is the intention of this pledge to promote proper behavior and respect for all participants within the Association. All officials must sign this pledge before being allowed to participate in hockey and must continue to observe the principles of Fair Play.

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR OFFICIALS (ACKNOWLEDGMENT INITIALS)

1. I will make sure that every player has a reasonable opportunity to perform to the best of his or her ability, within the rules. _____
2. I will avoid or remedy any situation that threatens the safety of the players. _____
3. I will maintain a healthy atmosphere and environment for competition. _____
4. I will not permit the intimidation of any player either by word or action. I will not tolerate unacceptable conduct towards myself, other officials, players, coaches or spectators. _____
5. I will be consistent and objective in calling all infractions, regardless of my personal feelings towards a team or individual player. _____
6. I will handle all conflicts firmly but with dignity. _____
7. I will accept my role as teacher and role model for fair play, especially with young participants. _____
8. I will be open to discussion and contact with players before and after the game. _____
9. I will remain open to constructive criticism and show respect and consideration for different points of view. _____
10. I will obtain proper training to upgrade my officiating skills. _____
11. I will work in co-operation with coaches for the benefit of the game. _____

I agree to abide by the principles of this CODE as set and supported by FMMHA.
I also agree to abide by the rules, regulations and decisions as set for FMMHA.

PRINT

NAME _____ DATE _____

SIGNATURE:

Appendix B – Incident Report Form

Submit completed form to:

WBHL Vice-President Operations / WBHL League Governor

E-mail: vpos@fmmha.com

The form may also be submitted to the Fort McMurray Minor Hockey Association Office at Frank Lacroix Arena during regular business hours.

This form is to be utilized by anyone in the Fort McMurray Minor Hockey Association to report an incident of unacceptable behavior. **An individual is displaying unacceptable behavior if they are verbally or physically harassing and/or abusing a game participant (player, coach, spectator, or official).**

DATE & TIME OF INCIDENT _____
NAME OF OFFENDING INDIVIDUAL _____
ASSOCIATED WITH (TEAM NAME) _____
NAME(S) OF ADDITIONAL WITNESSES _____

Please provide a clear description of the unacceptable behavior witnessed. Please use pen or type the report. If additional space is required, please use reverse side or attach separately. Reports that are not legible will not be reviewed.

You can expect an official to investigate your report. Unfortunately, a written response to all reports is not possible as our volunteers do not have the resources to do so. We do however hope to be able to contact complainants at some point during or after the investigation. Resolution typically takes 2 to 4 weeks from receipt.

Please summarize your expectation of the outcome resulting from your report:
If additional space is required, please use reverse side or attach separately.

NAME: _____
ADDRESS: _____ City/Town: _____
PHONE: _____
SIGNATURE: _____ DATE: _____

Appendix C – Discipline Guidelines

In many instances, offences that are like those identified in the Hockey Alberta Minimum Suspension Guidelines will be dealt with in the same manner. The only difference being that when we are dealing with adults who should know better, they would be given an additional game suspension.

When an individual is suspended, they are suspended from all Minor Hockey activities. This includes attending other sibling's games if they are a parent with other children playing hockey. It also includes refereeing games if they are a referee.

ALL SUSPENSIONS WILL BE REVIEWED BY THE LEAGUE GOVERNOR TO ENSURE CONSISTENCY IN THE APPLICATION OF DISCIPLINE IS MAINTAINED.

Severity of Discipline

a. Mild (Verbal Warning)

This would be applied when it is a first offence which is less severe in nature and for which Hockey Alberta Minimum Suspension Guidelines are not stipulated. The offending individual has shown true remorse and the actions are out of character. There is little chance of this person reoffending.

b. Moderate (Minimum 2 game suspension)

This is for offences which are mild to moderate in severity. Application of this type of discipline could be for a second offence. It would also be applied to individuals who have not accepted responsibility for their actions, show no remorse and the likelihood of re-offending is high.

c. Severe (Minimum 5 games and up to expulsion from league suspension)

This is for the most serious offences. An example could be physically threatening or assaulting another individual. Application of this type of discipline would be for individuals who have re-offended multiple times or have not accepted responsibility for their actions, show no remorse and are likely to re-offend.

The following list of individuals have been delegated authority to assess suspensions on behalf of the FMMHA

President

Vice President Operations / WBHL League Governor or a member of the FMMHA designated by the League Governor in his/her absence

Division Director (Maximum 2 games)

Appendix D – ABUSE & HARRASSMENT DESCRIPTION

3.0 MATTERS OF UNACCEPTABLE CONDUCT AND BEHAVIOUR

3.1 Abuse and Neglect

3.1.1 When any person has reasonable grounds, during Hockey Alberta business, activities or events that a child is being abused or neglected, he or she shall report this belief to the child protection authorities and/or Police. Hockey Alberta's General Manager should also be advised of the intent to report.

3.1.2 Hockey Alberta shall take no further action until the authorities and/or Police have concluded their investigation, unless there is cause for an immediate suspension on an interim basis to protect the child from further harm.

3.1.3 The matter shall than be dealt with as a disciplinary matter pursuant to this policy, and the report of the investigation carried out by authorities may be utilized as required by Hockey Alberta.

3.2 Harassment

Harassment is a form of discrimination. Harassment is prohibited by human rights legislation. In its most extreme forms, harassment can be an offence under the Criminal Code of Canada.

3.2.1 Harassment is defined as conduct, which is disrespectful, insulting, intimidating, humiliating, offensive or physically harmful. Types of behavior which constitute harassment include, but are not limited to:

- (a) Unwelcome jokes, innuendo or teasing about a person's looks, body, attire, age, race, religion, sex or sexual orientation.
- (b) Condescending, patronizing, threatening or punishing actions which undermine self-esteem or diminish performance.
- (c) Practical jokes that cause awkwardness or embarrassment, endanger a person's safety or negatively affect performance.
- (d) Unwanted or unnecessary physical contact including touching, patting or pinching.
- (e) Any form of hazing.
- (f) Any form of physical assault or abuse.
- (g) Any sexual offense.
- (h) Behaviors such as those described above which are not directed towards individuals or groups but which have the effect of creating a negative, hostile or uncomfortable environment.