

National Capital Region Ringette League (NCRRL)

Respect of On-Ice Officials Policy

The NCRRL is committed to providing an environment in which all individuals are treated with respect. All participants are bound by the [Ringette Ontario Code of Conduct and Ethics policy](#) for their respective role.

Any incident involving officials falls under the jurisdiction of the NCRRL and the ERRA.

The purpose of this Policy is to ensure a safe, positive, and respectful environment for our on-ice officials, at all times. The NCRRL and ERRA consider any complaints regarding abuse of officials by coaches, players, and parents to be very serious in nature.

The policy applies to participants relating to conduct that may arise during the course of the NCRRL's business, activities and events.

Within this policy, the terms on-ice official and referee are interchangeable.

Definitions

- *Participant*: player, bench staff member, minor officials, board members or spectators.
- *Harassment*: A course of vexatious comments or conduct against a Participant or group of Participants, which is known or ought reasonably to be known to be unwelcome. This includes comments or conduct that is offensive, abusive, racist, sexist, degrading or malicious.

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

- Written or verbal abuse, threats or outbursts;
 - 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;
 - Physical or sexual assault;
 - Threats of retaliation against an individual who reports harassment.
- *Bullying*: Offensive behaviour and/or abusive treatment of a Participant that typically, but not always, involves an abuse of power.

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;
- Denying or discounting the target's accomplishments;

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- Threats of physical violence;
- Actual physical violence.

Before or After Game Play

- Referees will enter and exit the arena and ice surface free from harassment.
- The NCRRL Referee-in-Chief shall be informed by the officials of any harassment/threats within 24 hours of the situation. Officials should submit a written report to their designated RIC via email, which shall be forwarded to the NCRRL.
- In the event of harassment pre- or post-game, the offending participant shall receive an automatic 1-game suspension with further disciplinary review and potential additional suspensions to follow.
- Any occurrences of harassment or threats before or after a game where a specific individual cannot be identified or the guilty party is not a player or a coach, will also be documented as an Incident against the offending team.

During Game Play

- Teams are responsible for the conduct of their spectators.
- The Home team is responsible for the conduct of the minor officials assigned to the game.
- If the offending party is a spectator or minor official, the team *may* be assessed an unsportsmanlike conduct penalty, subject to referee discretion.
- Referees will only respond to questions that have been asked in a respectful manner. Comments, critiques, complaints, etc. will not be entertained.
- Teams are encouraged to make use of captains and assistants to interact with the on-ice officials, if deemed appropriate for the age of the players.
- Officials will be encouraged to assess an unsportsmanlike penalty for comments that are deemed to be disrespectful.
- If there is persistent questioning of calls or abusive behaviour, a misconduct penalty *may* be assessed to the offending coach or player, subject to referee discretion.

Youth Officials

The development of youth referees is critical to the continued growth of the sport of ringette. It is particularly important that bench staff are aware of the impact their actions may have on the mental well-being of a young official and their willingness to continue refereeing. Because of the power imbalance between adults and youth, particular care must be taken when addressing young officials. Even actions such as frustrated gestures or exclamations can be intimidating for a young referee. Upon the first report of this type of behaviour, there will be a follow up with the offending association to provide them an opportunity to educate the bench staff on appropriate behaviour. Young officials may find it difficult to assess an unsportsmanlike conduct or misconduct penalty during a game due

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to the power imbalance with bench staff. As such, any incidents of abuse or harassment reported by these officials will be investigated, and if substantiated, result in an automatic two (2) game suspension, with further disciplinary review and potential additional suspensions to follow.