



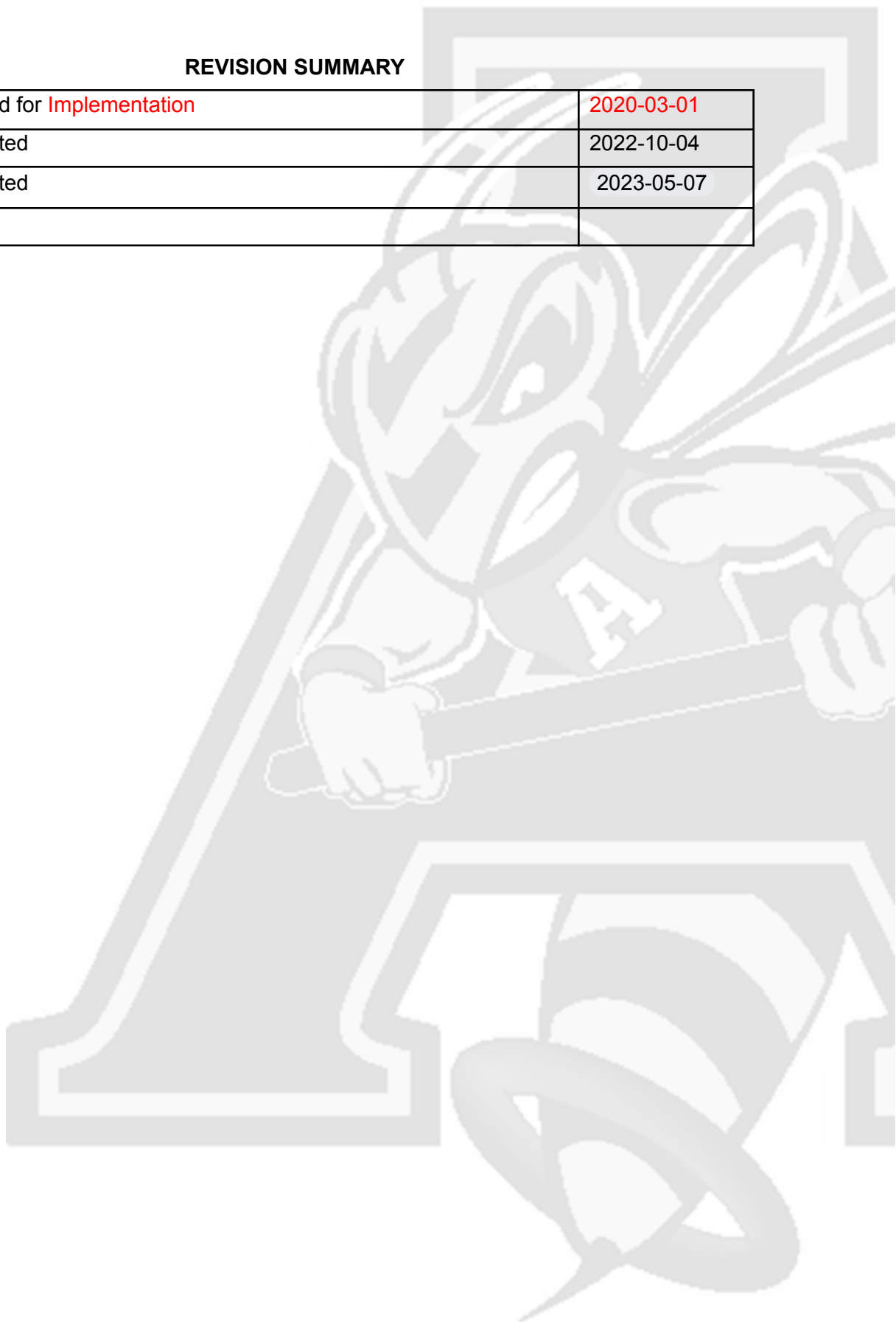
# Discipline and Complaints Policy

AIRDRIE RINGETTE ASSOCIATION  
P.O. Box 80034 Airdrie, Alberta T4B 2V8  
[www.airdrieringette.ca](http://www.airdrieringette.ca)

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## REVISION SUMMARY

1A	Issued for <b>Implementation</b>	2020-03-01
2A	Updated	2022-10-04
3A	Updated	2023-05-07



## **1.0 Definitions**

The following terms have these meanings in this Policy:

- 1.1 “Club” – Airdrie Ringette Association
- 1.2 “Complainant” – The party alleging an infraction.
- 1.3 “Days” – Days irrespective of weekends and holidays.
- 1.4 “Individuals” – All categories of Membership within the Club Bylaws, as well as all individuals engaged in activities with the Club, including but not limited to, athletes, coaches, officials, volunteers, managers, administrators, directors, and officers.
- 1.5 “Respondent” – The alleged infracting party.

## **2.0 Purpose**

The Airdrie Ringette Association is committed to providing an environment in which all members are treated with respect. Membership and/or participation in the Club, brings with it many benefits and privileges. All members of the Airdrie Ringette Association are expected to fulfill certain responsibilities and obligations including, but not limited to, complying with ARA Club Bylaws; policies; procedures; rules and regulations; and Code of Conduct and Ethics. Irresponsible behaviour can result in severe damage to members of the Club, the image of the Club, and to the sport of ringette. Conduct that violates these values may be subject to sanctions pursuant to this policy.

## **3.0 Application of this Policy**

- 3.1 This Policy applies to all Individuals as defined in the Definitions.
- 3.2 This Policy applies to discipline matters that may arise during the course of Club business, activities, and events; including, but not limited to, it's office environment, competitions, practices, training camps, travel, and any meetings.
- 3.3 Disciplinary action may arise as a result of a complaint filed in accordance with the ARA Discipline and Complaints Policy and/or a violation of ARA Code of Conduct brought to the attention of an ARA Executive Member. Furthermore, the President or appointed ARA Executive Board Member shall have the authority to:
  - 3.3.1 Suspend summarily any player, coach, trainer, manager or official of any team under the auspices of the Club for any conduct on or off the ice which in the sole discretion of the President is deemed to be unbecoming or detrimental to the game. Such suspensions to be effective until dealt with by an appointed Case Manager.
  - 3.3.2 Prevent summarily any spectator from viewing any game, practice, or other activity or entering a facility to view such a game or activity under the auspices of the Club for any conduct which in the sole discretion of the President is deemed to be unbecoming or detrimental to the game. Further, the President shall have the power to suspend similarly the player, coach, team official or the team to which the spectator is attached. Such action to be effective until dealt with by an appointed Case Manager.
- 3.4 The Club permits its membership to raise issues with the Club Executive Board that are negatively affecting their experience in their Ringette season after discussing them first with their manager, then their coach where appropriate.

- 3.5 If an issue has not been dealt with to a member's satisfaction, they are encouraged to follow the Club's Discipline and Complaints Policy and if necessary, the Club's Appeals Policy.
- 3.6 Discipline matters and complaints arising within the business, activities or events organized by entities other than the Club will be dealt with pursuant to the policies of these other entities unless accepted by the Club in its sole discretion.

#### **4.0 Reporting a Complaint**

- 4.1 Complaints are not to be initiated until a "24 hour cooling off period" has been observed after the event occurs.
- 4.2 Attempt to resolve the concern at the team level by reporting to the designated team manager and then to the team coach prior to submitting the complaint. If unable to resolve the complaint at the team level, move forward with section 4.3 of this policy.
- 4.3 Any Individual may report to the Club Executive Board any complaint of an infraction by an Individual. Such a complaint must be in writing; containing the Complainant's name and contact details (phone number for contact); corresponding policy that was breached as per the Club's bylaws; and submitted via the **ARA Complaint Form**, located on the ARA Website, within eight (8) calendar days of the alleged incident to account for the "24 hour cooling off period". Anonymous complaints may be accepted upon the sole discretion of the Club. The completed form will be automatically emailed to both the individual filing the complaint and to the Club using the email address **complaints@airdrieringette.ca**.
- 4.4 A Complainant wishing to file a complaint beyond the eight (8) calendar days must provide a written statement giving reasons for an exemption to this limitation. The decision to accept, or not accept, the notice of complaint outside the eight (8) calendar day period will be at the sole discretion of the Club. This decision may not be appealed or is grounds for defense.

#### **5.0 Case Manager**

Upon receipt of a complaint, the Club will assign a Case Manager within seven (7) calendar days (the person in authority may include, but is not restricted to, staff, officials, coaches, organizers, Club decision makers or Club appointed Case Manager) to oversee the management and administration of complaints submitted in accordance with this Policy and such appointment is not appealable. Careful consideration will be given to avoid conflict of interest. The Case Manager has an overall responsibility to implement this Policy in a timely manner with the goal of resolution within one (1) calendar month from the date the complaint was filed. More complex complaints may take longer to resolve with appropriate and relevant reasoning. More specifically, the Case Manager has a responsibility to:

- 5.1 Determine whether the complaint is frivolous or vexatious and within the jurisdiction of this Policy. If the Case Manager determines the complaint is frivolous or vexatious or outside the jurisdiction of this Policy, the complaint will

be dismissed immediately. The Case Manager decision to the acceptance or dismissal of the complaint may not be appealed.

- 5.2 Determine if the complaint is a minor or major infraction.
- 5.3 Appoint a Mediator and/or Panel, if necessary, in accordance with this Policy.
- 5.4 Determine the format of the hearing.
- 5.5 Coordinate all administrative aspects of the complaint.
- 5.6 Provide administrative assistance and logistical support to the Panel as required.
- 5.7 Provide any other service or support that may be necessary to ensure a fair and timely proceeding.
- 5.8 The Case Manager will inform the Parties if the incident is to be dealt with as a minor infraction or major infraction and the matter will be dealt with according to the applicable section relating to the minor or major infraction.
- 5.9 This Policy does not prevent an appropriate person having authority from taking immediate, informal, or corrective action in response to behaviour that constitutes either a minor or major infraction. Further sanctions may be applied in accordance with the procedures set out in this Policy. See section 3.3 of this policy.

## **6.0 Minor Infractions**

Minor infractions are single incidents of failing to achieve the expected standards of conduct that generally do not result in harm to others, the Club or to the sport of ringette.

6.1 Examples of minor infractions include, but are not limited to:

- 6.1.1 A single incident of disrespectful, offensive, abusive, racist, or sexist comments or behaviour towards others; including but not limited to peers, opponents, athletes, coaches, officials, executive members, or spectators.
- 6.1.2 Unsportsmanlike conduct such as angry outbursts or arguing.
- 6.1.3 Non-compliance with the rules and regulations under which Club events are conducted at local, provincial, national, and international levels.

6.2 All disciplinary situations involving minor infractions will be dealt with the appointed Case Manager as per section 5.0 of this policy.

6.3 Procedures for dealing with minor infractions will be informal as compared to those for major infractions and will be determined at the discretion of the person responsible for discipline of such infractions (see section 5.0 of this policy). This

is provided that the Respondent being disciplined is told the nature of the infraction and has an opportunity to provide information concerning the incident.

6.4 Penalties for minor infractions, which may be applied singly or in combination, include the following:

- 6.4.1 Education or reminders.
- 6.4.2 Verbal or written warning.
- 6.4.3 Verbal or written apology.
- 6.4.4 Service or other voluntary contribution to the Club.
- 6.4.5 Removal of certain privileges of membership or participation for a designated period of time.
- 6.4.6 Suspension from the current competition, activity, or event.
- 6.4.7 Any other sanction considered appropriate for the offence.

6.5 Minor infractions that result in discipline will be recorded and maintained by the President and the Vice President of the Club for a period of two years. Repeat minor infractions may result in further such incidents being considered a major infraction.

## **7.0 Major Infractions**

Major infractions are instances of failing to achieve the expected standards of conduct that result or have the potential to result in harm to other persons, to the Club or to the sport of ringette.

7.1 Examples of major infractions include, but are not limited to:

- 7.1.1 Repeated Minor Infractions that are deemed disrespectful, offensive, abusive, racist, or sexist towards others including, but not limited to peers, opponents, athletes, coaches, officials, executive members, or spectators. This includes repeated angry outbursts or arguing.
- 7.1.2 Intentionally damaging Club property or improperly handling Club monies.
- 7.1.3 Incidents of physical abuse.
- 7.1.4 Pranks, jokes, or other activities that endanger the safety of others, including hazing.
- 7.1.5 Disregard for the bylaws, policies, rules, regulations, and directives of the Club.
- 7.1.6 Knowingly participating while ineligible.

- 7.1.7 Conduct that intentionally damages the image, credibility or reputation of the Club or the sport of ringette whether at a local, provincial, national, or international level.
  - 7.1.8 Behaviour that constitutes harassment, sexual harassment, or sexual misconduct.
  - 7.1.9 Abusive use of alcohol where abuse means a level of consumption which causes the individual to behave in a disruptive manner or interferes with the individual's ability to perform effectively and safely.
  - 7.1.10 Any possession or use of alcohol or illicit drugs by minors.
  - 7.1.11 Use of illicit drugs and narcotics.
  - 7.1.12 Use of banned performance drugs or methods.
- 7.2 Major infractions will be decided using the disciplinary procedures set out in this policy, except where a dispute resolution procedure contained within a contract or other formal written agreement takes precedence.
- 7.3 Major infractions occurring within competition may be dealt with immediately, if necessary, by an appropriate person having authority (refer to section 3.3 in this policy). In such situations, disciplinary sanctions will be for the duration of the competition, training, activity, or event only. Further sanctions may be applied but only after review of the matter in accordance with the procedures set out in this Policy. This review does not replace the appeal provisions of this Policy.

## **8.0 Procedure for Major Infraction Hearing**

If the Case Manager is satisfied that the complaint is a major infraction, the Case Manager will, with the consent of the parties, seek to resolve the complaint through mediation using the services of an independent mediator or the Case Manager.

- 8.1 If the complaint cannot be resolved through mediation, then a hearing before a Panel will take place. The Case Manager will appoint the Panel, which will consist of a single Adjudicator, to hear the appeal. In extraordinary circumstances, and at the discretion of the Case Manager, a Panel of three persons may be appointed to hear and decide the complaint. In this event, the Case Manager will appoint one of the Panel's Individuals to serve as the Chair.
- 8.2 The Case Manager will determine the format of the hearing, which may involve an oral hearing in person, an oral hearing by telephone, a hearing utilizing a virtual video conference platform (this may include, but is not limited to Google Meets or ZOOM), a hearing based on written submissions or a combination of these methods. The hearing will be governed by the procedures that the Case Manager and the Panel deem appropriate in the circumstances, provided that:

- 8.2.1 The Parties will be given appropriate notice of the day, time, and place of the hearing. Consideration will be given to not impact employment obligations.
- 8.2.2 Copies of any written documents which the parties wish to have the Panel consider will be provided to all Parties in advance of the hearing.
- 8.2.3 The parties may be accompanied by a representative, advisor, or legal counsel at their own expense.
- 8.2.4 The Panel may request that any other individual participate and give evidence at the hearing.
- 8.2.5 If a decision in the appeal may affect another party to the extent that the other party would have recourse to an appeal in their own right under this Policy, that party will become a party to the appeal in question and will be bound by its outcome.
- 8.2.6 Decisions will be by majority vote.

## **9.0 Decision**

After hearing the matter, the Panel will determine whether an infraction has occurred and if so what appropriate sanction will be imposed. The Panel's written decision, with reasons, will be distributed to all parties, the Case Manager, and the Club. The decision will be considered a matter of public record unless decided otherwise by the Panel.

9.1 Where the Respondent acknowledges the facts of the incident, they may waive the hearing, in which case the Panel will determine the appropriate disciplinary sanction. The Panel may hold a hearing for the purpose of determining an appropriate sanction.

9.2 If the Respondent chooses not to participate in the hearing, the hearing will proceed in any event for the sole purpose of determining an appropriate sanction.

9.3 In fulfilling its duties, the Panel may obtain independent advice.

9.4 The Panel may apply the following disciplinary sanctions singly or in combination, for major infractions:

- 9.4.1 Verbal or written reprimand.
- 9.4.2 Verbal or written apology.
- 9.4.3 Service or other voluntary contribution to the Club.
- 9.4.4 Removal of certain privileges of membership.
- 9.4.5 Suspension from certain Club teams, events and/or activities.



- 9.4.6 Suspension from all Club activities for a designated period of time.
- 9.4.7 Withholding of prize money.
- 9.4.8 Payment of the cost of repairs for property damage.
- 9.4.9 Suspension of funding from the Club or other funding.
- 9.4.10 Expulsion from the Club.
- 9.4.11 Other sanctions as may be considered appropriate for the offence.

9.5 Unless the Panel decides otherwise, any disciplinary sanctions will commence immediately. Failure to comply with a sanction as determined by the Panel will result in automatic suspension until such time as compliance occurs.

9.6 A permanent written record will be maintained by the Club at their head office for major infractions that result in a sanction.

9.7 The Club may determine that an alleged incident is of such seriousness as to warrant suspension of the Respondent pending a hearing and a decision of the Panel.

## **10.0 Criminal Convictions**

An Individual's charge or conviction for any of the following Criminal Code offenses will be deemed a major infraction under this Policy and will result in expulsion and/or suspension from the Club and/or removal from Club competitions, programs, activities, and events upon the sole discretion of the Club:

- 10.1 Any child pornography offences.
- 10.2 Any sexual offences.
- 10.3 Any offence of physical or psychological violence.
- 10.4 Any offence of assault.
- 10.5 Any offence involving trafficking of illegal drugs.

## **11.0 Confidentiality**

The discipline and complaints process is confidential involving only the Parties, the Case Manager, and the Panel. Once initiated and until a decision is released, none of the Parties will disclose confidential information relating to the discipline or complaint to any person not involved in the proceedings.

## **12.0 Appeals Procedure**

The decision of the Panel may be appealed in accordance with the Club's Appeal Policy and subject to a \$750 fee that will be returned if the appeal deems in favour of the Complainant.

