



# APPEAL POLICY

<b>Document #</b>  POL-02	<b>Prepared By:</b>  Nancy Sanftleben – Safety Director	<b>Date Effective::</b>  05-01-2018
<b>Version/Revision #</b>  1.0	<b>Approved By:</b>  Kevin Breen - President	<b>Date Revised:</b>

## **Scope of Appeal**

Any member of Fort McMurray Minor Baseball Association who is affected by a decision of the Board of Directors, of any Committee of the Board of Directors, or of anybody or individual who has been delegated authority to make decisions on behalf of the Board of Directors, shall have the right to appeal that decision, provided there are sufficient grounds for the appeal as set out in Grounds For Appeal Section of this Policy. Such decisions may include, but are not limited to, carding, employment, contract matters, harassment, selection and discipline. This policy shall not apply to matters relating to the rules of Baseball, which may not be appealed.

## **TIMING OF APPEAL**

Members who wish to appeal a decision shall have 21 days from the date on which they received notice of the decision, to submit written notice of their intention to appeal, along with detailed reasons for the appeal, to the President of Fort McMurray Minor Baseball Association.

Any party wishing to initiate an appeal beyond the 21-day period must provide a written request stating reasons for an exemption to this requirement. The decision to allow or not allow an appeal outside of the 21-day period shall be at the sole discretion of the President and Executive of Fort McMurray Minor Baseball Association.

## **GROUNDINGS FOR APPEAL**

A decision cannot be appealed on its merits alone. An appeal may be heard only if there are sufficient grounds for the appeal. To have sufficient grounds, the appeal must be based on one or more of the following potential errors having been made by the respondent:

- a) Making a decision for which it did not have authority or jurisdiction as set out in governing documents;
- b) Failing to follow procedures as laid out in the by-laws or approved policies of Fort McMurray Minor Baseball Association;
- c) Making a decision which was influenced by bias, where bias is defined as a lack of neutrality to such an extent that the decision maker is unable to consider other views;
- d) Exercising its discretion for an improper purpose;
- e) Making a decision which was grossly unreasonable.

## **SCREENING OF APPEAL**

Within 3 days of receiving notice of appeal, the President shall decide whether or not the appeal is based on one or more of the categories of possible error by the respondent as set out in Sections. The President shall not determine if an error has been made, only if the appeal is based on such an allegation of error by the respondent. In the absence of the President, a member of the Executive shall perform this function.

If the appeal is denied on the basis of insufficient grounds, the appellant shall be notified of this decision in writing, stating reasons. This decision is at the sole discretion of the President and may not be appealed.

## **APPEALS PANEL**

If the President is satisfied that there are sufficient grounds for an appeal, within 10 days of having received the original notice of appeal, he or she shall establish an Appeal Panel, with the "Panel" as follows:

- a) The Panel shall be comprised of three individuals who shall have no significant relationship with the affected parties, shall have had no involvement with the decision being appealed, and shall be free from any other actual or perceived bias or conflict.
- b) At least one of the Panel's members shall be from among the appellant's peers.
- c) The appellant shall be given the opportunity to recommend the peer member on the Panel, provided that member satisfies criteria (a), above.
- d) Should the appellant not recommend the Panel member as set out in c), above, within 5 days, the President shall appoint the peer member of the Panel.

## **PRELIMINARY CONFERENCE**

The Panel may determine that the circumstances of the dispute warrant a preliminary conference:

The matters that may be considered at a preliminary conference include the date and location of hearing, timelines for exchange of documents, format for the appeal, clarification of issues in dispute, any procedural matter, order and procedure of hearing, remedies being sought, identification of witnesses, and any other matter that may assist in expediting the appeal proceedings.

The Panel may delegate to its Chairperson the authority to deal with these preliminary matters.

## **PROCEDURE FOR THE APPEAL**

The Panel shall govern the appeal by such procedures as it deems appropriate, provided that:

- a) The appeal hearing shall be held within 21 days of the Panel's appointment;
- b) The appellant, respondent and affected parties shall be given 14 days written notice of the date, time and place of the appeal hearing;
- c) The Panel's members shall select from themselves a Chairperson;
- d) A quorum shall be all three Panel members;
- e) Decisions shall be by majority vote, where the Chairperson carries a vote.;
- f) Copies of any written documents which any of the parties would like the Panel to consider shall be provided to the Panel, and to all other parties, at least 5 days in advance of the hearing;
- g) Any of the parties may be accompanied by a representative or advisor, including legal counsel.
- h) If the matter under appeal relates to team selection, any person potentially affected by the decision of the Panel shall become a party to the appeal;
- i) The Panel may direct that any other individual participate in the appeal;
- j) In the event that one of the Panel's members is unable or unwilling to continue with the appeal, the matter will be concluded by the remaining two panel members;
- k) Unless otherwise agreed to by the parties, there shall be no communication between Panel members and the parties except in the presence of, or by copy to, the other parties.

In order to keep costs to a reasonable level, the Panel may conduct the appeal by means of a conference call or video conference.

## **APPEAL DECISION**

Within 7 days of concluding the appeal, the Panel shall issue its written decision, with reasons. In making its decision, the Panel shall have no greater authority than that of the original decision maker. The Panel may decide:

- a) To void or confirm the decision being appealed;
- b) To refer the matter back to the initial decision-maker for a new decision; and
- c) To vary the decision where it is found that an error occurred and such an error cannot be corrected by the original decision-maker for reasons which included, but are not limited to, lack of clear procedure, lack of time, or lack of neutrality;
- d) To determine how costs of the appeal shall be allocated, if at all.

A copy of this decision shall be provided to each of the parties and to the President.

## **TIMELINES**

If the circumstances of the dispute are such that this policy will not allow a timely appeal, the Panel may direct that these timelines be abridged. If the circumstances of the disputes are such the appeal cannot be concluded within the timelines dictated in this Policy, the Panel may direct that these timelines be extended.

## **DOCUMENTARY APPEAL**

Any party to the appeal may request that the Panel conduct the appeal by way of documentary evidence. The Panel may seek agreement from the other parties to proceed in this fashion. If agreement is not forthcoming, the Panel shall decide whether the appeal shall proceed by way of documentary evidence, or in-person hearing.

## **ARBITRATION**

All differences or disputes shall first be submitted to appeal pursuant to the appeal process set out in this Policy. If any party believes the Appeal Panel has made an error such as those described in Paragraph 5 of this Policy, the matter shall be referred to arbitration, such arbitration to be administered under the Alternate Dispute (ADR) Program for Amateur Sport and its Rules of Arbitration, as amended from time to time.

Should a matter be referred to arbitration, all parties to the original appeal shall be parties to the arbitration.

The parties to arbitration shall enter into a formal Arbitration Agreement and the decision of any arbitration shall be final and binding and not subject to any further review by any court of competent jurisdiction or any other body.

## **LOCATION AND JURISDICTION**

Any appeal shall take place at a venue decided by Fort McMurray Minor Baseball Association, unless held by way of telephone conference call or held elsewhere as may be decided by the Panel as a preliminary matter.

This policy shall be governed and construed in accordance with the laws of the Province of Alberta.

No action or legal proceeding shall be commenced against Fort McMurray Minor Baseball Association in respect of a dispute, unless Fort McMurray Minor Baseball Association has refused or failed to abide by the provisions for appeal and/or arbitration of the dispute, as set out in this policy.