



# BC Ball Hockey Association

**Suspensions and Disciplinary Procedures**

**All Member Leagues**

**January 2024**

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# Suspension and Disciplinary Procedures

## General

BC Ball Hockey Association (“BCBHA”) is the Provincial Sport Organization for ball hockey in British Columbia. BCBHA developed the following suspension and discipline procedure document for all member associations/leagues. All members are required to follow the minimum suspensions set forth and maintain the disciplinary processes outlined to ensure due diligence, impartial review, and the safety of their participants, officials, and volunteers.

## Delegates

A league or association’s executive team is responsible for delegating a qualified individual with a strong understanding of the CBHA rulebook to be their League Delegate. A league/association may have multiple League Delegates in a year depending on circumstance and availability.

### League Executive Delegate

The delegate that is appointed by the League Executives is responsible for issuing suspensions under their authority, chairing the League Disciplinary Committee, and overseeing the appeal process at the League/Association level.

A league may have multiple people serve as delegates should there be multiple incidents requiring review or if the current delegate is not able to perform their duties in a timely manner due to personal reasons, or if the delegate is in a conflict of interest.

### BC Ball Hockey Executive Delegate

The delegate, that is appointed by the PSO Executives, is responsible for chairing the BCBHA Disciplinary Committee and overseeing the appeal process at the BCBHA level.

The BCBHA may have multiple people serve as delegates should there be multiple incidents requiring review or if the current delegate is unable to perform their duties in a timely manner due to personal reasons, or if the delegate is in a conflict of interest.

## Disciplinary Committees

A disciplinary committee is a necessary aspect of due diligence from an organizational perspective. All member leagues or associations within the BC Ball Hockey Association are required to create disciplinary committees to address specific incidents and appeals as outlined by our suspension matrix. This committee’s function is to issue suspensions and supplemental discipline where necessary. A committee approach can bring different viewpoints and reduce the potential of bias.

### How a Disciplinary Committee is Formed

The League Delegate is responsible for bringing together two or four other parties to sit on a Disciplinary Committee. The Committee must have an odd number of participants to ensure no ties in votes. It is

strongly suggested that the other parties sitting on the Committee have experience and bring diverse backgrounds and viewpoints to the table.

### League Disciplinary Committee

Each League's Disciplinary Committee shall be composed of a combination of 3 or 5 executive, volunteer members of the association, or outside parties with experience and knowledge. The League's Delegate shall oversee the selection of the members of each Disciplinary Committee. BCBHA strongly suggests that qualified people with a diversity of backgrounds/roles make up the Disciplinary Committee. The members of the League Disciplinary Committee from incident to incident can be different. The BCBHA recognizes that these are volunteer positions and conflicts of interest could exist. It is up to the League's Delegate to confirm or select the Disciplinary Committee for each incident requiring review.

### BCBHA Disciplinary Committee

The BCBHA Executive shall delegate an individual to chair the BCBHA Disciplinary Committee. The BCBHA Disciplinary Committee shall be composed of three (3) BCBHA directors and/or members of the Minor Steering Committee. The same conflict of interest rules from the League Disciplinary Committee apply to the BCBHA Disciplinary Committee.

### Conflict of Interests

All members of a disciplinary committee that believe they are or could be in conflict of interest must recuse themselves from all discussion and decision-making regarding the incident where a conflict exists. The league delegate may also remove a member from the committee for conflict of interest. A Disciplinary Committee member may participate in other concurrent incidents where a conflict of interest does not exist. They are not precluded from participating in other, unrelated incidents.

This includes, but is not limited to, any hearings involving a player or team official where the committee member:

- is related to a player or team official involved in the incident;
- is a team official or manager of a team involved in the incident;
- is a team official or manager of a team in the division; or
- can otherwise reasonably be perceived as having a conflict of interest.

### Suspension Minimum Guidelines

The League Delegate may form the Disciplinary Committee for any infractions within their authority at their sole discretion, but it is not required. Many incidents require a Disciplinary Committee to ensure due diligence on the league's part. Refer to the Suspension Matrix for the authority on specific infractions/suspensions.

**Example #1:** A player is given a game misconduct and the referee report does not suggest the issue was egregious or warrants further action. The default, minimum, one-game suspension would be determined by the League Delegate. However, repeat offenders may be suspended for a longer duration at the discretion of the League Delegate or Disciplinary Committee.

**Example #2:** A player is given a match penalty for cross-checking. This is the player's second match penalty in two seasons. The League Delegate should bring this to a Disciplinary Committee for review and determination.

**Example #3:** A player reportedly got into a physical confrontation in the hallway at the rink. The League Delegate should bring this to a Disciplinary Committee for review and due process. Because not all infractions or incidents can be determined by a matrix and the complexity of the incident, it is important that more attention and due process is exercised.

The League Delegate and/or the Disciplinary Committee cannot "forgive" a penalty that was issued correctly as per the CBHA Rulebook; however, if it is determined in the review process that the incorrect penalty was issued then the infraction may be corrected for suspension purposes only. Any such action with respect to correcting an infraction will not alter the records on the official game sheet.

**Example #1:** Referee issues a 5-minute Major penalty for Fighting and a Gross Misconduct. The correct call should be a 5-minute Major penalty for fighting and a Game Misconduct. For suspension purposes, this will be considered a Game Misconduct UNLESS a Gross Misconduct was being issued for another infraction by the player. Regardless, a Game Misconduct would need to be attached to the Major penalty.

**Example #2:** Referee issues a 5-minute Major penalty for Cross Checking but neglects to issue a Game Misconduct. All 5-minute Major penalties automatically come with a Game Misconduct. For suspension purposes, it will be considered that the player received a Game Misconduct.

**Example #3:** Referee issues a 5-minute Major penalty for Body Checking and a Game Misconduct. The player committed the infraction, but the League Disciplinary Committee's opinion is that the body check was not that severe and would like to change the penalty to a 2-minute minor. The League Disciplinary Committee cannot "forgive" or alter the call in this manner and the penalty stands. A minimum one-game suspension is required to accompany the game misconduct as the referee's determination of the severity of the infraction cannot be reduced in this instance.

The League Delegate must issue an indefinite suspensions to player(s) and team(s) pending the referral to the League Disciplinary Committee or BCBHA Disciplinary Committee. The League Disciplinary Committee must convene and reach a decision in an otherwise timely fashion, preferably before the conclusion of the minimum suspension term of the infraction, when possible.

## Authority of the BCBHA Disciplinary Committee

League Delegates refer disciplinary decisions to the BCBHA Disciplinary Committee when:

- The incident could reasonably be perceived as criminal in nature (alert the proper authorities immediately and then involve both the League Disciplinary Committee and the BCBHA Disciplinary Committee)
- The incident's complexity requires further consultation or no decision can be agreed upon amongst the League Disciplinary Committee
- The incident's severity can reasonably be considered extraordinary in relation to most other incidents reviewed by the League Disciplinary Committee

- A board member of a League is involved or allegedly involved in an incident. To remove potential conflict of interests and biases, Leagues must refer incidents involving any board member, director, or employee of a League to the BCBHA Disciplinary Committee. This is to ensure the member league demonstrates impartiality and due diligence.

**NOTE:** A suspension may not be issued that is less than the corresponding minimum suspension or sum of minimum suspensions as per the CBHA Rulebook, where applicable. The BCBHA has the authority to overrule a suspension that is lower than the minimum applicable suspension term.

**NOTE:** The League Disciplinary Committee, and/or BCBHA Disciplinary Committee, at their sole discretion, may investigate and make a ruling with respect to an incident that did not involve any penalties issued. This includes but is not limited to missed calls on the floor which resulted in injury, or off-floor incidents at sanctioned games/events.

## Jurisdiction

### Regular League Play

The League's Executive Delegate or Disciplinary Committee are responsible for the majority of suspensions issued to their own players and team officials. Extraordinarily serious incidents, a player's third suspendable event of a season, and issues involving board members should be referred to the BCBHA Disciplinary Committee for review and decision. Use the suspension matrix at the end of this document for the appropriate authority of each incident.

### Interlock/Interleague Games

In interlock games, League Delegate's will be responsible for communicating with one another and issuing the suspensions to players from their home Association. Suspensions agreed upon by the two League Delegates will be enforced. Should a League Delegate not agree on the suspensions issued by another, they may escalate the disciplinary decision to the BCBHA Executive's Delegate or Disciplinary Committee. Either League Delegate may escalate these suspensions to the BCBHA, it does not need to be agreed upon.

### Tournament & Out of Province Games

In Provincial tournament games, and Western Challenge Cup when hosted in BC, the BCBHA Executive's Delegate shall be responsible for issuing suspensions, chairing the tournament Disciplinary Committee, and overseeing the appeal process with respect to all associations or BCBHA members participating in the tournament.

For other tournaments, including but not limited to Western Challenge Cup (when not in BC), National Championships and World Championships, the relevant governing body is responsible for all disciplinary decisions. Other jurisdictions may apply our guidance document and matrix should they deem fit. The BCBHA will uphold all suspensions issued from other jurisdictions during sanctioned competitions.

## Suspensions Restrictions

Suspensions cover all activities under BCBHA's authority until all games have been served from the originating entity. Games from other sanctioned leagues or tournaments that suspended individuals may also be part of simultaneously may not be counted towards games served from the originating entity. League Delegates and/or the BCBHA Delegate may come to a compromise where games are served across multiple leagues/competitions where the player is registered. Affiliated Player (AP) games do NOT count in suspensions. All suspensions shall commence upon the conclusion of the game in which the infraction(s) occurred.

### Players

Suspended players may not participate in any games or game-related activities, including any exhibition games. No player under suspension shall participate in the pre-game warm up, occupy the dressing room, players' bench, or sit directly beside or behind the players' benches. The suspended player may not be a timekeeper or scorekeeper. In the event that the suspended player is also an official, they may not officiate any games until their suspension is served.

The League may choose to permit suspended players to participate in practices and observe team activities, such as games, from the stands.

### Team Officials

Suspended team officials are not able to participate in any BCBHA sanctioned games or events. The suspended team official may not occupy the bench, be a timekeeper or scorekeeper, or occupy the dressing room until the suspension is served. Team officials may participate in practice during their suspension. In the event that the suspended team official is also an official/referee, they may not officiate any games until their suspension is served.

Team officials are permitted to observe games from the stands but must not direct or communicate with their team at the rink either before, during, or after games. Any suspended team official who violates this rule will be suspended indefinitely pending a review by the Disciplinary Committee. It is recommended that if a suspended team official decides to exercise their right to observe a game, that they choose a location far enough away from the players' bench as to avoid any misunderstandings and potential supplemental discipline.

### Applicable Games

All regular season, playoff and tournament games shall count towards serving a suspension. The player or team official does not need to be in attendance for the game to count towards the suspension. Although suspended players or team officials may not participate in exhibition games, these games do not count towards the serving of a suspension.

**Example:** A player commits a Game Misconduct in the final game of the season. The following season, the player may not play in any exhibition games until a regular season, playoff, or tournament game has been served for the team in which they were suspended from. If a player has changed teams or leagues, they must sit out one regular season, playoff, or tournament game in a sanctioned league before being eligible to play for their new team.

## Multiple Leagues/End-of-Season Clause

For players who play in different sanctioned seasons, ie. Spring ball hockey and Fall/Winter ball hockey, and the player receives a suspension that carries over to the following season. That player must serve their remaining games in BOTH leagues. This is to ensure due diligence on the part of ALL leagues the player is a part of to reduce liability and promote the safety of its members.

**Example:** A player is suspended in their final game of the Spring season for three (3) games. This player cannot serve their 3 game suspension until the year following in the corresponding Spring league. To not punish the player unfairly by forcing them to miss an entire Fall/Winter league, the player must serve three games in BOTH leagues. Three games in the Fall/Winter league and three games in the Spring league. This is to ensure due diligence on the part of both leagues. Were an issue to arise in the first three games of either season, the league could be held liable for the result of an incident involving the player originally suspended.

## Suspension Tracking

Suspended players or team officials shall have their names recorded on the official game sheet in the "Suspended Player" section to track the number of games served, or alternatively, the letters "SP" shall be recorded beside the player's or team official's name to indicate that they are serving a suspension. For electronic game sheets, suspensions shall be recorded when team rosters for that game are entered, and will indicate game # of the suspension.

**Example:** Wayne Gretzky (SP) Game 1 / 2

## Suspension Process

### On-Floor Incidents

1. Referee/Official makes a call on the floor.
2. Referee/Official completes an Officials Game Report which is received by the League's Delegate and BCBHA's Executive Delegate.
3. The League Delegate reviews the incident report to confirm the call on the floor was correct as per the CBHA rulebook.
4. The League Delegate refers to the BCBHA Suspension Guidelines Matrix for both the minimum suspension term and if they should refer the incident to their League Disciplinary Committee or the BCBHA Disciplinary Committee for review and decision.
5. The League Delegate shall either issue a suspension per the BCBHA guidelines if the infraction falls under their authority, or refer it to the relevant Disciplinary Committee.

### Off-Floor Incidents

1. Complaint is filed online which is received by the BCBHA Executive's Delegate.
2. BCBHA confirms receipt of the complaint and a pending investigation, if necessary. The BCBHA may suspend a player or team official indefinitely pending investigation and due process.
3. BCBHA Disciplinary Committee convenes with the relevant League Association Disciplinary Committee to gather information.



4. BCBHA Disciplinary Committee conducts an investigation and issues a decision and/or refers the situation to the proper authorities/channels.

## Appeals

### Process

All appeals for League play, whether to the League Disciplinary Committee or BCBHA Disciplinary Committee, must be made in writing within 48 hours after notification of the decision has been sent. All appeals for Tournament play must be made in writing within 2 hours after the completion of the game. Late appeals shall not be considered.

**League's Delegate -> League's Disciplinary Committee -> BCBHA Disciplinary Committee**

An appeal of a decision made by the League Executive's Delegate shall be heard by the League Disciplinary Committee. All appeals to the League Disciplinary Committee must be made in writing to the League's Delegate or the League Association's President within 48 hours of the suspension decision. Where the League's Disciplinary Committee reasonably believes that there is no reasonable chance of success for an appeal, they may elect to refuse to hear the appeal and must refund the appeal fee. This decision must be made to the appellant in writing with reasoning.

**Example #1:** The League Delegate issues a 3-game suspension for a game misconduct deemed not serious enough to require the League Disciplinary Committee, but longer than the minimum one-game suspension for a game misconduct. The decision may be appealed to the League Disciplinary Committee.

**Example #2:** The League Delegate issues a 1-game suspension for a game misconduct. This decision is the minimum suspension term and less than two (2) games, so it cannot be appealed.

An appeal of a suspension issued by the League Disciplinary Committee shall be heard by the BCBHA Disciplinary Committee. All appeals to the BCBHA Disciplinary Committee must be made in writing to [info@bcbha.com](mailto:info@bcbha.com) with a completed Appeal form. Where BCBHA reasonably believes that there is no reasonable chance of success for an appeal, BCBHA may elect to refuse to hear the appeal and must refund the appeal fee. This decision must be made to the appellant in writing.

In tournament play, all appeals will be heard by the BCBHA Disciplinary Committee. All appeals to the BCBHA Disciplinary Committee must be made in writing to [info@bcbha.com](mailto:info@bcbha.com).

Any further appeals may be made pursuant to Canadian Ball Hockey Association policies, procedures, rules, and/or regulations, if applicable.

All players and team officials remain suspended during the appeal process.

### Administrative Correction

If there is video proof that the wrong player was penalized for a play due to administrative error, the penalty and resulting suspension may be corrected to the accurate offender.

## Fees

All League Disciplinary Committee's must charge an administration fee of \$150.00, and no less or more, to hear an appeal. The League Association's Disciplinary Committee may choose to refund all or part of the administration fee where the appeal is successful. This fee can be reviewed annually by BCBHA and its Member Leagues.

The BCBHA Disciplinary Committee charges an administration fee of \$250.00 to hear an appeal. The BCBHA Disciplinary Committee may choose to refund all or part the administration fee where the appeal is successful. This fee can be reviewed annually by BCBHA.

## What Can/Can't be Appealed

### League/Association's Disciplinary Committee

Suspensions not eligible for appeal to a League Association's Disciplinary Committee include:

- any suspensions that are two games or less or the sum of minimum suspensions

All other suspensions determined by the President's Delegate are eligible for appeal with the League Association's Disciplinary Committee.

**Example #1:** A player or team official receives a one (1) game suspension as a result of receiving a Game Misconduct. Not eligible for appeal as the term of the suspension is two games or less.

**Example #2:** A player or team official receives a three (3) game suspension for a Game Misconduct. Eligible for appeal with the League Association's Disciplinary Committee as the term is more than two (2) games.

**Example #3:**

### BCBHA Disciplinary Committee

Suspensions not eligible for appeal by the BCBHA Disciplinary Committee include:

- any suspensions that are two games or less

All other suspensions determined by a League Association's Disciplinary Committee are eligible for appeal with the BCBHA.

**Example #1:** A team official receives a two-game suspension from the League Disciplinary Committee for leaving the bench during play/an altercation. This is not eligible for appeal as it is two games or less.

**Example #2:** A player or team official receives a ten (10) game suspension as a result of match penalty. Eligible for appeal with the BCBHA Disciplinary Committee

## Video Evidence

Given the prevalence of recording devices in society, video evidence can serve as valuable information. However, BCBHA only permits the use of video evidence in certain instances. Appellants may submit their appeal application with corresponding witness statements and video to either the League Disciplinary Committee or BCBHA Disciplinary Committee.

Video evidence may only be provided to the appropriate Disciplinary Committee when:

- It is included in an eligible appeal (the decision must be eligible for appeal)
- It clearly displays the attribution of the penalty was incorrectly recorded or called on the floor
- The incident in question involves four (4) or more combination of major penalty (plus GM), game misconduct, gross misconduct, and/or match penalties.

Video evidence cannot be used to overrule any minor penalty, offside, goal call, or other ordinary play that occurs in a ball hockey game.

**Example #1:** Referee calls no goal during a game but video evidence from a spectator's phone shows the ball hitting the back bar in the net. This is not reviewable and the referee's call on the floor stands.

**Example #2:** A player receives a major and a game misconduct for slashing. A spectator with video suggests that the slash was not egregious enough to warrant a major. This is not permissible as a one game suspension for a major is not eligible for appeal and the referee's judgment of the severity of the slash is not appealable.

**Example #3:** A brawl occurs and one (1) match penalty, five (5) major penalties and two (2) gross misconducts are issued. Video evidence may be submitted to the appropriate Disciplinary Committee handling the suspensions before 10:00am the following day. This is to aid the lone two officials on the floor in handling the complexity and severity of the incident on the floor.

**Example #4:** The wrong player is documented as receiving a match penalty. The resulting 5-game suspension for a match penalty is appealed including video that clearly proves another player is responsible for the match penalty. This is permissible as the penalty was either not recorded on the game sheet properly or attributed to the correct player on the floor.

## Appeal Outcomes

An appealed decision may result in the following outcomes:

- elimination of the suspension where the player or team official did not commit the infraction;
- reduction of the suspension to any length that is not less than the minimum suspension length;
- no change to the previous decision; or
- increase the severity of the suspension.

**NOTE:** A penalty cannot be "forgiven" that was issued correctly as per the CBHA Rulebook.

## Serving of Suspensions

### A. General

- 1) The suspensions within this document are minimum guidelines and may be subject to lengthier sanctions, as they relate to the severity of the infraction(s).
- 2) All suspensions, minimum or otherwise, shall commence upon the conclusion of the game in which the infraction(s) occurred.
- 3) There shall be no appeal of any suspension applied in accordance with the prescribed minimum suspension(s) indicated under the guidelines in this document.
- 4) When a player or team official is suspended, they are prohibited from participating in any CBHA- or BCBHA-sanctioned regular season, playoff, or tournament games until the term of their suspension is served with the team that the infraction occurred. Should it be at the conclusion of a season, the player/team official must serve the same number

**Example #1:** A player plays on a local team as well as a high-performance team. The player is suspended for four (4) games as a result of an infraction while playing for their local team. The player is prohibited from playing in any sanctioned regular season, playoff, or tournament games for BOTH teams until they serve the 4 game suspension for their local team. Should the suspension occur at the end of a season, they must serve four games with the high-performance team before being eligible to play.

**Example #2:** A team official coaches U10 and U15 and receives a three (3) game suspension for an infraction with the U15 team who doesn't play again for a week. The upcoming weekend, the U10 team, that the team official coaches, has a tournament. The team official may not coach in the tournament as they have not served the three (3) game suspension for the U15 team.

- 5) Players and team officials may practice with their teams during suspensions unless otherwise specified in the suspension decision or indefinite suspension notification.
- 6) Suspensions carry over to following seasons, including when players age out to adult ball hockey. The player must be registered to serve the remainder of their suspension.
  - a) A player is suspended for four (4) games in their final game in the minors. That player sits out the following adult season and registers in the second year. They must still serve the remainder of their suspension as they didn't register the year prior.
- 7) Any player or team official serving a suspension are prohibited from participating with their team(s) from one (1) hour prior to any games until one (1) hour after the conclusion of any game.
- 8) Any player or team official serving a suspension shall be prohibited from acting in any official capacity, with the exception of practices, with a Team, League or Association within BCBHA. This includes involvement in tournaments, committees, board of directors, and other official capacities or positions that fall under the BCBHA.

## BCBHA Suspension Guidelines Matrix (Minimums and Authority)

LD = League/Association’s Executive Delegate

LDC = League/Association’s Disciplinary Committee (Chaired by League’s Executive Delegate)

BCBHA = BC Ball Hockey Association’s Disciplinary Committee (Chaired by BCBHA Executive’s Delegate)

For any infractions not found on this matrix, refer to the current CBHA Rulebook.

- (1) IF A PLAYER ACCRUES ANY COMBINATION OF THREE (3) SUSPENDABLE OFFENSES IN A SEASON, DISCIPLINED MUST BE ISSUED BY THE BC BALL HOCKEY ASSOCIATION (BCBHA).
- (2) ALL SUSPENSIONS BELOW ARE THE MANDATORY MINIMUM.
- (3) The League Delegate, League Disciplinary Committee, and BCBHA Disciplinary Committee reserve the right to exercise their discretion when determining suspensions.

Type of Infraction	Minimum Suspension	Authority	CBHA Minimum
<b>Major Penalties &amp; Game Misconduct - Player, Coach, or Team Official</b>			
Major Penalties + Corresponding Game Misconduct	One (1) Game	LD	One (1)
Game Misconducts	One (1) Game	LD	One (1)
<b>Major Penalties Accumulation in a Single Season - Player, Coach, or Team Official</b>			
Major Penalty (second offense)	One (1) Game	LDC	One (1)
Major Penalty (third offense)	One (1) Game	BCBHA	One (1)
Major Penalty (fourth offense)	Indefinite pending review	BCBHA	One (1)
<b>Major Penalties - Fighting</b>			
Fighting Major (First offense)	Three (3) Games	LD	Three (3)
Fighting Major (Second offense)	Three (3) Games	LDC	Three (3)
Fighting Major (Third offense)	Indefinite pending review	BCBHA	Three (3)
Third Man In (Game Misconduct)	One (1) Game	LD	One (1)
2nd subsequent or subsequent fight during the same stoppage	Three (3) Games for each fight plus one (1) additional game. (7 total games)	LDC	One (1) add'l plus three (3) games for each fight. (7)

First player identified leaving the bench during a fight (Game Misconduct)	One (1) Game	LDC	One (1)
Head Coach, or acting head coach, of team whose player is first to leave the bench during a fight	One (1) Game	LDC	None?
Head Coach, or acting head coach, of team whose players left bench in response to first team leaving bench	One (1) Game	LDC	None?
<b>Gross Misconducts</b>			
All Gross Misconducts	Two (2) Games	LD	
<b>Gross Misconducts Accumulation Sanctions - Player, Coach, and Team Officials (same season)</b>			
Gross Misconduct (Second offense)	Two (2) Games	LDC	
Gross Misconduct (Third offense)	Two (2) Games	BCBHA	
<b>Match Penalties</b>			
All Match Penalties (unless listed below)	Five (5) Games	LDC	Five (5)
Match Penalty - Physical Harassment of Officials	One calendar year	BCBHA	One calendar year
Physical Harassment of Officials - Strike, trip, body check	Indefinite pending review	BCBHA	Five (5)
Physical Harassment of Officials - Strike with equipment	Indefinite pending review	BCBHA	Five (5)
<b>Match Penalties Accumulation Sanctions - Player, Coach, and Team Officials (same season)</b>			
Two (2) match penalties in a season	Indefinite pending review	BCBHA	No add'l
Three (3) match penalties in a season	Expulsion pending review	BCBHA	No add'l
<b>Alcohol, Drugs, Tobacco and Illegal Activity</b>			
Any incident involving alcohol, drugs, tobacco, or banned/restricted substances	Indefinite pending review	BCBHA	None