

Lacombe Minor Hockey

Game & Conduct Resource Manual

INTRODUCTION

It has been determined that 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 numerous local Associations encounter in dealing with improper behaviour in a proper and timely fashion. Lacombe Minor Hockey is a volunteer-based organization, and it is a huge strain on our volunteers to find the time to deal with these behaviour-related situations.

The intended result would be a clear understanding of defining, identifying and dealing with unacceptable behaviour through a fair and consistent process. The basis of the program, and the repercussions of not abiding by the program are clearly outlined below. As an association, we are trying to put the proper mechanisms in place to quickly and consistently deal with the unacceptable behaviour that unfortunately exists in our game. The information contained within this document will be given to all members of our association, and in doing so, puts the onus on all individuals in our association to understand and abide by our Game & Conduct Management Plan.

Failure to abide by our guidelines will result in immediate discipline measures upon the individual(s) that have chosen to display improper behaviour. **All members of our association shall be accountable for their actions.** Our volunteers quite simply don't have the time to deal with improper behaviour, as we are putting our efforts towards running our association and giving the kids an opportunity to play this great game.

STEP 1.0: Association Philosophy and Program Name:

"RESPECT & ACCOUNTABILITY (R & A)"

Over the past several years it has become increasingly apparent that participating in the Game, whether as a player, coach, official or spectator, has become more complicated. People are leaving the game for the wrong reasons and with bad memories, often due to the conduct of spectators, coaches, officials and players amongst themselves, which has become increasingly more unacceptable, both on and off the ice.

The Lacombe Minor Hockey Association views the features of our new **"RESPECT & ACCOUNTABILITY (R & A)"** program as support and confirmation to the many excellent volunteers, coaches, officials and parents who are in the majority and 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. One could view the **"R & A"** program as a celebration of the

positive elements of the game that will overwhelm those negative elements that have unfortunately tainted the reputation of the game today. Those few who may question the program are the very ones that many of the elements of the program are aimed at and are indicative of a problem and not a solution. It is not a time to be defensive, but rather offensive and proactive in advocating a program that is totally positive. We encourage the majority to confidently come forward with energy and support the "**RESPECT & ACCOUNTABILITY**" program to make our game even better.

STEP 2.0: Objective(s) of the Program:

To provide a program which plays a significant role in the development of a young person's values, morals, social maturity, physical fitness and mental fitness. To promote acceptable conduct which provides:

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

It is a must that every participant abides by these principles. A participant is defined as (but not limited to) a player, coach, official, or spectator.

This program is not intended to be a new process for complaints about officiating or general hockey rules. The objective is to promote and ensure acceptable behaviour, along with communicating that unacceptable behaviour will be dealt with immediately.

STEP 3.0: Definition of "Unacceptable Behaviour"

An individual is displaying unacceptable behaviour 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 behaviour", the responsibilities of the Lacombe Minor Hockey Association coaches, spectators and on-ice officials are as set out herein. The focus is on achieving the program objectives. Confrontation should be avoided and reporting is encouraged, as it is an important step in attaining the objective. Verbal reports will not be accepted, as Lacombe Minor Hockey requires a written report to be submitted before the issue will be acknowledged.

STEP 4.0: Complaint Handling Procedure

4.1 Implementation Trigger

The reporting of unacceptable behaviour 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. The enforcement methods are outlined later in this document.

The LMHA Conflict Resolution process must be followed. A minimum of 24 hours must pass before submitting a written complaint unless there is player or coach safety concerns. Incidents or issues must be submitted in writing (to parent liaison, divisional director or game and conduct) no more than 21 days from the first incident occurring. This provides an opportunity to follow the conflict resolution process and enable time for resolution at the team level.

4.2 Reporting Process

If an incident occurs which meets the definition of unacceptable behaviour 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 (included in this document) must be completed. The Incident Report Form should be submitted to the parent liaison for the team in question. The parent liaison will handle complaints at the team level or pass it on, if needed, for review and actions at the Director level and following that, with Game and Conduct. Contact information and addresses are contained in the Incident Report Form. Any complaints involving bodily harm or property damage must be forwarded to Game and Conduct regardless if the situation has been resolved at the team level. All complaints must be submitted in writing after a 24 hour cooling off period has occurred.

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 at a stoppage of play, identify the offending individual and through discussion with one or both coaches, request that the offending individuals cease this unacceptable behaviour. If the behaviour 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 Association's designated individual outlined in step 4.2), triggering 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 individual responsible for complaint handling outlined in step 4.2). This will trigger the complaint handling procedure.

4.4 Enforcement

4.4.1 Player, Coach Official

After investigation, by a committee including three impartial executive members, the Lacombe Minor Hockey Association President 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 discretion of the committee is deemed to be unbecoming or detrimental to the game.

4.4.2 Spectators

The Lacombe Minor Hockey Association Executive 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 discretion of the Game and Conduct Committee is deemed to be unbecoming or detrimental to the game.

This authority may be delegated to such Association directors and officials as the Executive may designate, including team managers, parent liaison or head coach. The power and delegation granted to the team official 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. Further, the committee shall have the power to summarily suspend the player, coach, team official or the team to which the spectator is attached.

The Association is prepared to enforce these provisions as required and are an integral part of the reporting and enforcement initiatives.

4.5 Discipline Appeal Process

Upon receiving a request for an appeal, the Lacombe Minor Hockey Association will establish a Special Committee comprised of three (3) members to 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, typically). The appeal must contain a clear and concise summary of the grounds for the appeal, otherwise the appeal will not be accepted. Notice of the appeal must be submitted to the President of the Lacombe Minor Hockey Association 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.

STEP 5.0: Implementation Process

5.1 Introducing the Program

At the start of the season, a meeting is to be held with all team management and representatives of the officials to present the program. At this presentation, the designated Lacombe Minor Hockey Association representative(s) 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
- Provide a copy of this program for their own use and distribution

5.2 Other Notifications and/or Partnerships

It is recommended that notification is given and more importantly that Program support be garnered from local stakeholders regarding the objectives and implementation of the Program. The following are examples of local stakeholders that may need to be aware of the Program as they may be requested to support in the enforcement of some sanctions.

- Local Recreation Board
- Arena Operating Board
- Community Services Department
- Local/City Police Department

5.4 Pledge Forms and/or Code of Conducts

Lacombe Minor Hockey has established a set of guidelines for acceptable and unacceptable behaviour that the members must adhere to. In fact, the Lacombe Minor Hockey Association requires pledge forms to be signed and returned as part of our registration process. The Code of Conducts provide the foundation and accountability of the membership when enforcing a sanction becomes a reality. It must be made clear to all members that whether the pledge forms are signed or not, all members are still subject to the consequences for unacceptable behaviour as a condition of membership.

5.5 Discipline Measures

In many instances, offences that are similar to 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 LACOMBE MINOR
HOCKEY PRESIDENT TO ENSURE CONSISTENCY IN THE
APPLICATION OF DISCIPLINE IS MAINTAINED.**

In the event of a Game & Conduct violation, Lacombe Minor Hockey shall use the following discipline scale:

Severity of Discipline:

a. Mild (Reprimand to 2 game suspension)

This would be applied when it is a first offence which is less severe in nature. 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 3 game suspension)

This is for offences which are mild to moderate in severity. Application of this type of discipline would 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 to lifetime suspension)

This is for the most serious offences of the Lacombe Minor Hockey Game & Conduct Policy. 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.

INCIDENT REPORT FORM

Submit completed form to:
Lacombe Minor Hockey
Attn: Game & Conduct Manager
Box 5180
Lacombe, AB T4L 2N3

This form is to be utilized by anyone in the Lacombe Minor Hockey Association to report an incident of unacceptable behaviour. An individual is considered to be displaying unacceptable behaviour 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 _____

On a separate attachment, please provide a clear description of the unacceptable behaviour witnessed. 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.

Submitted By:

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____ City/Town: _____

PHONE: _____

SIGNATURE: _____ DATE: _____

HOCKEY ALBERTA GAME & CONDUCT MANAGEMENT

ABUSE & HARRASSMENT DESCRIPTION

MATTERS OF UNACCEPTABLE CONDUCT AND BEHAVIOUR

Abuse and Neglect

- When any person has reasonable grounds, in the course of 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.
- Hockey Alberta shall take no further action until such time as 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.
- 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.

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. • Harassment is defined as conduct, which is disrespectful, insulting, intimidating, humiliating, offensive or physically harmful. Types of behaviour 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) Behaviours 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.