



Newmarket Ringette Association

1111 Davis Drive, Suite #1-125, Newmarket, Ontario. L3Y 9E5

Code of Conduct, Grievance and Appeal Policy

The Newmarket Ringette Association (herein referred to as NRA) is committed to providing an environment in which all individuals are treated with respect. Members are expected to conduct themselves at all times in a manner consistent with the values and code of conduct of the NRA. Any conduct detrimental to the game of ringette will not be tolerated and includes, but is not limited to:

- a. Abusive use of alcohol, non-medical use of drugs, use of alcohol by minors,
- b. Verbally or physically abusing an official, or an opposing team member preceding, during or following a game,
- c. Showing disrespect to the officials, including the use of foul language and obscene or offensive gestures,
- d. Not complying with the rules, regulations or policies of the NRA, as adopted and amended from time to time,
- e. Any behaviour on or off the ice which in the judgment of the person in authority, places the integrity of the event or NRA in question,
- f. Deliberately disregarding the Ontario Ringette Association (ORA), Southern Regional Ringette Association (SRRRA) or NRA rules as amended from time to time,
- g. Verbal or physical abuse of any player, team mate or opposing team, preceding, during or following any event,
- h. Verbal or physical abuse of any Bench Staff member as defined on the team's TRF (team registration form) by players and/or parents of players,
- i. Verbal or physical abuse of any parent or legal guardian by any registered member of NRA

Members of the NRA include, but are not limited to, players, parents and/or legal guardians of the players, coaches, officials, volunteers, and Board of Directors Committee members.

Bench staff are required to sign a Code of Conduct form prior to the commencement of their first league game each season and it is expected that the standards of behavior consistent with NRA Code of Conduct, the SRRRA, and ORA be maintained throughout the season.

It is recognized, however, that from time to time, sanctions may be necessary for behavior, which transgress acceptable standards. Such sanctions may be applied to any player, team official, parent, or committee member and will take the form of:

- a. A verbal reprimand
- b. A written reprimand
- c. A suspension
- d. An expulsion
- e. Any combination of any of the above.

The NRA, through its elected Board of Directors Committee, has the authority to discipline any player, team official, parent, volunteer or committee member. The President shall ensure that each disciplinary incident is:

- a. Dealt with by a committee of 5 people (never less than 3 people) herein referred to as the Grievance Committee
- b. Treated fairly and that consistency is maintained across the association
- c. The right of appeal is extended
- d. Handled in such a way that the integrity and stature of all persons are respected

Complaints and the Grievance Committee

A member of NRA who is concerned by any behavior affecting a team or individual associated with a team may contact the Division Coordinator to have an initial discussion with respect to that concern. The Division Committee (Division Co-ordinator, Coach Development Chairperson, Player Development Chairperson or an officer of the Board of Directors) will hear any initial grievances and take appropriate measures to resolve as guided by the NRA Rules and Regulations. Any discussions will be held in confidence and shared only within the NRA Board of Directors.

If after the initial discussion the member prefers to escalate the matter to the Grievance Committee, the member will provide a written request outlining the nature of the concern.

The Grievance Committee will consist of preferably 5 members (but not less than 3) of the NRA Board of Directors Committee and will include the President and at least two (2) other board members as required by the nature of the complaint/grievance. If there is an actual or potential conflict of interest on the committee, the committee shall appoint a replacement from the available Board of Directors Committee members. A chairperson will be identified (different for each complaint) from within the Grievance Committee.

The Grievance Committee will investigate the complaint and will try to provide a response to the member within 10 days of receiving the written request. If the complaint is against an individual, the Chair will immediately inform the member about the complaint and will arrange a time to discuss the concern. If the complaint is about a team, the Chair will immediately contact the Head Coach. The Committee may seek information from other NRA members who may have knowledge about the matter under investigation.

The Grievance Committee must first determine if the complaint has validity. If it is not considered valid the affected members will be so advised. If the complaint has some degree of validity, the Committee will first attempt to find a means of dealing with the unacceptable behavior in a manner agreeable to the parties involved. If agreement cannot be reached, the Committee may decide to do any or all of the following:

- a. Take no further action
- b. Request, in writing, that a particular behavior be stopped or modified
- c. Recommend a disciplinary action to the Board of Directors,
- d. If a situation is determined by the Committee to be of a very severe nature the Committee may recommend to the President the immediate suspension of any player, parent, bench staff, official or team until the matter can be reviewed by the Board of Directors of the NRA. The President shall have the authority to make the recommended suspension.

All Grievance Committee members shall vote on the matter put to the committee and the vote shall be recorded numerically only. A simple majority vote will decide. How a member votes is privileged and confidential information is maintained within the Grievance Committee only. Minutes shall be recorded and documents shall be filed by the secretary.

All actions recommended by the Division or Grievance Committees shall be automatically upheld by the Board of Directors Committee, but shall be subject to appeal under Article 11.2. as per Article 12.1 of the N.D.R.A. Constitution and Bylaws.

No hearing shall be considered, without a formal complaint in writing being received by the Grievance Committee Members explaining the full details of the complaint, and must be received within 5 days of the incident. The committee will meet within 10 days of receipt of the written complaint, provided that the complaint is within the jurisdiction of the NRA.

At least 2 days prior to the hearing the Chair shall advise by phone all persons to be called upon of the date, time, and place and provide time on the agenda for each of the following; complainant, respondent(s) and witnesses to present their case. Persons unable to attend the hearing at the set shall advise the chair who their/his/her replacement representative shall be.

If a complainant or the representative fails to attend the hearing as requested the complaint may be dismissed and the committee may take disciplinary action against the complainant and any further right of appeal or complaint is removed. If a respondent or his/her representative fails to attend the hearing the complaint may be upheld and additional disciplinary action may be ordered by the committee. Failure to appear at a hearing removes any further right of appeal the respondent would have been originally entitled to.

All committee correspondence, either initial or confirming the committee decision, shall be posted by registered mail or hand delivered and shall be deemed to have been received by the addressees on the 4th day after such mailing. A suspension levied by the committee shall be forwarded to the Board of Directors, and if required, the SRRA and/or the ORA if play in an SRRA or ORA sanctioned event is affected.

Limitations:

- The Grievance Committee is not empowered to deal with complaints regarding decisions of the NRA Board of Directors and members are welcome to address those concerns directly to the Board of Directors.
- NRA recognizes the responsibility of the Head Coaches to be responsible for the discipline of players and bench staff of their teams. The Grievance Committee will not interfere with the reasonable application of discipline within the team. An action must be considered unreasonable, to warrant attention by the Grievance Committee.
- Complaints about members of other Ringette Associations will be directed to the appropriate league convener, who will be responsible for taking appropriate action as needed.

Appeals Committee

This committee shall consist of 3 unbiased members of the NRA Board of Directors Committee and shall include the Vice-President, unless they have served on the Grievance Committee, as they shall be deemed biased. An appeal must be received within 5 days of the receipt of the Grievance Committee decision. The Appeals Committee shall meet to hear the appeal within 5 days of receiving the written appeal.

At least 2 days prior to the hearing the a member of the Appeals Committee shall advise the appellant by phone of date, time, and place and provide time on the agenda for the appellant and witnesses to present their case.

All correspondence of the Appeals Committee, including any decision shall be posted by registered mail or hand delivered and shall be deemed to have been received by the addressees on the 4th day of posting.

All Appeals Committee members shall vote on the matter put to the committee and the vote shall be recorded numerically only. A simple majority vote will decide. How a member votes is privileged and confidential information is maintained within the Appeals Committee only. Minutes shall be recorded and documents shall be filed by a member of the committee.

The appellant shall be advised in writing of the decision within 5 days of the hearing. The decision of the committee will be final.

This policy may be revised at any time by the elected Board of Directors Committee and it is the member's responsibility to ensure that they have the read the most recent version.