



INVESTIGATIONS POLICY

Definitions

1. The following terms have these meanings in this Policy:
 - a) “*Individuals*” – All categories of membership defined in Ringette Ontario’s Bylaws, as well as all individuals employed by, or engaged in activities with, Ringette Ontario including, but not limited to, volunteers, managers, administrators, committee members, and Directors and Officers of Ringette Ontario

Purpose

2. Ringette Ontario is committed to eliminating all instances of Discrimination, Harassment, Workplace Harassment, Workplace Violence, Sexual Harassment, and Abuse within its operations and activities. This Policy describes how Individuals can report instances of Discrimination, Harassment, Workplace Harassment, Workplace Violence, Sexual Harassment, and Abuse and how Ringette Ontario will investigate those reports.

Determination and Disclosure

3. When a complaint is submitted per Ringette Ontario’s *Discipline and Complaints Policy*, the individual handling the complaint will determine if the complaint is related to an instance of Discrimination, Harassment, Workplace Harassment, Workplace Violence, Sexual Harassment, or Abuse.
4. Ringette Ontario will adhere to all disclosure and reporting responsibilities required by any government entity, local police force, or child protection agency.

Investigation

5. Complaints that are determined to contain an element of Discrimination, Harassment, Workplace Harassment, Workplace Violence, Sexual Harassment, and Abuse will continue to be addressed by the process(es) described in the *Discipline and Complaints Policy*. However, an Investigator will also be appointed to investigate the allegations.
6. The Investigator may be a representative of Ringette Ontario or a Director or may be an independent third-party skilled in investigating claims of harassment. The Investigator must not be in a conflict of interest situation and should have no connection to either party.
7. Federal and/or Provincial legislation related to Workplace Harassment may apply to the investigation if Harassment was directed toward a worker in a Workplace. The Investigator should review workplace safety legislation and/or consult independent experts to determine whether legislation applies to the complaint.
8. The investigation may take any form as decided by the Investigator, guided by any applicable Federal and/or Provincial legislation. The investigation may include:
 - a) Complainant interviewed;
 - b) Witnesses interviewed;
 - c) Statement of facts (complainant’s perspective) prepared by Investigator and acknowledged by Complainant;
 - d) Statement delivered to Respondent;
 - e) Respondent interviewed;
 - f) Witnesses interviewed; and
 - g) Statement of facts (respondent’s perspective) prepared by Investigator and acknowledged by Respondent.

Investigator's Report

9. The Investigator will prepare and submit a Report.
10. The Investigator's Report should include a summary of evidence from the parties (including both statements of facts, if applicable) and recommendations from the Investigator of whether or not, on a balance of probabilities, an incident occurred that could be considered Discrimination, Harassment, Workplace Harassment, Workplace Violence, Sexual Harassment, or Abuse.
11. The Investigator's Report will be provided to the parties with the names and identifying details of any witnesses redacted. The provision of the Investigator's Report is conditional on the parties not distributing the Report to any third party without the written permission of Ringette Ontario.
12. Should the Investigator find that there are possible instances of offence under the *Criminal Code*, particularly related to Criminal Harassment (or Stalking), Uttering Threats, Assault, Sexual Interference, or Sexual Exploitation, the Investigator shall advise the Complainant to refer the matter to police. The Investigator will further inform Ringette Ontario that the matter should be directed to the police.
13. The Investigator must also inform Ringette Ontario of any findings of criminal activity. Ringette Ontario may decide whether to report such findings to police but is required to inform police if there are findings related to the trafficking of doping drugs or materials, any sexual crime involving minors, fraud against Ringette Ontario, or other offences where the lack of reporting would bring Ringette Ontario into disrepute.
14. The individual or panel that is making a decision on the complaint shall consider the Investigator's Report, in addition to submissions from the parties, prior to deciding on the complaint.

Reprisal and Retaliation

15. An individual who submits a complaint to Ringette Ontario, or who gives evidence in an investigation, may not be subject to reprisal or retaliation from any individual or group. Should anyone who participates in the process face reprisal or retaliation, that individual will have cause to submit a complaint.

False Allegations

16. An individual who submits allegations that the Investigator determines to be false or without merit may be subject to a complaint under the terms of Ringette Ontario's *Discipline and Complaints Policy* with Ringette Ontario, or the individual against whom the false allegations were submitted, acting as the Complainant.

Confidentiality

17. The information obtained about an incident or complaint (including identifying information about any individuals involved) will remain confidential, unless disclosure is necessary for the purpose of investigating or taking corrective action or is otherwise required by law.
18. The Investigator will make every effort to preserve the confidentiality of the complainant, respondent, and any other party. However, Ringette Ontario recognizes that maintaining anonymity of any party may be difficult for the Investigator during the investigation.