



ONTARIO WOMEN'S HOCKEY ASSOCIATION (OWHA) DRESSING ROOM POLICY

DATE OF APPROVAL: JULY 3, 2024

This OWHA Dressing Room Policy applies to all OWHA U22 and younger teams and all teams and programs that have one (1) or more registered participant under the age of 18 and the policy is also recommended for all OWHA teams.

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 Ontario Women's Hockey Association (OWHA) firmly believes that all participants (athletes, officials, coaches, team staff, etc.) have a right to access safe, inclusive, and equitable dressing spaces. In this regard, all participants have the right to utilize the Dressing Room or appropriate and equivalent Dressing Environment based on their gender identity, religious beliefs, body image concerns and/or other reasons related to their individual needs.
- 1.2 OWHA believes in balancing the safety, privacy, modesty and wishes of our participants without compromising the aspects of camaraderie, social integration and bonding inherent in a team sport. This Policy attempts to meet these goals while providing a safe and respectful environment for participants.

2. DEFINED TERMS

- 2.1 Refer to the OWHA Confidentiality Statement for definitions of terms utilized throughout this document.
- 2.2 **Dressing Environments:** spaces beyond dressing rooms (in close proximity to them) that can be temporarily repurposed to provide a space for a small number of participants to change in and out of their gear (e.g., official's room, multi-purpose room, meeting rooms, single-unit washrooms).
- 2.3 **Dressing Rooms:** officially designated spaces for changing in and out of gear. Mostly, these are men's and women's, multi-stall spaces and occasionally can be all-gender, multi-stall spaces
- 2.4 **Minimum Attire:** this is clothing or a base layer that covers the pelvic region (ideally coverage would be from waist to upper thigh but, at a minimum there needs to be coverage of the buttocks and genitalia) and the chest area of the participant. Ideally Minimum Attire above the waist should include clothing or a base layer covering most of the body between the neck and the waistline, it must, at a minimum, include clothing that covers most of the upper torso, such as a sports bra.
- 2.5 **Policy:** means this Dressing Room Policy.

3. APPLICABLE POLICIES OR LAWS

3.1 Rule of Two

3.1.1 To best facilitate safety for all participants, all hockey programs sanctioned in Hockey Canada programming are to comply with their Hockey Canada Dressing Room Supervision Policy and the 'Rule of Two', namely that all interactions with athletes need to be conducted in open, observable and justifiable environments.

3.2 Prohibition on Violent Activities in Dressing Rooms or Dressing Environments

3.2.1 To address the safety of all participants in Dressing Rooms or Dressing Environments, no type of violent conduct of any kind (including locker room boxing) bullying, or hazing is permitted. It is the responsibility of coaches and team staff to ensure that no such violent behaviour is taking place in Dressing Rooms or Dressing Environments. Should anyone experience maltreatment in violation of this section of the Policy, a complaint may be submitted to Hockey Canada's Independent Third Party.

3.3 Prohibition on Recording in Dressing Rooms or Dressing Environments

3.3.1 To respect the privacy of participants, no videos, still photos, or voice recordings of any kind may be taken using any device with recording capabilities in a Dressing Room or Dressing Environment. Cell phones are only permitted to be used in a Dressing Room or Dressing Environment for the purposes of controlling music played in those spaces. Please refer to the Hockey Canada Member Prohibitive Use of Digital Devices Policy for full requirements.

3.4 Ontario Human Rights Code (1990)

3.4.1 Under the *Code*, organizations and their personnel are liable for any discrimination and harassment based on gender identity and gender expression, or any other prohibited ground under the *Code*. Hockey associations must deal with complaints, take steps to prevent problems, and provide a safe and welcoming environment all persons protected under the *Code*.

4. PROMOTING SAFE, INCLUSIVE, AND EQUITABLE PARTICIPATION

4.1 This policy is written in accordance with the *Code*, which prohibits the discrimination of all people on a number of protected grounds: race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, marital status, family status, and disability.

4.2 This policy is written in accordance with the Hockey Canada Dressing Room Policy, which is focused on minimizing the requirement of any youth individual from having to choose to request an accommodation for their personal reasons.

- 4.3 All players have the right to participate fully within the Hockey Canada programming in accordance with Hockey Canada's, its Members', OWHA's and the relevant Association's by-laws, regulations, and policies. To do so, the relevant Association, with support from the Hockey Canada, its Members, and OWHA, is responsible for working proactively to ensure all Dressing Room and Dressing Environment spaces and procedures are safe, inclusive, and equitable by anticipating and removing all barriers to participation. This includes anticipating and removing barriers for players protected under one or more of the aforementioned protected grounds.
- 4.4 All players, upon request, have the right to utilize their self-identified name(s) and pronouns, regardless of their sex/assigned sex, their status of transition, or their legal name and gender markers on identification documents. Relevant Associations will make every effort to utilize and refer to a player by their self-identified name(s) and pronouns on documents and in daily conversation. Intentionally misgendering or inappropriately referring to a player by their given name(s), or their self-identified name(s) and pronouns without prior consent (e.g., if a player is not 'out' to family members, the team, other players, staff and volunteers of the relevant Association, etc.) is harmful and a form of discrimination.
- 4.5 All players will have access to Dressing Room facilities that most appropriately meet their individual needs, which may or may not include accommodations with respect to gender identity and gender expression.
- 4.6 All requests for Dressing Room accommodations will be taken seriously and will be assessed on an individual and confidential basis, in order to address the specific needs and requirements of all players.
- 4.7 With the support of the Hockey Canada, its Members and the OWHA, the relevant Association will work collaboratively with and advocate for players to identify the most appropriate access to Dressing Rooms, including any interim and long-term accommodation solutions, so as to reflect both individual players' needs and the potential structural limitations of facilities.
- 4.8 A player has the right to utilize the Dressing Room or appropriate and equivalent changing area that the player considers to be most safe, inclusive, and reflective of their gender identity and gender expression, and transition status.

5. DRESSING ROOM REQUIREMENTS

5.1 Minimum Attire Requirements

5.1.1 All participants are to use Minimum Attire for use of the Dressing Room or in Dressing Environments where more than one participant is present and the solutions for implementation will be determined by the relevant Team.

5.1.2 It is the responsibility of all coaches and team staff to instruct players regarding the Minimum Attire and ensure that players have methods including but not limited to:

5.1.2.1 arriving at the rink wearing Minimum Attire;

5.1.2.2 utilizing an appropriate private space to change to Minimum Attire (e.g. private restroom stalls, empty dressing room etc.); or

5.1.2.3 using a towel to cover up while changing into Minimum Attire.

5.2 Team Talks

5.2.1 Coaches and team staff will only engage in pre and post-game talks when all athletes that are at the facility and eligible to be in the Dressing Room are present.

5.3 Use of Showers

5.3.1 Showers are an extension of the Dressing Room or Dressing Environment and players must utilize Minimum Attire to access the showers (i.e. walking to and from). Minimum Attire is not required in the shower itself unless the Team has an accommodation request in which case the Team must utilize the options with the OWHA Dressing Room Policy Implementation Guidelines.

5.3.2 A best practice solution for teams is for players to change into swimwear for showering. Changing into the swimwear would be done based on the Minimum Attire requirements in section 5.1.1.

5.4 Officials Dressing Rooms

5.4.1 Given that Dressing Room spaces for officials and officiating teams are often shared by officials of a wide variety of ages and genders and may be used by different sports at the same time, safety and privacy are of the utmost importance. To create a safe and welcoming environment for everyone who uses an officials Dressing Room space, the minimum attire rule and shower recommendations described should be applied. Any situations that require support should be directed to the relevant Association. If an Association does not have a solution, they are to contact OWHA.

6. **SEEKING DRESSING ROOM ACCOMMODATION**

6.1 If a player requires additional support to meet their individual needs over and above proactive efforts to remove barriers to inclusive participation, the player has the right to seek accommodations from the relevant Association. The relevant Association, once receiving the accommodation request in writing, either directly from the player or from the player's parent(s)/guardian(s), is required to meet and work collaboratively with a player to find an appropriate and equivalent option. This may include utilizing a pre-existing Dressing Room or an appropriate and equivalent changing area if required if the facility has limited number of Dressing Rooms.

6.2 As each player is different, the relevant Association must assess and manage all accommodation requests on an individual basis. The relevant Association must

provide safe and confidential opportunities to meet with any player(s) who wants to discuss their individual needs and potential accommodations.

- 6.3 Associations that do not have a solution are to contact their OWHA for support and guidance.

7. **CONFIDENTIALITY AND PRIVACY**

- 7.1 All players have the right to privacy. The relevant Association, with support from OWHA, is responsible for ensuring that a player's private information, including, but not limited to, their sex/assigned sex and/or gender identity, remains confidential. The relevant Association is expected to exercise due diligence with respect to issues of confidentiality and privacy. Disclosure of private information, including to parent(s)/guardian(s), can only take place upon the player's request and/or with the player's consent.

8. **COMPLAINTS**

- 8.1 It is the responsibility of the relevant Association to have a complaint process for addressing player grievances. The player has the right to have an individual of their choice (e.g., parent/guardian, other family member, mentor, friend, etc.) assist and support them within this process.

- 8.2 Unfounded concerns about safety are also sometimes used to attempt to justify discriminatory treatment relating to gender identity and gender expression. Complaints claiming that the inclusion of trans players in dressing rooms that accord with their gender identity or gender expression poses a safety threat or puts themselves or other players at risk are based on false and biased assumptions. In such cases, the bias of the complaint must be addressed and the player's right to access facilities that accord with their gender identity and gender expression must not be impeded based on this bias. Ultimately, the relevant Association must not exclude players in response to complaints based on presumed risk.

Linking to:

1. [OWHA Dressing Room Policy Implementation Guide](#)
2. [OWHA Dressing Room Policy FAQ](#)
3. [OWHA Dressing Room Supervision Policy](#)
4. [OWHA Confidentiality Statement](#)
5. [OWHA Camera Phones & PDAs Facility Alert](#)
6. [Hockey Canada Gender Expression/Gender Identity Policy](#)