

DISCIPLINE AND COMPLAINTS POLICY

Prince George Ringette Association

1. Purpose

Members of the Prince George Ringette Association must fulfill certain responsibilities and obligations including, without limitation, complying with the Prince George Ringette Association's bylaws, policies, procedures, rules and regulations, and applicable code of conduct and ethics documents. Irresponsible behaviour by individuals can result in negative consequences to other individuals, PGRA and the sport of Ringette. Conduct that violates these various bylaws, procedures, rules and regulation, or applicable codes of conduct and ethics documents may be brought to the attention of the Prince George Ringette Association and subject to sanctions pursuant to this policy.¹

2. Scope

This policy applies to all members of PGRA. It applies to members, participants, parents or guardians when they are engaged in activities that may include, without limitation: Practices, Games, Tournaments, Development Programs, Organized Off-Ice Activities and Special Events.

Disciplinary matters and complaints arising within the business, activities or events organized by other Associations but attended by members of PGRA will be subject to the rules of the organizing entity for League or Tournament play infractions occurring during competition, and subject to this Policy for all other infractions, unless otherwise determined at the sole discretion of the PGRA.

3. Definitions

The following terms have these meanings in this policy:

- a) Complaint: Allegation made to the President or Vice-President by a member regarding any infringement of the Association's bylaws, procedures, rules and regulations, applicable codes of conduct, and ethics (an "infraction").
- b) Complainant: The party alleging an infraction.
- c) Respondent: The alleged offender.
- d) Members: All categories of membership defined in the PGRA Bylaws.

¹ Disputes related to League or Tournament play are not subject to this policy and are referred directly to the appropriate Grievance Committee per BCRA policy. Common types of rule violations referred to a Grievance Committee would include player or bench staff eligibility, inaccurate scores recorded, etc., with the aim of calling the game result into question.

- e) Case Manager: An individual appointed by PGRA to oversee the management and administration of complaints submitted to PGRA in accordance with this policy. Case Managers may be appointed on a complaint-by-complaint basis.
- f) Participants: Players, Coaches, Managers, Trainers and Officials registered with PGRA.
- g) Parents/Guardians: Legal representatives of participants where participants are under the age of 19.
- h) Member/ Volunteers and Employees: Any person performing paid or unpaid service to a member of PGRA.
- i) Infraction: Any infringement of the Association's bylaws, procedures, rules and regulations, applicable codes of conduct, and ethics.
- j) Panel: Three-person committee to review alleged infractions and, if an infraction is found to have occurred, to apply sanctions at its own discretion.
- k) Appeal: A formal process for disagreement with sanctions applied under this policy and subject to the Appeals Policy.
- l) Code of Conduct: Formal Player, Referee, Coach and Manager Codes of Conduct documents completed and signed by each individual and kept on file each season.
- m) Ethics: Generally accepted moral standards of behaviour in organized sports that are normally followed by reasonable Individuals.
- n) Director: A Director of the PGRA as defined by the Association's Bylaws.
- o) Officer: An Officer of the PGRA (President, Vice-President, Treasurer, Secretary and Registrar) as defined by the Association's Bylaws.

4. Procedure

Reporting a Complaint

Any member may report a complaint to the PGRA's President or Vice-President. The complaint must be made within fourteen (14) days of the alleged incident. The complaint may be a written or verbal complaint.

Anonymous complaints of a serious nature will be accepted upon the sole discretion of the Association.

Late Complaints

A Complainant wishing to file a complaint after the fourteen (14) days of the date of the alleged incident must provide a written statement giving reasons for the requests for an exemption to this limitation. The decision to accept or reject the notice of complaint received outside the fourteen (14) day period will be at the sole discretion of the Association. This decision on whether to accept the complaint after a fourteen (14) day period is final, may not be appealed, and shall not form the basis of a defence.

Case Manager

Upon receipt of a complaint, the PGRA will assign a Case Manager to manage the complaint, and such appointment is not appealable.²

The Case Manager will be the Past-President, or an Officer of the Board (Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer or Registrar). Where all of these Officers may be conflicted as Case Manager with the outcome or involved in the incident, the President may appoint another Director (i.e. Coaching, Division Coordinator, Officiating) or a third party that is not a Director of the Association.

The Case Manager must implement this policy in a timely manner. Respondents alleged to have committed a major infraction may be temporarily ineligible to participate in any PGRA events until sanctions have been determined and applied (which may or may not result in the formation of a panel and a hearing).

The Case Manager must:

- Determine whether the complaint is frivolous or within the jurisdiction of this Policy. If the Case Manager determines the complaint is frivolous or outside the jurisdiction of this policy, the complaint will be dismissed immediately. This decision may not be appealed;
- Coordinate all administrative aspects of the complaint;
- Consult the relevant Director(s) or Officer(s) (i.e. Coaching, Officials, Division Coordinator, etc.);
- Consult with the Respondent;
- Ensure the knowledge and participation of Parents / Guardians in any conversations or hearings with Respondents under 19 years of age;
- Determine if the complaint alleges a minor or major infraction; and
- Determine the appropriate sanction(s) to be applied to the specific situation.

The Case Manager may appoint a panel in accordance with this Policy (see “Procedure for Major Infraction Hearing by Panel” section). The Case Manager then must:

- Appoint all Panel members;
- Appoint a Panel member as the Panel Chair;
- Determine the format of the hearing in conjunction with the Panel Chair; and
- Provide administrative assistance and logistical support to the Panel, as required, to ensure a fair and timely proceeding.

An appropriate person (i.e. Director of Coaching, Director of Officiating, etc.) having authority may deal with Infractions occurring within competition immediately if necessary (in consultation with the PGRA President or Vice-President). In such situations, disciplinary sanctions will be for the duration of the competition, training,

² It is understood that the President of the Association may assign a Case Manager per the Association Bylaws section 7-1.

activity or event only. Further sanctions for major infractions may be applied in accordance with this policy. Such further sanctions may be appealed according to the appeal provisions of this policy.

Minor Infractions

The Case Manager will refer Minor Infractions to the responsible Board Member having authority over the situation and the individual involved. The person in authority is normally restricted to a Director or Officer of the Association (i.e. Coaching or Officiating).

Minor infractions are single incidents of failing to achieve the expected standards of conduct that generally do not result in harm to others, PGRA or to the sport of Ringette. Minor infractions could include careless task performance, excessive absences, minor safety violations, failure to follow directions, an unintentional leakage of confidential information, and other examples of poor conduct.

In this manner this Policy will not inhibit PGRA Directors or Officers from managing the area of their responsibility except in the case of major infractions.

Procedures for dealing with minor infractions will be informal as compared to those for major infractions and will be determined at the discretion of the person responsible for discipline of such infractions (i.e. the responsible Board Member as noted above). The respondent must be informed of the nature of the infraction and provided a reasonable opportunity to respond to the complaint if she/he chooses to do so.

Penalties or measures for minor infractions, which may be applied singly or in combination, include the following:

- Verbal or written warning;
- Verbal or written apology;
- Service or other voluntary contribution to PGRA;
- Removal of certain privileges of membership or participation for a designated period of time;
- Suspension from the current competition, activity or event; or
- Any other sanction considered appropriate for the offence.

Minor infractions that result in discipline will be recorded and maintained by PGRA. Repeat minor infractions may result in further such incidents being considered a major infraction.

Major Infractions

Major infractions are single or repeated instances of failing to achieve the expected standards of conduct that result in, or have the potential to result in, harm to other

persons, to PGRA or to the sport of Ringette.

Examples of major infractions include, but are not limited to:

- Repeated Minor Infractions;
- Intentionally damaging PGRA property or improperly handling PGRA property or funds;
- Physical abuse;
- Pranks, jokes or other activities that endanger the safety of others, including without limitation hazing;
- Intentional contravention of the Association bylaws, policies, or rules and regulations;
- Violation of the applicable Code(s) of Conduct;
- A specific incident of behaviour that would be considered unethical to a reasonable observer and disadvantages or marginalizes a Member or group of Members;
- Conduct that intentionally damages the image, credibility, or reputation of an individual, PGRA, or the sport of Ringette;
- Behaviour that constitutes harassment, sexual harassment, or sexual misconduct; or
- Abusive use of alcohol, any use or possession of alcohol by minors, or use or possession of illegal drugs and narcotics.

An appropriate person (i.e. Director of Coaching, Director of Officiating, etc.) having authority may deal with Major Infractions occurring within competition immediately if necessary and in consultation with the PGRA President or Vice-President. In such situations, disciplinary sanctions will be for the duration of the competition, training, activity or event only. Further sanctions for major infractions may be applied in accordance with this policy. Such further sanctions may be appealed according to the appeal provisions of this policy.

The Case Manager will apply the appropriate sanctions after reviewing the facts of the case. The Case Manager's written decision, with reasons, will be distributed to all parties and the PGRA Board. The outcome may be released publicly, but written materials will remain confidential.

The Case Manager will apply appropriate sanctions for Major Infractions without requiring formation of a Panel when the Case Manager determines in her/his sole discretion that:

- Appropriate sanctions for similar infractions have been established by past decisions; or
- The infraction requiring discipline is straightforward and appropriate sanctions are easily determined.

Procedure for Major Infraction Hearing by Panel

Complaints for major infractions will require a hearing before a panel when, at the Case Manager's sole discretion, it is decided that:

- The Major Infraction is particularly serious and contentious, and support in determining and reviewing the facts is advisable;
- The infraction may lead to the expulsion of a member; or
- The infraction may lead to a Player, Coach, Assistant Coach, or Official being disqualified from competition for a period exceeding 10 days.

A Panel so appointed will consist of three (3) persons appointed by the Case Manager's sole discretion to hear and decide the complaint. The Case Manager will appoint one of the Panel's members to serve as the Chair. The Panel shall consist of at least one (1) person who is a Director or Officer of the Association, and at least one (1) person that is not a current Member of the association and who has substantial experience in local organized sport. Panel members must not have been a participant in the incident in question, nor have a conflict of interest with the result of the matter.

The Case Manager will determine the format of the hearing, which may involve an oral hearing in person, an oral hearing by telephone, web conference or other appropriate electronic means, a hearing based on written submissions, or a combination of these methods.

The hearing will be governed by the procedures that the Case Manager and the Panel Chair deem appropriate in the circumstances, provided that:

- The Parties will be given minimum seven (7) days notice of the day, time and place of the hearing to be scheduled, where possible, that the parties are not required to take time from their employment to participate;
- Copies of any written documents which the parties wish to have the panel consider will be provided to all Parties in advance of the hearing;
- The Parties may be accompanied by a representative, adviser or legal counsel at their own expense; and
- The Panel may request that any other individual participate and give evidence at the hearing.

Decisions will be by majority vote of the Panel members. The Case Manager will provide administrative and logistical support, but does not vote on the Panel.

After hearing the matter, the Panel will determine whether an infraction has occurred and, if so, what appropriate sanction will be imposed. The Panel's written decision, with reasons, will be distributed to all parties, the Case Manager, and PGRA Board.

The Respondent may waive the hearing, in which case the Panel will determine the

appropriate sanction. The Panel may hold a hearing for the purpose of determining an appropriate sanction. If the Respondent chooses not to participate in the hearing, the hearing may proceed in any event.

The panel may obtain independent advice in fulfilling its duties.

The panel may apply the following disciplinary sanctions singly or in combination, for major infractions:

- Verbal or written reprimand;
- Verbal or written apology;
- Service or other voluntary contribution to PGRA;
- Additional training;
- Removal of certain privileges of membership;
- Suspension from certain PGRA teams, events, and/or activities;
- Suspension from all PGRA activities for a designated period of time;
- Payment of the cost of repairs for property damage;
- Expulsion from PGRA; or
- Other sanctions as may be considered appropriate for the offence.

The panel may order that sanctions, where appropriate, be completed by a deadline. A Respondent who fails to complete such sanctions by the deadline shall be suspended pending completion of the sanctions.

The Panel's written decision, with reasons, will be distributed to all parties and the PGRA Board. The outcome may be released publicly, but written materials will remain confidential.

A written record will be maintained by PGRA for infractions that result in a sanction.

5. Criminal Convictions

An active volunteer's subsequent conviction for any 'Relevant Offence' under the PGRA [Screening Policy](#) will be processed under the Screening Policy procedures, and is not subject to this Discipline and Complaints Policy.

6. Confidentiality

Once initiated and until a decision is released none of the parties will disclose confidential information relating to the complaint or discipline to any person not involved in the proceedings.

7. Appeals Procedure

See PGRA [Appeals Policy](#).