

Okotoks Minor Hockey Association



Game and Conduct Management Plan

April 2015

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- **Introduction**

The Okotoks Minor Hockey Association administers a minor hockey program of approx. 1,200 players from the Municipal District of Foothills, including the Town of Okotoks. OMHA current hockey program consists of:

- Elite Level (AAA, AA)
- Community Level (A, B, C, D)
- Recreational (non-contact)
- Shiny

The program exists for players from 5 years – 18 years of age. OMHA has formulated a constitution that is registered with Hockey Alberta, and the Government of Alberta under the societies act.

Within OMHA there is only 1 organization that administers the Elite level of hockey:

Okotoks Oilers Athletic Association

(1) **AAA** – the draw zone for this level of hockey includes all players in the Chestermere Minor Hockey Association south of 17th Ave., Claresholm Minor Hockey Association, Foothills Minor Hockey Association (Blackie and High River) High Country Minor Hockey Association, Okotoks Minor Hockey Association, Strathmore Minor Hockey Association south of Highway #1, Vulcan Minor Hockey Association.

(2) **AA** – the draw zone for this level of hockey includes only Okotoks Minor Hockey Association.

(3) **A** – the draw zone for this level of hockey is the Okotoks Minor Hockey Association.

- The Okotoks Minor Hockey Association Executive Committee and Board of Directors is elected by the general membership at the Annual General Meeting. Thus responds to the needs of the membership. Part of the mandate the Executive Committee and Board of Directors is to establish conduct management guidelines for all participants in the hockey program.

- It has become evident over the last couple of years OMHA needs to establish a clear and concise Conduct Management Program for all members of the association. With this program OMHA wants to address the fundamental values of the game:

- Shared Respect for all participants of the game
- Development of the players involved in the game

- Fun while participating in the game
- To achieve this OMHA wants to focus on respect, positive development, and fun.
- The Game and Conduct Management Plan is not a short term solution to the serious problems the game is facing. It has been created as a long term guiding principle for the minor hockey program in Okotoks.

2) Okotoks Minor Hockey Association Philosophy:

a) The Game and Conduct Management Plan

i) The Okotoks Minor Hockey Association views the Game and Conduct Management Plan as support and confirmation to our many coaches, players, officials, parents, and volunteers who are in the majority and who have always participated in the game following the fundamental principles of respect, positive development, and fun. We see this program as a vehicle to assist them to further these values and make the game even better and more enjoyable.

b) Objectives of the Game and Conduct Management Plan

i) To provide a program that 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 other participants.
- Respect for the great game of hockey.
- Protection from harm.
- Development of ethical conduct towards others.
- Notions of justice, fairness, equity.
- Caring attitudes.
- Freedom to enjoy.

ii) 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.

iii) This program is not intended to be a new process for complaints about officiating or general hockey rules. The objective is to promote and insure acceptable behavior.

c) Definition of "Unacceptable Behavior"

i) An individual is displaying unacceptable behavior if they are verbally or physically harassing and/or abusing a game participant (coach, player, official or spectator). When there is a situation of

"unacceptable behavior", the responsibilities of OMHA coaches, players, officials, spectators and administrators are outline below. The focus is on achieving the Game and Conduct Management Plan objectives. Confrontation should be avoided. Practice the "24 Hour" rule and then report the incident, as it is an important step in attaining the programs objectives.

d) Providing an Incident Report

i) Rumors, innuendo and supposition will not be accepted by OMHA. Complainants not willing to present their observations/concerns in writing with their name provided will NOT receive standing. ALL those who do provide this, will receive a formal response. For the protection of all those involved, at minimum, two OMHA representatives should be present to hear/address a complaint.

3) Code of Conduct – Zero Tolerance Policy

i) Members, players and participants are asked to and are expected to abide by the Bylaws, Rules, and Policies of the Okotoks Minor Hockey Association, and their behavior is expected to align with the spirit of the Bylaws, Rules, and Policies of this code.

ii) All members and participants of the Association shall respect other Members, officials, parents, players, fans, team officials, volunteers, executive committee members, employees and property of the association. Any inappropriate conduct, threats, harassment or abuse (including the use of profanity) directed towards game or team officials, members, parents, fans, volunteers, executive committee members, employees, damage to the property of the Association or another Association will not be tolerated.

iii) All members, fans, and participants of the Association shall respect the game of hockey and shall behave in a manner so as not to make a travesty of the game.

iv) Okotoks Minor Hockey Association will not tolerate LOUD, obscene, obnoxious coaches, managers, assistants, players, parents, or fans. Such individuals will be subject to disciplinary action as outlined in the disciplinary section.

v) Parents and fans are not permitted in the dressing room except as expressly permitted by the respective division head and/or coach to assist their child in changing before or after a game or practice.

vi) Under no circumstances will a parent or fan to enter the opposing team's dressing room.

vii) Within the Okotoks Minor Hockey membership Coaches and other team official's players, parents, and fans are not permitted under any circumstance in the official's dressing room, nor are they to confront game officials about the game.

viii) Violation by any member, fan, or participant of any provision of this Code of Conduct – Zero Tolerance will result in disciplinary action being taken by the Association against such individuals as provided in this document.

ix) Harassment and Bullying in all its forms, including cyber bullying (e.g.: facebook, Twitter, etc.) will not be tolerated during the course of any Okotoks Minor Hockey activity or program. All those involved with Okotoks Minor Hockey, including its volunteers, players and parents/guardians of players are responsible for making every reasonable effort to uphold this commitment. Specifically, this includes refraining from harassing or bullying behavior, responding promptly and informally to minor incidents of harassment or bullying and following Local or National policy guidelines for reporting or responding to more serious complaints of harassment or bullying. Everyone is encouraged to report incidents of harassment or bullying.

x) The inappropriate use of Camera's, Cell Phones, PDA's (iPad's, iTouch, Blackberry's) or any other type of recording device is strictly prohibited in dressing rooms OR the inappropriate use of any Camera's, Cell Phones, PDA's (iPad's, iTouch, Blackberry's) or any other type of recording device is also strictly prohibited in and around player's benches. This includes coaches, parents, players, and visitors. Disciplinary action, including possible suspension will follow any breach of this rule.

xi) Coaches and Assistant Coaches will have their Cell phone available in Case of Emergency for that use only.

xii) Also after a game a picture may be taken by a team official or parents for a memory photo of the team under a special occasion such as a tournament or playoff win. Privacy Rules apply to any of these photos taken.

ANY VIOLATION OR BREACH OF THE PROVISIONS IN THIS CODE OF CONDUCT – ZERO TOLERANCE BY MEMBERS, FANS, OR PARTICIPANTS OF OMHA/OOAA WILL RESULT IN DISCIPLINARY ACTION BY THE ASSOCIATION AGAINST SUCH INDIVIDUALS WHICH WILL INCLUDE SUSPENSION AS OUTLINED IN THE DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES OF THIS CODE OF CONDUCT – ZERO TOLERANCE.

4) Complaint Handling Procedure

a) Implementation Trigger

i) The reporting of unacceptable behavior by a coach, player, official, spectator, or administrator 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.

b) Reporting Process

i) If an incident occurs which meets the definition of unacceptable behavior and in the opinion of a coach, player, official, spectator, or administrator, is serious enough to warrant a formal complaint, then an Incident Report Form (Appendix E) must be completed and forwarded to OMHA Division Director with seven days of occurrence.

ii) The Incident Report Form will then be submitted to the current Game and Conduct Director for the review and actions. Incident Reports must be filed within the season which the incident occurs.

c) Responsible Reporters

i) If, in the opinion of a Coach, Player, Official, Spectator, or Administrator an individual is verbally or physically harassing or abusing a game participant (coach, player or official), at the next stoppage of play, the offending individual will be identified and through discussion with one or both coaches, request that the offending individual(s) cease this unacceptable behavior. If the behavior continues, the official will document the offense on an incident report form or the back of the game sheet. A copy of the write up will be forwarded to (the Association's designated individual outlined in the Complaint Handling Procedure section 4.b.ii), triggering the complaint handling process. The OMHA's Executive Committee Member responsible for management of the Game and Conduct Management Plan will determine if an investigation team is required or the matter can be dealt with by the President or Director Game and Conduct.

d) Investigation Team

i) If an Investigation Team is required, it will consist of 3 members of the association appointed by the President or Game and Conduct Director. They will be given a copy of the Game and Conduct Management Plan to ensure they conduct the investigation according to the objectives of the plan.

e) Enforcement

i) Reports handled by an Investigation Team:

After the investigation, the Okotoks Minor Hockey Association President shall have the power to implement the recommendations of the Investigation team that could include suspending any player, coach, official, spectator, or administrator of any team under the auspices of the Okotoks Minor Hockey Association.

ii) Reports handled by the President or Designate:

The President or Designate has the power to suspend any coach, player, official or spectator of any team under the auspices of the Association for any conduct on or off the ice which in the sole discretion of the President or Designate is deemed to be unbecoming or detrimental to the game.

The President or Designate shall have the power to prevent 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 sole discretion of the President or Designate is deemed to be unbecoming or detrimental to the game. Further, the President or Designate has the power to suspend the player, coach, team official or the team to which the spectator is attached.

iii) This authority may be delegated by the President, to other members of the association's executive committee or board of directors.

iv) The power and delegation granted to the President or Designate allows for effective and quick action against conduct considered detrimental to the game and its participants. The Okotoks Minor Hockey

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

f) Appeal Process

i) Upon receiving a request for an appeal, the Okotoks Minor Hockey Association will establish an appeal committee made up of three (3) members to hear the appeal related to any disciplinary action handed down as a result of an investigation. Appeals should be heard as quickly as is practical (within 7 days). The appeal must contain a clear and concise summary stating the grounds for the appeal. Notice of the appeal must be submitted, in writing, to the President of the Okotoks Minor Hockey Association within five (5) days from the date of discipline notification was received. If the appeal is denied, further appeals can be made to Hockey Alberta under Hockey Alberta Rules & Regulations 13.03 "Appeal from Decision of Local Minor Hockey Association".

5) Implementation Process

a) Incorporation into OMHA Bylaws

i) By-Law 102(c)

(1) The President shall have the power to suspend any coach, player, or team official who is a member of the Okotoks Minor Hockey Association for any conduct on or off the ice which in the sole discretion of the President is deemed to be detrimental to the game. Such suspension to be effective until dealt with by the appeal committee.

ii) By-Law 102(d)

(1) The President shall have the power to prevent any spectator from viewing a game, other activity, or entering a facility to view a game or other activity that is being conducted by the Okotoks Minor Hockey Association for conduct the President has deemed to be detrimental to the game. Further, the President shall have the power to suspend the coach, player, team official, or the team to which the spectator is affiliated. Such action to be effective until dealt with by the appeal committee.

b) Introducing the Program

i) At the start of the each season, a meeting is to be held with all participants of the game to present the program. At this meeting, the Okotoks Minor Hockey Association 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

ii) The teams will be given packages with the Fair Play Pledge forms (Appendix A, B, C, D) and a program outline. Players, parents, and coaches will have access to a copy of the OMHA Game and Conduct Management Plan as early as practical in the season. Players, parents and coaches may be required to sign a statement agreeing to abide by the OMHA Conduct Management Plan. OMHA members refusing to sign the OMHA Game and Conduct Management Plan will be immediately suspended from all member privileges.

iii) Other Notifications and/or Partnerships

(1) 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/City Recreation Board
- Arena Operating Board
- Agricultural Society
- Town Council
- Community Services Department
- Local/City Police Department

6) Communication Protocol

Prior to reporting and or filing a complaint all members must wait 24 hours before submitting their concern. This will be strictly enforced.

Player/Parent -> Manager/Coach -> Division Director/Game and Conduct Director ->Vice President(s) and/or President -> Hockey Alberta

Communication Flow Chart (OMHA)

Step One: Player / Parent

Step Two: Team Manager

Step Three: Team Coach

Step Four: Division Director/ Game and Conduct Director

Step Five: OMHA Vice-President(s)

Step Six: OMHA President

Step Seven: Hockey Alberta

Accompanying procedure:

Under no circumstances shall issues be advanced without first seeking resolution at the correct level. If a resolution cannot be secured at the appropriate level the communication must be delivered as per the flow chart as above. Once the communication has been received you will be contacted by a representative of OMHA.

Appendices

Appendix A – Parents Pledge Form

Appendix B – Player Pledge Form

Appendix C – Coach Pledge Form

Appendix D – Officials Pledge Form

Appendix E – Incident Report Form

Appendix F – Discipline Guidelines

Appendix G – Hockey Alberta Game & Conduct Management and Abuse & Harassment Description

Appendix A

PARENTS PLEDGE

It is the intention of this pledge to promote proper behavior and respect for all participants within the Association. All parents are asked to sign this pledge to show their support for the principles of Fair Play.

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR PARENTS

1. I will not force my child to participate in hockey.
2. I will remember that my child plays hockey for his or her enjoyment, not mine.
3. I will encourage my child to play by the rules and to resolve conflict without resorting to hostility or violence.
4. I will teach my child that doing one's best is as important as winning so that my child will never feel defeated by the outcome of the game.
5. I will make my child feel like a winner every time by offering praise for competing fairly and hard.
6. I will never ridicule or yell at my child for making a mistake or losing a game.
7. I will remember that children learn by example. I will applaud good plays and performances by both my child's team and their opponents.
8. I recognize officials are being developed in the same manner as players, and will be supportive of their decisions during games.
9. I will support all efforts to remove verbal and physical abuse from the hockey environment.
10. I will respect and show appreciation for the volunteers who give their time to hockey for my child.

I agree to abide by the principles of this CODE as set and supported by this Association.

I also agree to abide by the rules, regulations and decisions as set for this Association.

PRINT

NAME _____ DATE _____

SIGNATURES:

PARENT _____ PARENT _____

Appendix B

PLAYERS PLEDGE

It is the intention of this pledge to promote proper behavior and respect for all participants within the Association. All players are asked to sign this pledge to show their support for the principles of Fair Play.

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR PLAYERS

1. I will play hockey because I want to, not because someone else wants me to.
2. I will play by the rules of hockey and in the spirit of the Game.
3. I will control my temper so I do not spoil the activity of everyone.
4. I will respect my opponents.
5. I will do my best to be a true team player.
6. I will remember that winning isn't everything - that having fun, improving skills, making friends and doing my best are also important.
7. I will acknowledge all good plays and performances - those of my team and my opponents.
8. I will remember that coaches and officials are there to help me. I will accept their decisions and show them respect.

I agree to abide by the principles of this CODE as set and supported by this Association.

I also agree to abide by the rules, regulations and decisions as set for this Association.

PRINT

NAME _____ DATE _____

SIGNATURE:

PLAYER _____ TEAM _____

Appendix C

COACHES PLEDGE

It is the intention of this pledge to promote proper behavior and respect for all participants within the Association. All coaches are asked to sign this pledge showing their support for the principles of Fair Play.

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR COACHES

1. I will be reasonable when scheduling games and practices remembering that young athletes have other interests and obligations.
2. I will teach my athletes to play fairly and to respect the rules, officials, opponents and Teammates.
3. I will ensure all athletes receive equal instruction, discipline, support and appropriate, fair playing time.
4. I will not ridicule or yell at my athletes for making mistakes or for performing poorly. I will remember that children play to have fun and must be encouraged to have confidence in themselves.
5. I will make sure that equipment and facilities are safe and match the athlete's ages and ability.
6. I will remember that children need a coach they can respect. I will be generous with praise and set a good example.
7. I will obtain proper training and continue to upgrade my coaching skills.

I agree to abide by the principles of this CODE as set and supported by this Association.

I also agree to abide by the rules, regulations and decisions as set for this Association.

PRINT

NAME _____ DATE _____

SIGNATURE:

COACH _____ TEAM _____

Appendix D

OFFICIALS PLEDGE

It is the intention of this pledge to promote proper behavior and respect for all participants within the Association. All officials are asked to sign this pledge showing their support for the principles of Fair Play.

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR OFFICIALS

1. I will make sure that every player has a reasonable opportunity to perform to the best of his or her ability, within the rules.
2. I will avoid or remedy any situation that threatens the safety of the players.
3. I will maintain a healthy atmosphere and environment for competition.
4. I will not permit the intimidation of any player either by word or action. I will not tolerate unacceptable conduct towards myself, other officials, players, coaches or spectators,
5. I will be consistent and objective in calling all infractions, regardless of my personal feelings towards a team or individual player.
6. I will handle all conflicts firmly but with dignity.
7. I will accept my role as teacher and role model for fair play, especially with young participants.
8. I will be open to discussion and contact with players before and after the game.
9. I will remain open to constructive criticism and show respect and consideration for different points of view.
10. I will obtain proper training to upgrade my skills.
11. I will work in co-operation with coaches for the benefit of the game.

I agree to abide by the principles of this CODE as set and supported by this Association.

I also agree to abide by the rules, regulations and decisions as set for this Association.

PRINT

NAME _____ DATE _____

SIGNATURE:

OFFICIAL _____

Appendix E

INCIDENT REPORT FORM

Submit completed form to:

Game and Conduct C/O

Okotoks Minor Hockey

Box 1152, Okotoks, Alberta T1S 1B2

gameandconduct@okotokshockey.com

This form is to be utilized by anyone in the Okotoks Minor Hockey Association to report an incident of unacceptable behavior. An individual is considered to be displaying unacceptable behavior 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 Behavior witnessed. Please use black ink or type the report. Reports that are not legible will not be reviewed.

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.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/Town: _____

PHONE: _____

SIGNATURE: _____ DATE: _____

Appendix F

Discipline Guidelines

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 SHOULD BE REVIEWED BY THE SAME PERSON TO INSURE CONSISTENCY IN THE APPLICATION OF DISCIPLINE IS MAINTAINED.

Severity of Discipline (Game and Conduct)

a. Mild (Verbal Reprimand + Possible 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 re-offending.

b. Moderate (Written Reprimand + Minimum 2 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 (Written Reprimand + Min. 5 games to Max. 3 year suspension)

This is for the most serious offences. An example could be physically threatening or assaulting another individual. Application of this type of discipline would be for individuals who have reoffended multiple times or have not accepted responsibility for their actions, show no remorse and are likely to re-offend.

The following lists individuals that have been delegated authority to assess suspensions on behalf of the Okotoks Minor Hockey Association

Association President (As noted above)

Game and Conduct Director (5 Games)

VP, Development (5 Games)

VP, Programs (5 Games)

Individual(s) or committee designated by the President with program enforcement (up to 3 years).

Severity of Discipline (Game and Conduct – Zero Tolerance)

- 1st Offence – Minimum 1 week (7 days) to a maximum of twenty one (21) days suspension from participating in any Okotoks Minor Hockey activity. This will include all dryland, exhibition, games, league games, arenas, tournaments as well as any team functions.
- 2nd Offence (or failure to comply with 1st Offence ruling) will result in: instant removal of the offending player, parent (s), or guardian (s) from any and all activities within OMHA/OOAA, for the remainder of the season from the date of the infraction.
- 3rd Offence (or failure to comply with 1st or 2nd Offence rulings) will result in: instant removal of the entire family (all family members) from any and all activities within OMHA/OOAA, for the remainder of the season from the date of the infraction.

The Code of Conduct checked off at registration is good for one season. The season is from the registration date to the end of that upcoming season.

Any Physical abuse of another person will carry an indefinite suspension from all OMHA/OOAA events until reviewed by OMHA for further discipline.

A permanent suspension will entail NO refund of registration monies depending on the severity of the infraction.

Use Appendix E – Incident report Form to document and file the Zero Tolerance breach with OMHA.

Once received it will be forwarded to the Game and Conduct Committee for review as per 4) d) i). The OMHA or OOAA Secretary will be present as a neutral party at all disciplinary hearings to record and document all proceedings.

All formal complaints will be kept on file for the time the offender is a member of OMHA/OOAA.

Appendix G

HOCKEY ALBERTA GAME & CONDUCT MANAGEMENT

ABUSE & HARRASSMENT DESCRIPTION

3.0 MATTERS OF UNACCEPTABLE CONDUCT AND BEHAVIOUR

3.1 Abuse and Neglect

3.1.1 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.

3.1.2 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.

3.1.3 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.

3.2 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.

3.2.1 Harassment is defined as conduct, which is disrespectful, insulting, intimidating, humiliating, offensive or physically harmful. Types of behavior 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.