

	Game and Conduct Manual	Page 1 of 12
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OBJECTIVE

To provide a “Conduct Management framework” for Strait Richmond Minor Hockey Association (SRMHA).

INTRODUCTION

Improper conduct is detrimental to the development of players, coaches, officials, and volunteers in minor hockey and can be directly linked to many quality participants exiting the game. Further to this point is the struggle that Minor Hockey Associations encounter in dealing with improper behavior in a proper and timely fashion.

The intended result of this Policy is to provide a clear understanding of defining, identifying, and dealing with unacceptable behaviour through a fair and consistent process. The Code of Conduct/Pledge Forms for Coaches, Parents, Players, and Officials, in Appendix A outline unacceptable/acceptable guidelines for the membership.

CONTENTS

The SRMHA Game and Conduct Manual include the following:

- 1.0 STRAIT RICHMOND MINOR HOCKEY ASSOCIATION PHILOSOPHY**
- 2.0 OBJECTIVES OF THE SRMHA GAME AND CONDUCT POLICY**
- 3.0 DEFINITION OF UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR**
- 4.0 COMPLAINT HANDLING PROCEDURE**
 - 4.1 Implementation Trigger**
 - 4.2 Reporting Process**
 - 4.3 Responsible Reporters**
 - 4.3.1 On/Off Ice Officials**
 - 4.3.2 Directors, Spectators, Players**
 - 4.4 Enforcement**
 - 4.5 Appeal Process**
- 5.0 IMPLEMENTATION**
 - 5.1 Incorporation into Constitution**
 - 5.2 Introducing the Program**
 - 5.3 Other Notifications and /or Partnerships**
 - 5.4 Pledge Forms and/or Code of Conducts**

Appendices

- Appendix A - Pledge Forms**
- Appendix B - Incident Report Form**
- Appendix C - Discipline Guidelines**

1.0 Association Philosophy

SRMHA's philosophy in its development and administration of minor hockey programs is to:

1. promote hockey as a means of providing an enjoyable and rewarding learning experience for players, to improve and maintain their fitness level and to lead an active life;
2. provide opportunities for players to learn the fundamental skills of hockey and acquired sport skills that will be the cornerstone of their future athletic development;
3. promote and develop sportsmanship, fair play, pride, self worth and confidence and learn life skills by participating in an organized team sport activity;
4. provide opportunities for coaches to improve their skills and abilities to teach players and become role models in the community;
5. offer Minor Hockey Players the opportunity to participate in a recreational hockey program by operating the SRMHA from Initiation to Midget, ensuring all players have an equal opportunity to participate, play and develop their skills; and
6. establish and enforce policies, procedures and rule governing the operations of all Minor Hockey in the Strait Richmond region.

The SRMHA Game and Conduct Policy's aim is to remind all participants in minor hockey that it is up to each individual to set a good example.

The SRMHA Game and Conduct Policy provides support and confirmation to the majority of our excellent volunteers, coaches, officials and parents who have always practiced and subscribed to the fundamental principles of fun, respect and positive development of the Game. We see this program as a vehicle to assist them to further these values and make the Game even better and more enjoyable.

2.0 SRMHA Game and Conduct Policy Objectives

The SRMHA Game and Conduct Policy was initiated to address issues of inappropriate conduct and is not intended to replace existing processes for handling rule infractions, Referee calls, general hockey rules, etc.

The SRMHA Game and Conduct Policy will play a significant role in the development of a young person's values, morals, social maturity, physical fitness and mental fitness. The program aims to promote acceptable behavior which provides:

- Respect for persons
- Protection from harm
- Development of ethical conduct towards others
- Notions of justice, fairness, equity
- Caring attitudes
- Freedom to enjoy and to flourish
- Respect for the game

Every participant at SRMHA activities must abide by these principles. A participant is defined as (but not limited to) a player, coach, official, or spectator. The SRMHA Game and Conduct Policy are not intended to be a new process for complaints about officiating or general hockey rules. The objective is to promote and ensure acceptable behavior.

3.0 Definition of "Unacceptable Behavior"

All forms of unacceptable behavior will NOT be tolerated by SRMHA. An individual is displaying unacceptable behavior if they are verbally or physically harassing and/or abusing a game participant (player, coach, spectator or official). When there is a situation of "unacceptable behavior", the responsibilities of SRMHA coaches, spectators and on-ice officials are as set out herein. The focus is on

achieving the objectives outlined in Section 2.0. Confrontation should be avoided, and reporting is encouraged, as it is an important step in attaining the objectives of the SRMHA Game and Conduct Policy.

4.0 Complaint Handling Procedure

SRMHA has established a procedure to handle complaints which includes complaint triggers, reporting process, and enforcement process.

4.1 Implementation Trigger

The reporting of unacceptable behaviour by a director, spectator, coach, player or official 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.

4.2 Reporting Process

If an incident occurs which meets the definition of unacceptable behavior and in the opinion of a player, spectator, coach, official or administrator, is serious enough to warrant a formal complaint, then an Incident Report Form (Appendix B) must be completed. SRMHA has a Vice-President who is the Chair of the Discipline Committee to receive and investigate complaints as part of the Discipline Committee's role. This individual remains independent. If this Vice-President feels he/she may not be able to deal objectively with the complaint due to personal involvement or other conflict, an alternate will be designated by the President. The expectation is to report and discuss the incident at the team level first (i.e. parent to coach). The Incident Report Form will be submitted to the SRMHA Vice President either in person or through e-mail (Executive emails can be found on the association website www.srmha.ca). All submitted incident reports will be reviewed by the Discipline Committee to ensure the appropriateness of the response and consistency of enforcement within the Association. While the process to handle complaints outlined above is encouraged, if the situation dictates or the reporter is uncomfortable submitting the complaint to the coach, the complaint may be submitted directly to a member of the Executive.

4.3 Responsible Reporters

4.3.1 On/Off Ice Officials

If, in the opinion of an official (on-ice or off-ice), an individual is verbally or physically harassing or abusing a game participant (coach, player or official), the official will call a stoppage of play, identify the offending individual and through discussion with one or both coaches, request that the offending individuals cease this unacceptable behaviour. If the behavior continues, the official will document the offense or action on a game incident report form or the back of the game sheet. A copy of the write-up on the game sheet will be forwarded to the Vice President. This will trigger the complaint handling process.

4.3.2 Directors, Spectators, Players

If in the opinion of a Director, spectator, player or rink facilitator an individual is verbally or physically harassing or abusing a game participant (coach, player, official, or spectator), an incident report form is to be completed and forwarded to the Vice President. This will trigger the complaint handling process.

4.4 Enforcement

Within SRMHA, the following individuals have the power to assess discipline within the Association:

- 1) The Discipline Committee chaired by the Vice President,
- 2) Another member of the SRMHA Board of Directors, delegated by the Vice President, in his absence, and
- 3) The President (though the President is not typically engaged in the complaint handling process unless the Vice President's decision is appealed).

Part of this process also includes the right of the Richmond Arena or Port Hawkesbury Civic Center to support the necessary discipline, which may include restricting a participant from entering a facility during an SRMHA event.

After investigation, the SRMHA Discipline Committee shall have the power to suspend summarily any player, coach, trainer, manager, 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 Discipline Committee is deemed to be unbecoming or detrimental to the game. The Discipline Committee shall have the power to prevent summarily 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 Discipline Committee is deemed to be unbecoming or detrimental to the game. Further, the Discipline Committee shall have the power to suspend summarily the player, coach, team official or the team to which the spectator is attached. This authority may be delegated to such Association directors and officials as the Vice President may designate, depending on the nature of the incident. The power and delegation granted to the Vice President allows for effective and quick action against conduct unbecoming or detrimental to the game and its participants, as well as action against the team of the contravening spectator. The Association is prepared to enforce these provisions as required and they are an integral part of the reporting and enforcement initiatives.

4.5 Appeal Process

To ensure a complaint has been handled with impartiality and fairness, SRMHA has an appeals process in cases there is a perception that an incident has been mishandled or discipline improperly applied. Upon receiving a request for an appeal of the Vice President's decision, the SRMHA President will hear any appeals related to the discipline or actions undertaken as a result of the outcome of an investigation. Appeals should be heard as soon as is practical (within 7 days of appeal submission). The appeal must contain a clear and concise summary of the grounds for the appeal. Notice of the appeal must be submitted to the President of the SRMHA within five (5) days from the date of notification of discipline. If the appeal is denied, further appeals can be made to Hockey Nova Scotia under the normal appeals process.

5.0 Implementation Process

5.1 Incorporation into Constitution

As outlined in section 4.4 Enforcement, those with the authority to discipline are specified in the SRMHA's Constitution, the governing documents of the Association:

POWER OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

For the purpose of carrying out the objects of the Strait Richmond Minor Hockey Association, the Board of Directors shall manage the affairs of the Association,

and shall implement all of the resolutions, exercise all of the powers and do all such acts and things as may be exercised or done by the Association and are not by these Bylaws expressly directed or required to be done at a meeting of the members or otherwise. The powers and duties of the Board of Directors include, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, the following:

- a). to establish and define the Rules and Policies of the SRMHA, ***solely, finally, absolutely and exclusively, to the exclusion of any interference from any other body***, subject always to the constitution, bylaws and rules and regulations of the Nova Scotia Amateur Hockey Association and the Canadian Hockey Association;
- b). to interpret and enforce the Constitution, Bylaws, Rules, Regulations and Policies of the SRMHA, Hockey Nova Scotia and Hockey Canada for the betterment of hockey in the Strait Richmond region;
- c.) to impose and enforce penalties upon the members, hockey teams, players, coaches, officials or other persons for violation or breaches of the Constitution, Bylaws, Rules, Regulations and policies of the SRMHA, Hockey Nova Scotia or Hockey Canada, or for any violation or breach of a decision or ruling of the SRMHA;

5.2 Introducing the Program

SRMHA will introduce the SRMHA Game and Conduct Manual at the beginning of the hockey season at its annual coaches meeting SRMHA's Referee - In - Chief will be responsible for introducing the Policy to the on ice Officials. The program will be explained to coaches and on-ice officials who can then discuss the program with their teams. Referees can remind coaches and players of the program's objectives before each game if they choose, or mention the details whenever they see a need to remind participants of the program. At the start of the season (2015/16) a meeting will be held with all team management and representatives of the officials to present the program. At this presentation, SRMHA 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
- The teams will be given packages with the Fair Play Pledge forms (Appendix A) and a program outline. These will be distributed to the Parents, Players, Coaches and Officials for completion. Once complete they will be collected and returned to the Association.

5.3 Other Notifications and/or Partnerships

Notification of the SRMHA Code of Conduct, in effect, will be given to:

- SRMHA Board of Directors

5.4 Pledge Forms and/or Code of Conducts

SRMHA has established a set of guidelines for acceptable and unacceptable behaviour that the members must adhere to. The Code of Conducts provides the foundation and accountability of the membership when enforcing a sanction becomes a reality. The Pledge Forms are attached in the Appendices of this manual. SRMHA has elected to make the signing of the forms mandatory and it should be very clear to all members that whether the pledge form is signed or not, all members are still subject to the consequences for unacceptable behaviour as the Program is consistent with the Constitution and Policies of the SRMHA and must be followed as a condition of membership.

Appendix A – Codes of Conduct

STRAIT RICHMOND MINOR HOCKEY ASSOCIATION (SRMHA) PARENTS/GAURDIANS PLEDGE

It is the intention of this pledge to promote proper behavior and respect for all participants within SRMHA. All parents must sign this pledge before being allowed to participate in hockey and must continue to observe the principles of Fair Play.

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR PARENTS INITIAL

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 or anyone else 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 will never question the official's judgment or honesty in public. I recognize officials are being developed in the same manner as players. _____
9. I will support all efforts to remove verbal and physical abuse from children's hockey games. _____
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 SRMHA.

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

PRINT NAME(S) _____ DATE _____

SIGNATURES:
PARENT/GAURDIAN _____

PARENT/GAURDIAN _____

STRAIT RICHMOND MINOR HOCKEY ASSOCIATION (SRMHA) PLAYERS PLEDGE

It is the intention of this pledge to promote proper behavior and respect for all participants within the FMMHA. All players **Atom and up** must sign this pledge before being allowed to participate in hockey and must continue to observe the principles of Fair Play.

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR PLAYERS INITIAL

1. I will play hockey because I want to, not because others or coaches want me to. _____
2. I will play by the rules of hockey and in the spirit of the Game. _____
3. I will control my temper - fighting or "mouthing-off" can 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 SRMHA.

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

PRINT
PLAYERS NAME _____ DATE _____

SIGNATURE:
PLAYER/PARENT/GAURDIAN _____

TEAM _____

By signing the above form I acknowledge that I have reviewed the above form with my child and that he/she has a good understanding of the player's pledge.

STRAIT RICHMOND MINOR HOCKEY ASSOCIATION (SRMHA) COACHES PLEDGE

It is the intention of this pledge to promote proper behavior and respect for all participants within the SRMHA. All coaches must sign this pledge before being allowed to participate in hockey and must continue to observe the principles of Fair Play.

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR COACHES INITIAL

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 or anyone else 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. _____
8. I will agree to obtain my Criminal Records Check, Child Abuse Registry, Respect in Sport for Coaches and any other courses or documentation required by Hockey Nova Scotia by the deadlines they impose. _____
9. I will hold and attend a parents meeting where I will review the Fair Ice Policy, the code of conduct and my expectations for the season. _____

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

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

PRINT
NAME _____ DATE _____

SIGNATURE:
COACH _____ TEAM _____

STRAIT RICHMOND MINOR HOCKEY ASSOCIATION (SRMHA) OFFICIALS PLEDGE

It is the intention of this pledge to promote proper behavior and respect for all participants within the Association. All officials must sign this pledge before being allowed to participate in hockey and must continue to observe the principles of Fair Play.

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR OFFICIALS INITIAL

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. _____ SHOULD WE REMOVE??**
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 officiating skills. _____
11. I will work in co-operation with coaches and SRMHA for the benefit of the game. _____

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

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

PRINT

NAME _____ DATE _____

SIGNATURE:

OFFICIAL _____

Appendix B – Incident Report Form

*This form is to be utilized by anyone in the Strait Richmond 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 _____

Please provide a clear description of the unacceptable behavior witnessed. Please use pen or type the report. If additional space is required, please use reverse side or attach separately. 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 C – Discipline Guidelines

Any incidents on or off ice not being handled by Hockey Nova Scotia will be dealt with by SRMHA. SRMHA and its members will cooperate fully with Hockey Nova Scotia on any investigations or disciplinary matters.

SRMHA has the right to increase any suspensions given out by Hockey Nova Scotia.

In many instances, offences that are similar to those identified in the Hockey Nova Scotia 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 WILL BE REVIEWED BY THE DISCIPLINE COMMITTEE TO ENSURE CONSISTENCY IN THE APPLICATION OF DISCIPLINE IS MAINTAINED.

Severity of Discipline

a. Mild (Verbal Warning and or Written)

This would be applied when it is a first offence which is less severe in nature and for which Hockey Nova Scotia Minimum Suspension Guidelines are not stipulated. The offending individual has shown true remorse and the actions are out of character. There is little chance of this person reoffending. All warnings verbal or written must be documented to the Discipline Committee.

b. Moderate (Minimum 2 game suspension)

This is for offences which are mild to moderate in severity. Application of this type of discipline could 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 (Minimum 5 games to expulsion from Minor Hockey)

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 re-offended multiple times or have not accepted responsibility for their actions, show no remorse and are likely to re-offend. The following list of individuals has been delegated authority to assess suspensions on behalf of the SRMHA:

President

Vice President who is the Chair of the Discipline Committee

Any member SRMHA designated by the Vice President in his/her absence

SRMHA Board of Directors (Maximum 2 games)

Appendix D – 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 SRMHA or Hockey Nova Scotia 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 Nova Scotia and SRMHA should also be advised of the intent to report.

3.1.2 Hockey Nova Scotia 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 Nova Scotia.

3.2 Harassment

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 includes, but is 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.
- (h) Behaviors such as those described above which are not directed towards individuals or groups but which have the effect of creating a negative, hostile or uncomfortable environment.

Related Policies:

SRMHA Rink Behavior Policy

SRMHA Social Media Policy

SRMHA Fair Ice Policy