



## **HARASSMENT AND BULLYING POLICY**

**SEPTEMBER 11, 2024**

This Policy sets out the principles and practices of the Squamish Minor Hockey Association (SMHA) with regards to bullying, harassing and abusive behavior towards participants. It is the policy of the SMHA that bullying, harassing or abusive behaviors in all forms will not be tolerated during the course of any SMHA activity or program, we must represent ourselves accordingly on the ice, off the ice, in our community and at school. Accordingly, all SMHA members (players, directors, staff, volunteers, team and on ice officials), parents and guardians, are responsible for making every reasonable effort to uphold this commitment.

Some behaviors which are defined as abuse when directed towards a child or youth may constitute bullying or harassment when directed towards a peer or when perpetrated between adults. This policy addresses the entire spectrum of abusive, bullying and harassing behaviors.

## **ABUSE**

There shall be no abuse or neglect, whether verbal, physical, emotional, or sexual of any participant in any of its programs. The SMHA expects every member, volunteer and Board member to take reasonable steps to safeguard the welfare of its participants and to protect them from any kind of maltreatment.

Abuse is any form of verbal, physical, emotional and/or sexual mistreatment or lack of care which causes physical injury or emotional damage to a person. A common characteristic of all forms of abuse against children and youths is an abuse of power or authority and/or a breach of trust. Within British Columbia a person is considered a child up to the age of nineteen years of age.

### Emotional

Emotional abuse is a chronic attack on a person's self-esteem; it is psychologically destructive behavior by a person in a position of power, authority or trust. It can take the form of name calling, threatening, ridiculing, berating, intimidating, isolating, hazing or ignoring a child's needs.

### Physical

Physical abuse is when a person in a position of power or trust purposefully injures or threatens to injure a person. This may take the form of slapping, hitting, shaking, kicking, pulling hair or ears, throwing, shoving, grabbing, hazing or excessive exercise.

### Neglect

Neglect is chronic inattention to the necessities of life such as clothing, shelter, nutritious diets, education, good hygiene, supervision, medical and dental care, adequate rest, safe environment, moral guidance and discipline, exercise and fresh air. This may occur in hockey when injuries are not adequately treated or players are made to play with injuries, equipment is inadequate or unsafe, non-intervention when team members are persistently harassing another player, or road trips that are not properly supervised.

### Sexual

Sexual abuse is when a young person is used by an older child, adolescent or adult for his or her own sexual stimulation or gratification. There are two categories:

### *Contact*

- touched or fondled in sexual areas
- forced to touch another person's sexual areas
- kissed or held in a sexual manner
- forced to perform oral sex
- vaginal or anal intercourse
- vaginal or anal penetration with an object or finger
- sexually oriented hazing

### *Non-Contact*

- obscene remarks on phone, computer or in notes
- voyeurism
- shown pornography
- forced to watch sexual acts
- sexually intrusive questions and comments
- forced to pose for sexual photographs or videos
- forced to self-masturbate or forced to watch others masturbate

### **Duty To Report**

Abuse and neglect are community problems requiring urgent attention. The SMHA is committed to help reduce and prevent the abuse and neglect of participants. The SMHA realizes that persons working closely with children and youths have a special awareness of abusive situations. Therefore, people have a particular reporting responsibility to ensure the safety of Canada's young, by knowing their provincial protection acts and following through as required.

The Province of British Columbia has mandatory reporting laws regarding the abuse and neglect of children and youth. Consequently it is the policy of SMHA that any SMHA member, director, volunteer, participant, team official, on ice official, parent and guardian who has reasonable grounds to suspect that a participant is or may be or may have suffered from emotional, physical abuse and neglect and/or sexual abuse shall immediately report the suspicion and the information on which it is based to the local child protection agency and/or the local police detachment. The local child protection agency and/or the local police detachment may request the local association to deal with the matter reported.

Those involved with the SMHA in providing hockey opportunities for participants understand and agree that abuse or neglect, as defined above, may be the subject of a criminal investigation and/or disciplinary procedures. Failure to report an offence and thereby failure to provide safety for participants may render the adult who keeps silent legally liable for conviction under the provincial child protection acts.

### **BULLYING AND HARASSMENT**

Refraining from bullying and harassing behavior, responding promptly and informally to minor incidents of bullying and harassment, and following local and national policy guidelines for reporting or responding to more serious complaints of bullying and harassment is expected of all SMHA members (players, directors, staff, volunteers, team and on ice officials), parents and guardians. Players and other participants

are expected to refrain from bullying and harassing behavior and are encouraged to report incidents of bullying and harassment.

Bullying is the use of aggression with the intention of hurting another person. Bullying results in pain and distress to the victim. It is done to intimidate, coerce, instill fear, control, embarrass or exclude.

Bullying can be:

- Emotional being unfriendly, excluding (emotionally and physically)
- Sending hurtful text messages, tormenting, (e.g. hiding gear, clothing, threatening gestures)
- Physical pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
- Racist taunts, graffiti, gestures
- Sexual unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
- Homophobic or focusing on the issue of sexuality
- Verbal name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumors, teasing

Bullying may be:

- Planned or unintentional
- Individual or group action(s)
- Of an isolated or continual nature

Harassment is defined as conduct, gestures or comments which are insulting, intimidating, humiliating, hurtful, malicious, degrading or otherwise offensive to an individual or group of individuals, and which create a hostile or intimidating environment for work or sport activities, or which negatively affect performance or work conditions. Any of the different forms of harassment may be based on the grounds prohibited in human rights legislation, such as race, ethnicity, sex, sexual orientation and religion. Harassment may occur between peers (eg: player to player in the same age group, parent to official, coach to coach) or between someone in a position of power or authority and an adult in a subordinate position (eg: coach to player, sports administrator to employee).

The following is a non-exhaustive list of examples of harassment:

- unwelcome jokes, innuendo or teasing about a person's body, looks, race, sexual orientation, etc.
- condescending, patronizing, threatening or punishing actions which undermine self-esteem
- practical jokes that cause awkwardness or embarrassment or may endanger a person's safety
- any form of hazing
- unwanted or unnecessary physical contact including touching, patting, pinching \*\*
- unwanted conduct, comments, gestures or invitations of a sexual nature which are likely to cause offence or humiliation, or which might, on reasonable grounds, be perceived as placing a condition of a sexual nature on employment or on any opportunity for training or advancement \*\*
- sexual assault or physical assault \*\*

*\*\*It is important to note that the behaviors described in these items, when directed toward a child or youth, constitute abuse under child protection legislation. This may also be true of other behaviors, for example, certain hazing practices. In such cases, the duty to report provisions above come into effect.*

## **Response and Remedies**

Bullying and harassment of all kinds has been tolerated for too long in hockey, being tacitly accepted as part of the culture of the game and used by individuals who would not condone such conduct outside of the hockey environment. It is the position of SMHA that bullying and harassment is unacceptable and harmful and can be tolerated no longer. The SMHA recognizes the serious negative impact of all types of bullying and harassment on personal dignity, individual and group development and performance, enjoyment of the game and in some cases, personal safety.

SMHA recognizes that not all incidents of bullying and harassment are equally serious in their consequences. Bullying and harassment covers a wide spectrum of behaviors and the response to bullying and harassment must be equally broad in range, appropriate to the behavior in question and capable of providing a constructive remedy. There must be no summary justice or hasty punishment. The process of investigation and settlement of any complaint of bullying and harassment must be fair to all parties, allowing adequate opportunity for the presentation of a defense to the charges.

Most incidents of harassment, (eg: inappropriate jokes) should be corrected promptly and informally, taking a constructive approach and the aim of bringing about a change in negative attitudes and behavior.

More serious incidents (eg: a course of repeated taunting, any form of sexual or physical assault) should be dealt with according to the relevant policy guidelines. Complaints should be handled in a timely, sensitive, responsible and confidential manner. There should be no tolerance of reprisals taken against any party to a complaint. The names of parties and the circumstances of the complaint should be confidential except where disclosure is necessary for the purposes of investigation or taking disciplinary measures.

Anyone making a complaint which is found to be clearly unfounded, false, malicious or frivolous will be subject to discipline.

## **HARASSMENT AND ABUSE DIFFERENCES AND SIMILARITIES**

	<b>Abuse</b>	<b>Harassment</b>
<b>Types</b>	Emotional, physical, sexual, lack of care	Emotional, physical, sexual; may be motivated by racial or other forms of prejudice
<b>Victim</b>	Any person under the age of majority as determined by the Provincial Child Protection Acts, may be male or female	Person of any age; may be male or female
<b>Offender</b>	Any person who has power or authority over victim and/or breaches trust; may be male or female	May be peer or person with power or authority over adult victim; may be male or female
<b>Investigation</b>	External to the organization, referred to child welfare or police who may in some instances refer back to organization	Most often internal unless referred to police in cases of suspected physical or sexual assault or criminal harassment (stalking)

<b>Follow-up Actions</b>	Determined by Provincial Child Protection Acts and Criminal Code; civil suits may also occur	Determined by organizations harassment policies, Criminal Code, labour tribunals, civil action and/or Provincial Human Rights Tribunals; may be used concurrently or alone
<b>Philosophy</b>	The victim is not to blame; offenders are responsible for their behavior	The victim is not to blame; offenders are responsible for their behavior

This policy was approved by the Board on September 11, 2024.