



NORTHERN ONTARIO HOCKEY ASSOCIATION

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SPEAK OUT POLICIES FOR NOHA OFFICIALS

(Revised June 2, 2011)

APPENDIX P

POLICIES AND DEFINITIONS

This appendix sets out the principles and practices of the Northern Ontario Hockey Association (NOHA) for On-ice Officials with regard to abusive behaviour towards participants. Each Official within the NOHA is to comply with these policies. For the complete policy, please visit the NOHA website at www.noha.on.ca

OFFICIALS

One of the most prominent areas in hockey where abuse and harassment are evident is in the domain of officiating. For some reason, many people believe that the sport culture allows them to exhibit abusive or harassing behaviours towards Officials. Where younger Officials are involved, it is quickly learned that it is easier to try and ignore the maltreatment than to penalize it. To assign a penalty means further intimidation to the referee; to ignore the behaviour means the focus is on the game rather than on the Official. The result is many young officials leave the Officiating ranks. Carrying out their role becomes too painful!

When it comes to abuse and harassment during the competition, all officials need to make use of the playing rules and guidelines within hockey to deal with these occurrences. Support from Local Association administrators and supervisors will enhance this course of action. However abuse and harassment can occur in other relationships within the Officiating community.

SUPERVISORS

Supervisors have a profound impact on young officials. Their role is to not only coach the official but to also provide constructive criticism and evaluation of the Official's performance. They have significant authority over future assignments and advancements.

Guidelines:

- Treat young Officials with respect.
- Give feedback in a constructive manner, rather than an intimidating manner.
- Support the learner and the learning process.
- All Supervisors must follow the NOHA Supervisors Manual



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ASSIGNORS

Assignors are in the position of deciding which Official will referee specific games. As a result they have considerable power over young men and women who want to work and gain experience.

Guidelines:

- Officials should be assigned according to their skills and caliber of play.
- Assignors need to know the physical and emotional limitations of their Officials.
- Assignors must never use their position to intimidate or demoralize an Official.
- Officiating is usually a hobby and needs to be valued as such.

PEERS

In many sports, officials work in teams. The concept of “team” must be utilized at all times.

Guidelines:

- The role of Officials is to ensure that the sport is played fairly and safely by both sides. Officiating is an apprenticeship that most often occurs during the actual competition.
- When there are concerns between Officials, they need to be discussed in an appropriate place, such as the dressing room or office, not during the game.
- Officials need to encourage each other as often as possible throughout the competition.
- Harassment and Abuse should be reported to the District Referee-in-Chief.

DRESSING ROOMS/OFFICES

Although the dressing rooms or offices for Officials are usually quite small, it is important that an area be reserved for Officials as they prepare for the upcoming competition.

Guidelines:

- Any inappropriate behaviour in the dressing room must be reported to the District Referee-in-Chief.
- When male and female Officials work together, it is **never** appropriate to change or dress in the same space at the same time. One gender should dress first while the other waits outside the dressing room: then vice versa.
- Once both genders are fully dressed, they can share the room in preparation for the competition, but leave the door open.



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- Only Officials and their Supervisor are allowed in the Official's room.
- When Supervisors are talking with one Official the door should be left open.
- Officials use the two-deep system: always have a third person present.

DISCIPLINE

There will be times when it is necessary to discipline an Official.

Guidelines:

- All disciplinary action must be respectful of the person while addressing the inappropriate behaviour. It should never be abusive or harassing in nature.
- Ridicule is not an acceptable form of discipline.
- District Referee-in-Chief is to follow the Disciplinary Policy in the NOHA Referee-in-Chief Manual.

DUTY TO REPORT

It is the responsibility of an Official to be aware of situations where players are being harassed or abused. If an Official feels that a player is being harassed or abused they must report it. Please follow these procedures:

Guidelines:

- Write down as much information as possible. (The teams playing, the date, the rink, the period and time it occurred, the number and player's name, the name of the person committing the foul, if you do not know the name, state that you do not know the name but make sure the name of the team is noted and record the incident.)
- **DO NOT WRITE THIS ON THE GAME SHEET.**
- Send this report to the NOHA Office.
- Do not discuss this with anyone except your fellow Officials of the game. Ask them for their input if they witnessed this incident. (Although we want this reported, you must be positive of your decision.) A person's name and reputation could be on the line.
- If you are not sure whether to write it up or not, contact the NOHA Office for their advice.



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Regulation 10.17 from NOHA Constitution

All Officials, Supervisors, and Instructors who are 18 years of age will require a Criminal Record Check, which includes the Vulnerable Sector Screening and a search of the National Sex Offender Registry. Once the individual has been cleared, a Criminal Record Check will be required every 4 years. These Criminal Record Checks cannot be more than 6 months old when submitted as per NOHA Policy 5.7.1.

Guidelines for obtaining Criminal Record Check from Police Department:

1. Obtain Criminal Record Check which includes the Vulnerable Sector Screening from Police; cost is borne by the individual
2. Place Criminal Record Check in sealed envelope
3. Write your name on envelope and "Criminal Record Check"
4. Deliver envelope to District Referee-in-Chief
5. The District Referee-in-Chief will forward the envelope to the designated person within their District for review
6. If approved, the review person will confirm with the District Referee-in-Chief that the Criminal Record Check has been cleared. It is the District Referees-in-Chief responsibility to contact the NOHA Technical Director and their District Council Director to advise them that the official is cleared to officiate. The review person is to keep all Criminal Record Checks on file.

NOHA CRIMINAL RECORD CHECK POLICY

This policy is designed to identify any person who poses a risk to children, youth or other vulnerable persons.

All Officials, Supervisors, and Instructors who are 18 years of age will require a Criminal Record Check, which includes the Vulnerable Sector Screening and a search of the National Sex Offender Registry.

Criminal Record Checks are probably the most misunderstood element of screening. Too many people believe that doing a Criminal Record Checks means that the person has been screened; nothing could be further from the truth. A positive police record tells one thing - the individual has been convicted of a crime.

It is important to know if someone has been convicted of an abuse or harassment offense. Criminal Record Checks do serve a purpose, particularly in the case of high risk positions, as it signals in a very public way that the NOHA is concerned about the safety of their young athletes and Officials.



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Applicants are responsible to obtain the Criminal Record Check which includes the Vulnerable Sector Screening, pay the fee and submit the form prior to them officiating. They are to have the results released to them directly. This puts more control into the hands of the individual and allows him or her to make the decision whether or not to share the results.

If they agree to release it, the Criminal Record Check which includes the Vulnerable Sector Screening is to be provided to the District Referee-in-Chief who will then give it to an independent designated person within the District selected by the NOHA Executive and District Referee-in-Chief. This designated person would review the Criminal Record Checks. This person should have a "professional designation", such as: police, doctor, banker, lawyer, judge or principal. They would be focusing on areas such as: trafficking in controlled substances, child pornography, sexual offenses, assault causing bodily harm, robbery and aggravated assault. (NOHA Policy 5.7.3)

The District Referee-in-Chief must supply this designated person with a list of registered Officials within their District.

This designated person will contact the District Referee-in-Chief to inform him of the Officials who have passed their Criminal Record Checks which includes the Vulnerable Sector Screening. It is the Referees-in-Chief responsibility to contact the NOHA Technical Director and District Council Director to confirm that the Criminal Records Checks which includes the Vulnerable Sector Screening have been cleared.

If this designated person has a concern such as where the police have identified a criminal conviction, he/she would forward it on to a committee appointed by the NOHA Executive made up of individuals that have a "professional designation". Their duties would be to compare the offense to the Officiating Program determining the risk involved and to keep them confidential. Officials who have not passed their Criminal Records Check which includes the Vulnerable Sector Screening are not to officiate until the NOHA appointed Committee advises the District Referee-in-Chief.

It is very important that this policy be consistently practiced and that there be no "behind the doors" decision making.

An Official may attend a re-certification clinic without a completed Criminal Record Check which includes the Vulnerable Sector Screening. They will be allowed to attend the clinic and register but will not be allowed to officiate until a completed Criminal Record Check which includes the Vulnerable Sector Screening has been submitted and approved.

Please contact your District Referee-in-Chief to ascertain the procedure in your District.