



LACOMBE MINOR HOCKEY ASSOCIATION GAME & CONDUCT RESOURCE MANUAL

Introduction

Lacombe Minor Hockey Association (LMHA) has developed guidelines and processes to help all members efficiently and effectively report and address unacceptable behaviour within the organization. The intended result is to provide a clear understanding of how to define, identify, report, and respond to unacceptable behaviour through a fair and consistent process aligned with guidelines established by Hockey Alberta.

This manual is intended to assist LMHA in determining whether unacceptable behaviour has occurred and the degree to which members, including players, coaches, parents, team staff, officials, and spectators, should be held accountable for their actions.

The primary objective of this manual is to promote a safe, respectful, and positive hockey environment that supports:

- Respect for all persons
- Protection from physical and emotional harm
- Development of ethical conduct toward others
- Principles of justice, fairness, and equity
- Caring and inclusive behaviour
- Freedom for participants to enjoy and flourish within the sport
- Respect for the game of hockey

LMHA is committed to supporting conflict resolution through a collaborative, respectful, and forward-looking approach that promotes positive communication, accountability, and constructive outcomes.

Purpose of the Manual

The purpose of this manual is to:

1. Establish clear expectations for behaviour within LMHA and its members
2. Provide a consistent process for reporting and addressing incidents
3. Promote accountability among all participants
4. Protect the safety and well-being of all members
5. Encourage respectful communication and sportsmanship
6. Ensure disciplinary actions are fair, transparent, and consistent

Definitions

Participants

- "Participants" include, but are not limited to:
 - Players
 - Coaches

- Team staff and volunteers
- Officials
- Parents and guardians
- Spectators
- Executive and Operating Committee Members and Association Representatives

Unacceptable Behaviour

- “Unacceptable Behaviour” refers to conduct by an individual that creates, or has the potential to create, risk to the organization or to the health, safety, or well-being of participants. Examples include, but are not limited to:
 - Yelling at or verbally attacking participants
 - Swearing directed toward participants, officials, or spectators
 - Verbal, physical, or emotional harassment or abuse
 - Bullying or intimidation
 - Inappropriate gestures or actions
 - Discriminatory behaviour, including racial, gender-based, or cultural discrimination
 - Threatening behaviour
 - Physical aggression or violence
 - Damage to facilities or property
 - Social media harassment or inappropriate online conduct
 - Unsportsmanlike conduct before, during, or after games or practices

Incident

- An “Incident” is any event involving unacceptable behaviour by a participant that initiates the Conflict Resolution Procedure outlined in this manual. Incidents may include:
 - Complaints from participants or spectators
 - Reports from coaches, officials, or team staff
 - Match penalties or game misconducts
 - Written incident reports
 - Social media complaints or evidence
 - Behaviour observed directly by LMHA representatives

Confidentiality

The Association will make reasonable efforts to maintain confidentiality throughout the reporting, investigation, and resolution of all disciplinary matters. Information will be collected, used, and disclosed only to the extent necessary to investigate, adjudicate, and resolve the matter, or as otherwise required by law or applicable governing body policies. Access to information will be limited to individuals who have a legitimate need to know in order to fulfill their responsibilities within the disciplinary process.

Code of Conduct

All LMHA participants are expected to:

- Demonstrate respect toward teammates, opponents, officials, volunteers, and spectators
- Display good sportsmanship at all times
- Follow the rules, regulations, and codes of conduct established by LMHA and governing hockey organizations.
- Refrain from abusive, discriminatory, or aggressive behaviour
- Accept decisions of officials and association representatives respectfully
- Promote a positive environment for youth hockey development

Failure to meet these expectations may result in disciplinary action.

Scope of the Conflict Resolution Manual

This Conflict Resolution Manual is intended for use within the Association. It applies primarily to interpersonal disputes, conduct concerns, and other matters arising from the activities of the Association that are not otherwise governed by the disciplinary processes of a governing league or hockey governing body.

This Manual does not replace, override, or supersede any suspension, disciplinary action, or sanction imposed by a governing league, Hockey Alberta, or Hockey Canada. All suspensions or disciplinary actions issued by these organizations shall be referred directly to the Executive Disciplinary Committee for internal review to determine whether any additional Association measures or conditions are appropriate.

In addition, the procedures outlined in this Manual may be invoked when an incident is deemed sufficiently serious to warrant review by the Executive Disciplinary Committee. Such review may occur regardless of whether the matter originated through the Association's conflict resolution process or has been referred by a Director, league official, or other authorized representative.

Complaint Handling Procedure

LMHA follows the direction as set forth by Hockey Alberta's Conduct Management and Conflict Resolution principles. The purpose of this process is to provide a fair, transparent, and consistent method for members to report concerns, incidents, conflicts, misconduct, or policy violations to the Executive Board of the Association.

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 governs the individual(s) responsible for investigating the complaint. The methods of enforcement will vary depending on the severity of the incident.

Incident Reporting Process

The LMHA Conflict Resolution Process must be followed before a formal complaint is submitted unless there are immediate player or coach safety concerns.

A minimum of twenty-four (24) hours must pass before submitting a written complaint. This cooling-off period is intended to encourage reflection and reduce emotionally driven complaints. It also gives individuals an opportunity to review [LMHA Conflict Resolution Procedures](#) as found on the website.

All incidents or issues must be submitted in writing with a clear description of the incident and parties involved. **Phone calls or verbal conversations will not be accepted.**

All complaints should start first at the team level by contacting the team Parent Liaison. If an incident is not able to be solved at the team level, the Parent Liaison will contact the Divisional Director. If the incident is still not solvable, then the Divisional Director will reach out to the Game and Conduct Representative. If a direct or perceived conflict of interest exists at any stage of the Conflict Resolution Flow Chart, the incident shall be escalated to the next level in the process.

Written complaints must be submitted no later than twenty-one (21) days from the date of the first incident.

Serious Incidents

Some incidents are more serious in nature and would bypass the standard progressive system of reporting. These incidents would come directly to the Executive Disciplinary Committee, but are still required to be in writing to instigate an appropriate investigation. Incidents that would be considered for immediate escalation to the Executive Disciplinary Committee:

- Severe maltreatment (sexual, physical, or emotional abuse)
- Gross misconduct
- Discriminatory behaviour (racism or sexism)
- Behaviour that directly affects the safety or legal integrity of the association

Investigation Process

Team Level

Complaints submitted to the Parent Liaison will be handled using the following process:

- The Parent Liaison will review the complaint and contact all involved parties to provide written statements and ensure each individual has the opportunity to provide their account of the incident.
- The Parent Liaison may consult with the Divisional Director or Game and Conduct Committee for guidance, education, or conflict resolution strategies to assist in resolving the matter.
- Depending on the nature, severity, and individuals involved, the Parent Liaison may seek input from other relevant team personnel, including coaches, the team manager, parents, or other appropriate representatives, to obtain additional context.
- All information gathered will be reviewed before determining appropriate next steps, with the goal of resolving concerns in a fair, respectful, and impartial manner.
- The Parent Liaison may initiate a meeting between the involved parties to attempt resolution.
- Discipline at this level remains between the involved parties and the team staff.

Director Level

If there is a direct or perceived conflict of interest involving the Parent Liaison, or if the conflict cannot be resolved satisfactorily at the team level, the incident complaint may be escalated to the appropriate age Division Director.

Some incidents may also be too serious or involve too many individuals to be addressed effectively at the team level, while not rising to the level requiring direct referral to the Executive Disciplinary Committee. In such cases, the matter should also be escalated to the appropriate age Divisional Director.

For Example: The player involved in an incident is the child of the Parent Liaison

NOTE: Consultation with the Executive Disciplinary Committee does not, in itself, constitute an escalation of a conflict or incident. Team officials or Divisional Directors may consult with the Committee to seek guidance, clarification, or resources to assist in resolving a matter at the team level. Such consultation is intended to support effective conflict resolution and does not automatically result in a formal investigation or referral to the Committee.

Executive Disciplinary Committee

Conflicts or incidents that cannot be resolved at the team level, with the assistance of the Level Director, or that are considered more serious in nature will be referred to the Executive Disciplinary Committee for investigation.

The Executive Disciplinary Committee consists of the Game and Conduct Manager, the President, and the Vice-President, provided there is no actual or perceived conflict of interest. Examples include, but are not limited to, complaints or incidents involving the Divisional Director, the Divisional Director's spouse, child, or other immediate family member, a player on the Divisional Director's team, or circumstances where the complaint directly involves the Divisional Director's own team and could reasonably be perceived as compromising the fairness or impartiality of the review.

If a member of the Executive Disciplinary Committee has a conflict of interest or is otherwise unable to participate impartially, that individual will be replaced by another member of the Executive Committee. If no unbiased Executive Committee members are available, a member of the Operating Committee may be appointed to serve on the Committee for that investigation.

The Executive Disciplinary Committee will review all relevant information, gather additional information as required, and make decisions or recommendations in accordance with the Association's policies, procedures, bylaws, and code of conduct. The Committee will conduct all investigations in a fair, impartial, and confidential manner following the recommended process as set forth by [Hockey Alberta](#).

The Executive Disciplinary Committee reserves the right to refer a conflict back to the team level if it determines that the matter can be appropriately resolved there.

Disciplinary Measures

During the investigation of an incident, the Executive Disciplinary Committee will assess the circumstances using the following rubric to determine the appropriate disciplinary outcome.

The rubric provides a consistent framework for evaluating the severity of the conduct, the individual's perceived intent, any history of repeated behaviour, and the degree of accountability and remorse demonstrated.

The examples and scoring guidelines are intended to promote fair, consistent, progressive, and educational disciplinary decisions while allowing the Disciplinary Committee to consider the unique circumstances of each case. This rubric supplements, but does not replace, any mandatory sanctions or disciplinary measures imposed by the Association or its governing bodies. The Disciplinary Committee retains the discretion to increase or reduce disciplinary outcomes based on aggravating or mitigating factors and the overall interests of player safety, sportsmanship, and the integrity of the game.

Severity Level	Behaviour Examples	Typical Outcome	Repeat Offences
Level 1 – Minor	Unsportsmanlike language, disrespect toward teammates, minor equipment violations	Verbal warning or written reminder; discussion with coach	Written warning
Level 2 – Moderate	Abuse of officials, inappropriate social media posts, repeated Level 1 behaviour, minor locker room misconduct	Written warning; meeting with parents/player; behaviour contract	1-2 game suspension
Level 3 – Serious	Fighting outside normal play, bullying, harassment, discriminatory language, vandalism, repeated abuse of officials	1-2 game suspension; mandatory education; Disciplinary Committee review	3-6 game suspension
Level 4 – Major	Threats, intentional injury, alcohol/drug violations at games or team functions, severe harassment, repeated serious misconduct	6+ game suspension or remainder of season; probation upon return (Falls under Hockey Canada Maltreatment Rule 11)	Season suspension
Level 5 – Gross Misconduct	Physical assault, sexual misconduct, criminal behaviour, hazing, major violence, significant abuse toward officials, repeated Level 4 offences	Indefinite suspension pending investigation; possible expulsion; referral to governing body (Falls under Hockey Canada Maltreatment Rule 11)	Permanent expulsion consideration

The Disciplinary Committee may use a scoring system to help determine the necessary level of discipline.

Factor	Score 1 Point	Score 2 Points	Score 3 Points
Intent	Accidental	Negligent	Deliberate
Harm	None	Minor	Significant
Safety Risk	Low	Moderate	High
Prior Discipline	None	One Previous	Multiple Previous
Remorse & Accountability	Immediate	Partial	None

Suggested interpretation

- **5–7 points:** Level 1
- **8–10 points:** Level 2
- **11–13 points:** Level 3
- **14–15 points:** Level 4
- **Exceptional circumstances:** Level 5 regardless of score

Enforcement

The Executive Disciplinary Committee is committed to fostering a culture of learning, accountability, and respect. Whenever appropriate, the Committee will seek opportunities to educate individuals and promote understanding of expected standards of conduct before imposing disciplinary measures.

The Association embraces an "educate before enforcement" philosophy. Where circumstances permit, education, coaching, and corrective action will be the preferred first response to misconduct. However, this approach does not preclude immediate disciplinary action when the nature, severity, or circumstances of an incident warrant a more significant response to protect the safety, integrity, or well-being of participants and the Association.

Players, Coaches, Officials, & Team Staff

Following the completion of an investigation, the Executive Disciplinary Committee will determine the appropriate disciplinary outcome based on the severity of the incident, the supporting evidence gathered, and the circumstances of the case. In reaching its decision, the Committee will also consider any applicable disciplinary actions or mandatory sanctions imposed by governing bodies, as well as opportunities for education, restorative measures, and personal development that support the member's growth and future positive participation within the Association.

Parents/Guardians & Spectators

Following the completion of an investigation, the Executive Disciplinary Committee may prohibit any parent, guardian, or spectator whose conduct is deemed unbecoming, abusive, or detrimental to the game or the Association from attending games or participating in any team or Association events or activities for a specified period or indefinitely.

Where the conduct of a parent, guardian, or spectator significantly interferes with the safe and respectful operation of the Association, or where reasonable efforts to address the behaviour have been unsuccessful, the Disciplinary Committee may also impose disciplinary measures affecting the player associated with that individual, including suspension from Association activities. Such action will be considered only after careful review of the circumstances, the impact on the Association, and the best interests of all participants.

Appeals

Any individual who is subject to disciplinary measures imposed by the Disciplinary Committee has the right to appeal the decision. Appeals must be **submitted in writing** to the Game and Conduct Manager within five (5) days of receiving written notification of the disciplinary decision but must wait a mandatory 24-hour cooling off period before submitting an appeal. **Phone calls or verbal communications will not be accepted.**

The appeal must include a clear and concise summary outlining the grounds for the appeal. Appeals that do not provide sufficient detail or identify valid grounds for appeal may be dismissed without further review.

Upon receipt of an appeal, the Game and Conduct Manager will establish an Appeals Committee consisting of three (3) members of the Executive and/or Operating Committees who had no involvement in the original investigation or disciplinary decision and who have no actual or perceived conflict of interest.

Within seven (7) days of receiving the appeal, the Appeals Committee will review the written submission to determine whether the appeal meets the established grounds for appeal. Where the appeal is accepted for review, the Appeals Committee will examine the investigation file, supporting evidence, and the original disciplinary decision to determine whether:

- the disciplinary process was fair and complied with the Association's bylaws, policies, and applicable governing body regulations;
- the Disciplinary Committee acted within its authority;
- the disciplinary outcome was reasonable and proportionate based on the available evidence;
- any significant procedural error occurred that may have affected the outcome;
- any actual or perceived conflict of interest or bias existed during the investigation or disciplinary process; and
- any new evidence, which was not reasonably available at the time of the original decision, warrants reconsideration.

Following its review, the Appeals Committee will issue a written decision with reasons. The Appeals Committee may:

- uphold the original disciplinary decision;
- modify the disciplinary measures imposed;
- overturn the disciplinary decision; or
- refer the matter back to the Discipline Committee for reconsideration with specific directions.

The decision of the Appeals Committee is final with respect to the Association's internal appeal process. If the appealing party remains dissatisfied with the outcome, any further appeal must be submitted in accordance with the applicable appeal procedures of Hockey Alberta. Executive, Operating, and/or Appeals Committee members will not accept phone calls or other direct communications regarding the decision. Any further inquiries must be submitted through the appropriate organizational channels.

Repeated or unwanted attempts to contact committee members after a final decision has been communicated may be considered harassment and may result in additional disciplinary action.

Submitting an Incident Complaint

To submit an incident, please contact your team Parent Liaison. Please ensure you include the following:

- Date, time and location of incident
- Detailed written description of the events
- Any other parties involved or witness of the event
- Any video or photo evidence to support your statement

For more serious incidents or if there is a conflict of interest, please contact your level director via email which is “u”, followed by your age level number, and the word “director” @lacombeminatorhockey.com Ex. u18director@lacombeminatorhockey.com

If this incident is being escalated to the Executive Committee, please email your statement to the Game and Conduct Manager at gameconduct@lacombeminatorhockey.com. Alternatively, if you perceive any bias your statement can be emailed to the President at president@lacombeminatorhockey.com or the Vice-President at vicepresident@lacombeminatorhockey.com.