

Cumberland County Minor Hockey Association – Policy Manual

CATEGORY: Risk Management	LAST REVIEW: 2025
POLICY NUMBER: 5.4	DATE APPROVED: September 11, 2021
TITLE: Disciplinary Action	
PURPOSE: CCMHA is committed to ensuring a clear process for addressing disciplinary issues.	
RELATED GUIDELINES/DOCUMENTS: Hockey Nova Scotia Code Of Discipline And Minimum Suspensions https://5647e90c-cdn.agilitycms.cloud/Code%20of%20Discipline%20Nov.%202023.pdf Hockey Nova Scotia On-Ice Bullying Policy https://5647e90c-cdn.agilitycms.cloud/Attachments/On-Ice%20Bullying%20Policy.pdf Hockey Canada/ Hockey Nova Scotia Prevention of Bullying, Harassment and Abuse Policy https://cdn.hockeycanada.ca/hockey-canada/Hockey-Programs/Safety/Speak-Out/Downloads/bullying_eng.pdf Hockey Canada/Hockey Nova Scotia Hazing Policy https://5647e90c-cdn.agilitycms.cloud/Attachments/Hockey%20Canada's%20Hazing%20Policy.pdf Hockey Canada Cyber-Bullying Administration Manual https://5647e90c-cdn.agilitycms.cloud/Attachments/cyberbullying_resource_manual_e.pdf Hockey Nova Scotia Abusive Parent Dispute Resolution Policy https://5647e90c-cdn.agilitycms.cloud/Attachments/Abusive%20Parent%20Dispute%20Resolution%20(4)%20-%20dispute%20resolution%20policy.pdf Hockey Nova Scotia Intervention Policy https://5647e90c-cdn.agilitycms.cloud/Attachments/Intervention%20Policy.pdf Hockey Nova Scotia Risk Management Policy	

1. INTRODUCTION

All players, parents/guardians, supporters, managers, coaches and other members are expected to abide by CCMHA Code of Conduct, as well as the *For the Good of the Game* principles, the acknowledgement of which is a condition of registration of the member.

Members are expected to assume responsibility for those participants or supporters who attend any game, practice, team or CCMHA function, at their invitation. Violation of the Code of Conduct or the *For the Good of the Game* principles, may result in disciplinary action being taken.

The purpose of this policy is to promote a safe, respectful, and inclusive environment for all participants in CCMHA, including players, coaches, officials, volunteers, and spectators. The policy provides a clear and consistent approach to addressing inappropriate behavior, rule infractions, and violations of Hockey Canada and Hockey Nova Scotia regulations on and off the ice.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to all participants under the jurisdiction of CCMHA, at all sanctioned games, practices, events, or any activities representing the association. It complements disciplinary guidelines issued by Hockey Canada and Hockey Nova Scotia and allows for additional action by CCMHA.

Standards of behaviour are communicated and may be updated throughout each season. It is

recognized that behaviour may transgress outside acceptable standards and that disciplinary action may be required.

All members are expected to:

- Treat others with respect and dignity
- Abide by the rules of hockey and the principles of fair play
- Refrain from abusive, discriminatory, or violent behavior
- Represent CCMHA positively on and off the ice

Violations of this code will be addressed under the terms of this policy.

Such discipline may be applied to any member of CCMHA and their supporters and may take the form of, but are not limited to:

- a verbal reprimand,
- a written reprimand,
- a demand for an apology, either written or verbal, to any affected party,
- a suspension from participation in or at Association activities,
- continued participation in CCMHA under a behaviour contract,
- a request for damages compensation for CCMHA damages,
- expulsion from CCMHA,
- a combination of two or more of the above.

The result of any disciplinary action taken may affect a member's current standing or future appointment as a team official.

The non-observance or non-performance by a person of any sanction or discipline imposed by CCMHA shall be deemed a breach of the Code of Conduct and be the subject of review by CCMHA for further action, which can include the suspension of the associated player from the bench and all team functions.

3. VIOLATIONS AND PENALTIES

This section MAY be used as part of the Informal Process to ensure penalties are consistent. Violations and Penalties MUST be used during all Public Hearings.

The Association also considers Hockey Nova Scotia Code Of Discipline And Minimum Suspensions Policy <https://5647e90c-cdn.agilitycms.cloud/Code%20of%20Discipline%20Nov.%202023.pdf>

3.1 Class I Violations

Class I violations carry a minimum penalty of a one (1) week suspension from all practices, games, and/or any team activity. The suspension begins when the Discipline Committee has reached a decision on the issue; however, the Discipline Committee has the authority to immediately suspend the offender until the investigation is complete. This time will count towards the overall suspension period.

Class I violations include, but are not limited to:

- Use of obscene or vulgar language or gestures to anyone at any time.
- Abusive language and/or negative social media postings.
- Taunting by means of baiting, or ridiculing.
- Addressing a coach, official, player or CCMHA Volunteer in an unsportsmanlike, discourteous, or threatening manner.
- Questioning the coach(s) during or after practices or games.
- Questioning the referees during or after games.
- Approaching a coach or referee immediately following a game to voice a complaint.

3.2 Class II Violations

Class II violations carry a minimum penalty of a thirty (30) day suspension from all practices, games, and/or any team activity. The suspension begins when the Discipline Committee has reached a decision on the issue; however, the Discipline Committee has the authority to immediately suspend the offender until the investigation is complete. This time will count towards the overall suspension period.

Class II violations include, but are not limited to:

- Threats of physical violence towards any player, coach, parent, official, CCMHA volunteer, or spectator.
- Throwing of any object in the spectators viewing area, players bench, penalty box, locker room, or on the ice surface.
- Intentionally shoving or striking a player, coach, official or CCMHA Volunteer during any CCMHA function, whether in the locker room, on the ice, or at any time the team is getting together.
- Public disparagement of other members (allegations found to be false).
- Bullying, (as defined by Hockey Canada).
- Second Class I violation of the same offense or third or subsequent Class I violations.

3.3 Class III Violations

Class III violations carry a minimum penalty of a one (1) year minimum suspension from the program to permanent termination from the CCMHA organization. The suspension begins when the Discipline Committee has reached a decision on the issue; however, the Discipline Committee has the authority to immediately suspend the offender until the investigation is complete. For Class III violations penalties will require ratification by a 2/3 majority of the Board of Directors, at a meeting where there is a quorum of the Board.

Class III violations include, but are not limited to:

- Use of alcohol or drugs at the arena or official team function (this does not apply to consumption of alcohol at a restaurant, hotel, or home after scheduled games or practices).
- Physical abuse of a player, coach, parent, official, CCMHA volunteer, or spectator.
- Bullying (as defined by Hockey Canada).
- Activities that violate Provincial or Federal Laws which create a safety risk to any member of the organization.

- Second Class II violation of the same offense or third or subsequent Class II violations.

4. Supplemental Discipline:

A supplemental discipline is an additional consequence imposed by CCMHA in response to the nature or context of an incident. This may apply when:

- The infraction demonstrates intent to harm or repeat behavior.
- The behavior reflects poorly on the Association's values or safety standards.
- There is a pattern of misconduct or prior disciplinary history.
- The governing body's minimum suspension does not fully address the seriousness of the situation.

Examples of Supplemental Measures:

- Additional game suspensions beyond the automatic minimum.
- Mandatory meeting with the player and guardians before returning to play.
- Enrollment in a *Respect in Sport, Safe Sport*, or similar education program.
- Temporary or permanent removal of leadership roles (e.g., captaincy).
- Implementation of a behavior contract for the remainder of the season.

Example 1: Match Penalty – Attempt to Injure

- Hockey Nova Scotia rule: Automatic 5-game suspension
- CCMHA may decide to:
 - Add an extra 2 games based on severity or past history
 - Require a meeting with the player and parents
 - Enforce a mandatory Respect in Sport refresher course
 - Place the player on a behavior contract for the rest of the season

Example 2: Gross Misconduct – Discriminatory Language

- Automatic suspension: 2+ games, reviewed by Hockey Nova Scotia
- CCMHA may decide to:
 - Extend suspension if more evidence emerges
 - Recommend or require anti-bullying or diversity training
 - Remove player from leadership roles (e.g., assistant captain)

4.1 Authority and Review of Supplemental Discipline:

All supplemental disciplinary actions shall be subject to review by the CCMHA Discipline Chair and a designated committee. During the course of the investigation or review, an indefinite suspension may be applied at the discretion of the Discipline Chair if deemed necessary to protect the integrity of the process or ensure safety.

Following the review, the proposed disciplinary action will be presented to the Executive Board Members for a vote. No disciplinary measure will be enforced prior to this approval process. All decisions will be formally documented and communicated to the affected parties via email in a timely manner.

5. Progressive Discipline for Inappropriate Conduct – Non-Game Activities

Applies To:

- Practices
- Team meetings
- Dryland/off-ice training
- Team travel or dressing rooms
- Any official team event not covered by a game sheet

Step 1: Verbal Warning & Education

Used for:

- First-time minor disruptions
- Inappropriate jokes, mild disrespect, inattentiveness

Action:

- Coach or bench staff member addresses behavior in private, while adhering to the 2 deep rule
- Reminder of team code of conduct
- No formal documentation required, but should be noted

Step 2: Written Warning

Used for:

- Repeated disruptions or disrespect
- Aggressive or inappropriate language (non-threatening)
- Dismissive behavior toward coaches, staff, or teammates

Action:

- Coach or Discipline Chair documents incident
- Email or letter sent to parents/guardians
- Clear expectations set for future behavior

Step 3: Suspension from Practice or Activities

Used for:

- Physical aggression (e.g., pushing, throwing equipment)
- Verbal abuse or intimidation
- Discriminatory or hateful remarks (pending investigation)

Action:

- 1–3 day suspension from team activities
- Meeting with player, parent, and CCMHA Discipline Chair required before return
- Documented by Discipline Committee

Step 4: Formal Hearing & Extended Suspension

Used for:

- Repeated or serious violations
- Intentional harm (verbal or physical)
- Harassment, bullying, or serious misconduct

Action:

- Immediate removal from team activities
- Disciplinary hearing with CCMHA Committee
- Potential suspension of 1+ weeks or removal from team
- Referral to Hockey Nova Scotia or external authorities as required

Supportive/Educational Components (Used at Any Stage):

- Required Respect in Sport refresher (Will be updated when new programming rolls out)
- Conflict resolution sessions
- Apology letters or reflective exercises
- Supervised reintegration into team environment

Zero-Tolerance Triggers (Immediate Action)

For serious misconduct (e.g., discriminatory slurs, sexual comments, physical assault), skip early steps and move directly to suspension or hearing. This is consistent with Hockey Canada's Maltreatment and Discrimination Policy.

6. Equity & Inclusion in Discipline: Individualized Discipline for Diagnosed Neurodiverse Players

Cumberland County Minor Hockey Association (CCMHA) is committed to fostering an inclusive

environment that supports all participants, including those with diagnosed neurodevelopmental conditions including but not limited to ADHD, Autism Spectrum Disorder, Oppositional Defiant Disorder and Impulse Control Disorders.

When a player exhibits aggressive, disruptive, or inappropriate behavior related to a diagnosed condition, the CCMHA Discipline Committee will take the following approach:

- Seek to understand the cause of the behavior before applying standard consequences.
- Consult with parents/guardians and coaching staff to identify triggers and supports.
- Apply reasonable accommodations (e.g., adjusted practice expectations, cool-down strategies) where possible, while ensuring team and player safety.
- Develop a support plan if needed, involving behavior strategies, pre-practice routines, or mentorship by a coach or staff member.

The goal is to provide **education, structure, and support**, not punishment, while holding all players accountable to team values and the safety of others.

6.1 When Discipline is Still Necessary

If behavior escalates to the point of:

- Physical harm or consistent unsafe conduct
- Disruption of the learning or playing environment
- Repeated disregard for agreed-upon behavior supports

Then disciplinary action may still be applied, including suspension or removal from activities, while continuing to offer guidance and a pathway for reintegration.

6.2 Documentation & Confidentiality

All accommodations and discipline involving neurodiverse players will be:

- Documented in a confidential record
- Communicated clearly to the family
- Shared only with necessary team staff on a need-to-know basis

CCMHA encourages families to self-disclose any relevant diagnoses early in the season so appropriate planning and understanding can be put in place.

6.3 How CCMHA Handles Misconduct and Behavioral Challenges in Neurodivergent Players:

This section ensures fairness and consistency while acknowledging that equal treatment doesn't always mean identical treatment.

1. Understand the Context

Before applying standard disciplinary steps:

- **Gather information:** Confirm if the player has a diagnosis or documented needs.
- **Consult with parents/guardians:** Get background on behavioral triggers and effective supports.
- **Talk to the coach:** Are there patterns? What has worked or not worked in the past?

2. Modify the Progressive Discipline Process

The goal is not to excuse unsafe behavior—but to adapt the response. Here's how:

Typical Step Adapted Response for Players with a Clinical Diagnosis

Verbal	Coach calmly redirects and uses short, clear instructions. Reinforce expectations
Warning	privately.
Written	Provide a written note outlining behavior with constructive, non-punitive language.
Warning	Include a “support plan” (e.g., extra breaks, quiet space).
Suspension	Consider alternatives first: shortened practice time, supervised cooldowns, or “reset” check-ins with staff. Only suspend if the behavior is dangerous or unmanageable.
Formal	If suspension is unavoidable, include the parent/guardian and invite support
Hearing	professionals to participate. Provide a re-entry plan with flexibility.

3. Supportive Interventions

These should complement, not replace, discipline:

- Positive behavior plans (visual cues, reward systems)
- Pre-practice prep (e.g., reviewing rules or schedule in advance)
- Extra movement breaks during longer practices
- Assign a calm, consistent adult as a point of contact
- Use simple, predictable routines to reduce anxiety and impulsivity

4. Safety Still Comes First

If the player's behavior:

- Endangers others
- Becomes a repeated pattern with no improvement
- Escalates beyond the coach's or support team's capacity

Then discipline, including suspension, may still be necessary—but should be:

- Well-communicated
- Paired with a plan for return
- Rooted in empathy, not punishment

7. NOTIFICATION

Parents/guardians will be informed of the Policy on Sports Conduct before the beginning of the

season. Parents/guardians are required to acknowledge (by signature) that they received a copy of the Policy before their player may participate in CCMHA sanctioned games.

8. REPORTING

Any person may report an incident to CCMHA following the proper chain of communication as follows:

- Coach or team manager
- Division Coordinator
- Discipline Chair
- Any Executive Member

Anonymous reports will be reviewed but may limit the ability to act. All reports will be handled with confidentiality and respect.

A formal review may involve:

- Interviews with involved parties
- Review of game sheets or video
- Consultation with league or provincial bodies

The President of the CCMHA organization will deliver an annual report to the organization at the Annual Meeting stating such particulars as number of Policy incidents, sanctions levied, and policies pursued.

9. REVIEW

The Policy will be reviewed by Cumberland County Minor Hockey on an annual basis.