



2005-2006 OWHA SUSPENSION POLICY

On an annual basis, the Ontario Women's Hockey Association Executive Committee approves the Minimum Suspension Guidelines, which become an appendix of the OWHA constitution.

Minimum Suspension Policies

- Minimum suspensions are just that, minimum suspensions.
- Exhibition games are not permitted for serving suspensions. Exceptions may be granted at the discretion of the Discipline Chairperson and respective Regional Director. If a suspendable infraction occurs in an exhibition game, it must be reported. Minimum suspensions apply and additional sanctions may be assessed.
- Teams, associations, leagues and OWHA tournament organizers have the authority to add additional suspensions but DO NOT have the authority to lessen the suspensions
- If it is deemed that the minimum suspension may be inappropriate due to extenuating circumstances, an approach may be made to the OWHA Executive Committee to request relief. The OWHA Executive Committee has the authority to give relief to minimum suspensions as a result of a discipline hearing.
- If any OWHA member fails to serve the minimum suspension without proper approval, the individual(s) and those others involved are subject to additional suspension.

Examples of situations where relief may be granted:

- It is proven that the official called the wrong rule or misinterpreted the rule,
- It is proven the wrong person was assessed a penalty,
- Compassionate grounds, circumstances deemed to be extreme by the OWHA Executive Committee,
- Where an individual wishes to participate in a professional development activity (i.e./Speak Out! Session) while under suspension, the individual may receive special permission for that activity.

End of Season Suspensions

As we are aware, individuals under suspension are not eligible for any involvement in Hockey Canada programmes until their suspension is served.

Due to the reality of the game, combined with rules, regulations, policies, procedures and, sometimes, some common sense – this can create a challenge.

Case One: A player has a one game suspension for a relatively minor infraction. Technically, she would miss tryouts, practices, exhibition games, team functions, etc. etc. until next season when her suspension is served. Is this reasonable and effective?

Case Two: At the end of the season, a player's team faces elimination. She decides to get rid of her frustrations on the nearest opponent/official and is assessed a penalty for fighting. If we take no serious action, will we create a dangerous free-for-all at the end of each season?

POLICY

- 1) Before a suspended individual is allowed to participate in any OWHA/Hockey Canada activity, the individual must write a letter addressed to OWHA President, c/o OWHA office stating why they feel the individual should be allowed to participate prior to their suspension being served.
- 2) The OWHA President, Discipline Chairperson and Regional Director shall review each situation and make a determination as deemed appropriate.

Until the above process has been completed, the individual(s) shall not be eligible for participation in any OWHA/Hockey Canada programmes of any kind.

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2005-2006 OWHA SUSPENSION PROCEDURES



The following clarifications are in addition to the information contained in the OWHA Handbook. It is the responsibility of all OWHA members to know and follow the OWHA Constitution, By-Laws, Regulations and Rules.

The OWHA wishes to see team members participate in the game of hockey. The OWHA takes a very negative view on individuals who act in a manner that is inconsistent with the Regulations, Rules and Values of this Association. These actions are costly – to the individual and team against which the infraction was committed and to the operations of the OWHA in terms of finances and human resources. Prevention is much more desirable than suspension. It is important that all stakeholders buy into the challenge and actively promote fair play.

Who Shares in the Responsibility for Discipline?

- Parents
- Team
- Association
- Coach
- Self
- Players
- Peers
- Game Officials
- Leagues

Goals and Objectives

- Safe and fun environment
- Responsibility
- Stay out of Court
- Buy into the responsibility by stakeholders including coaches
- Education
- Process to address offending participants & highly penalized teams
- Discipline committees within associations
- Fairness and consistency
- Respect for others (Good Citizenship)
- Fair Play
- Integrity
- Clearly defined chain of command needed
- Clearly defined decision-making

Process for the delivery of discipline within the OWHA

When a potential suspendable action occurs:

1. The team must report every on-ice incident to the OWHA Regional Director c/o the OWHA office within 48 hours of the occurrence.
2. An OWHA on-ice official must forward the original copy of the game sheet for all match penalties and gross misconduct penalties to the OWHA office.
3. It is the responsibility of the team management to ensure a suspended individual does not participate in OWHA activities. If in doubt please check with the OWHA Regional Director before participation.
4. Upon receipt of a potential disciplinary situation, the OWHA Discipline Chairperson will determine a process as follows:
 - A) Any Match Penalty, Gross Misconduct Penalty, suspendable offense to a Repeat Offender (any individual who receives a second or subsequent suspendable offence in one season), a suspendable offense to an OWHA member currently on probation and/or a violation of the OWHA Code of Conduct shall be handled by the OWHA Discipline Chairperson who will appoint a Disciplinary Panel. The individual will not be allowed to participate in any sanctioned OWHA activities until there has been a decision rendered by the OWHA, to that effect.

- B) Any suspendable offense not listed in 4. A) that occurs in an OWHA sanctioned house league with all individuals and teams involved being members of one association shall be reviewed and ruled on by that association. OWHA minimum suspensions apply. All such incidents must be reported by the team as per number 1 above. The decision of the association in regards to the length of suspension must be reported, in writing, to the OWHA office within 48 hours of the determination of the suspension.
- C) Any suspendable offense not listed in Number 4. A) that occurs in a regular season or playoff game of a recognized OWHA League, shall be reviewed and ruled on by the League. OWHA minimum suspensions apply. All such incidents must be reported, by the team as per number 1 above. The decision of the League in regards to the length of suspension must be reported, in writing, to the OWHA office within 48 hours of the determination of the suspension.
- D) Any suspendable offense that does not fall under 4. A), B), or C), (i.e./exhibition game, out-of-province tournament, etc.) shall be reported as per number 1. A determination shall be made by the OWHA Discipline Chairperson in cooperation with the OWHA Executive Committee in regards to action deemed appropriate.
- E) In addition to number 4. A), B), C), and D), the OWHA Executive Committee reserves the right to take additional action as deemed appropriate.
- F) Appeals may be made to the OWHA in accordance with the OWHA Handbook.

NOTE REGARDING OWHA RULE FOUR Suspensions (7)

“Any player or team official currently under suspension is not eligible for any OWHA activity until his or her suspension has been completed. Note that Hockey Canada Regulation R states that suspensions are valid in all branches of Hockey Canada.”

New Wording of Hockey Canada Regulation R (as of May 24, 2004)

“Any Hockey Canada player, coach or other official, who is under suspension by a Hockey Canada Branch, League or Minor, Junior, Senior, or Female Hockey Association is suspended from any and all involvement in Hockey Canada sanctioned games. The suspension may, pursuant to Branch Regulations, include suspensions up to and including all Hockey Canada activities for the duration of his/her suspension. Any individual who violates the terms of his/her suspension will be subject to discipline by Hockey Canada, or the member Branch, League or Minor, Junior, Senior, or Female Hockey Association.”

OWHA Interpretation and Policy due to new Hockey Canada Rule:

- 1) Any player or team official currently under suspension is not eligible to participate in any OWHA and Hockey Canada sanctioned games.
- 2) In cases where a player or team official is serving a suspension that does not require a hearing and is a maximum of 2 games, that player or team official may participate in all OWHA sanctioned activities except hockey games for the duration of the suspension. The suspended individual is not permitted on or near the bench or dressing room during these games. Violations of the OWHA Code of Conduct or any incidents occurring while under suspension, will result in additional suspensions being assessed.
- 3) In cases where a player or team official appears before a discipline panel/committee, it shall be the responsibility of that panel/committee to rule on whether the minimum suspension is adequate or whether additional games and/or terms are warranted. The panel/committee will also determine whether the suspended individual will be permitted to practice and/or participate in other sanctioned activities while under suspension.

