

OWHA Harassment / Abuse Policies



The following policies have been approved by the OWHA Board of Directors. It shall be the obligation of all members to adhere to these policies.

SCREENING/CRIMINAL RECORD CHECKS

Policy 1: It is the Policy of the OWHA that prior to the 2000-2001 season that the OWHA highly encourage that all Teams, Associations, Programmes and Leagues begin phasing in the 10 Steps of Screening as outlined in the Harassment/Abuse Implementation Guide, including Criminal Record Checks.

Policy 1a: It is the policy of the OWHA that Criminal Record Checks will become mandatory beginning in the 2000-2001 season for all volunteers and staff people who are deemed as high risk by the team, association, programme or league through the 10 Step Screening Process and the Relationship of Position Requirements to Screening Tasks form. This applies to all parties in the OWHA. This is only one part of the overall 10 step screening process that must be implemented at all levels of hockey within the OWHA. A volunteer is defined as a non-paid person who donates, enters or offers his or her time freely to assigned specific duties.

(Please refer to the 10 Step Screening Process and Relationship of Position to Screening Information)

Policy 1b: It is the policy of the OWHA that the OWHA members have the option of conducting either Local Criminal Record Checks or CPIC Criminal Record Checks. These Criminal Record Checks should not be more than 4 months old when accepted by the Team, Association, Programme or League.

Policy 1c: It is the policy of the OWHA that Criminal Record Checks as stated in policy 1b will be required for all new volunteers and staff people of the Team, Association, Programme, League. Once the individual has been permitted to act as a volunteer or hired as a staff person these Criminal Record Checks will be required every 4 years.

Supporting Documentation

An applicant will be required to fill out the OWHA Approved Consent for Criminal Record Search form and pay the fee. It would be the responsibility of the Team, Association, Programme, League to determine any reimbursements to the individual and to coordinate the fee charged by the police agency. The Team, Association, Programme, League should have the applicant return the form to the independent designated person within the Team, Association, Programme, League. The independent designated person should have a "Professional Designation such as: Police, Chiropractors, Notary Publics, Engineers, Banker, Clergy, Doctor, Lawyer, Judge, Principal, Dentist and Accountant

The Team, Association, Programme, League would establish a Review Committee made up of the list of individuals that have a "Professional Designation" to review the Criminal Records Checks when the police have identified a criminal conviction. Their duties would include comparing the offense to the specific job description and reference checks of that individual and determining the risk involved. If an individual transfers to another Team, Association, Programme, League they would be required to provide a new Criminal Record Check and provide any previous Criminal record Checks that they may have access to. It is the intent that volunteers of the Team, Association, Programme, League not have access to other volunteers Criminal Record Checks. By using independent people with Professional Designations this risk is minimized.

It is also recommended that Teams, Associations, Programmes, Leagues develop a relationship with the Police Agency to assist in the screening process and to facilitate a working relationship when situations arise that require assistance.

OBLIGATION TO REPORT

Policy 2: It is the policy of the OWHA that any and all situations involving Harassment and Abuse must be reported to the Team, Association, Programme, League and subsequently to the OWHA by the Team, Association, Programme, League.

Policy 2a: Situations involving Harassment and Abuse must be reported to the Team, Association, Programme, League and OWHA on the OWHA Fact Finding Form.

Supporting Documentation

Information transfers should be done only through courier or personal delivery. No e-mail or faxes are to be permitted. If a computer is to be used the computer must only have one person with access to the password. All records will be kept confidential.

Major incidents such as:

- *inappropriate touching, fondling, kissing,*
- *hiring escort services or solicitations from off the street,*
- *situations of a physical nature, physical mistreatment, sexual mistreatment,*
- *Inadequate moral guidance or emotional mistreatment must be reported to the proper authorities.*

Policy 2b: It is the policy of the OWHA that each Team, Association, Programme, League of the OWHA shall appoint a designated person to accept reports involving Harassment / Abuse. It shall be the responsibility of that person to inform the OWHA designated person of all information available on the situation. The OWHA shall then report any and all situations to the appropriate insurance carrier.

Monitoring of Harassment / Abuse Initiatives

Policy 4: It shall be the policy of the OWHA that all Teams, Associations, Programmes, Leagues must provide documentation of their Harassment / Abuse implementation efforts to the OWHA on an annual basis. This documentation will be provided on a check off form and signed by the Team, Association, Programme, League President. Copies of these reports will be forwarded to the OWHA at the conclusion of each season.

Policy 5: It is the policy of the OWHA that if an individual whose conduct establishes:

- any violent behaviour against children or adults,
- violations of positions of trust,
- abuse of a physical, sexual or verbal nature,
- substance or chemical abuse or
- violations of government licensing privileges,

Such persons may be deemed unworthy and may be dismissed or not accepted as a volunteer or staff person within the OWHA, Team, Association, Programme or League.

Policy 6: It is the policy of the OWHA that if a person is found in violation of the OWHA Code of Conduct that this individual may be dismissed as a volunteer or staff person within the OWHA.

Policy 7: It is the policy of the OWHA that any person found in violation of the Hockey Canada (formerly CHA) Policy on Harassment/Abuse adopted by the OWHA on June 27, 1998 may be dismissed as a volunteer or staff person within the OWHA.

Policy 8: It is the policy of the OWHA that the term “Harassment” includes: a chronic behaviour by one person toward another which is insulting, intimidating, malicious, degrading or offensive. Harassment can be in the form of physical, verbal, sexual or emotional abuse.

The term “Abuse” includes: A vicious conduct, practice or action toward another person or persons.

Policy 9: It is the policy of the OWHA that the qualifications of the OWHA Harassment / Abuse Panel Members may include, but is not restricted to:

- Child psychology
- Mediation
- Education
- Law
- Medicine
- Hockey
- And who have attended Local Harassment / Abuse Seminar e.g. Canadian Red Cross-Prevention of Abuse, Neglect, and Harassment in Hockey Seminar

Supporting Documentation

The OWHA members will provide a list of individuals for consideration to be OWHA Panel Members. The OWHA supports the concept of Local Panels, but the Team, Association, Programme, League Panel Member must be educated and demonstrate competency on Harassment / Abuse issues through the approved Harassment / Abuse Educational Seminar conducted by the Canadian Red Cross. Before a Local Panel could be established, the Team, Association, Programme, League should demonstrate that:

- 1. A meeting or hearing has been conducted involving all parties to attempt to resolve the matter.*
- 2. That they have conducted a Fact Finding/Discovery process.*

This would also apply to OWHA Teams, Associations, Programmes, Leagues. If a Team, Association, Programme, League does wish to proceed with a Panel which involves Harassment / Abuse, the Team, Association, Programme, League would be required to coordinate the Panel's activities with the OWHA. The OWHA is in the process of reviewing the operations of the Panel through legal counsel.

Policy 10: All OWHA Harassment/Abuse Panel members must declare any potential conflict of interests and thus would not serve on that specific panel.

Traveling / Billets

Policy 11: It is the policy of the OWHA that local billet hosts should also be screened following the 10 steps of screening and that players should have ready access to their coaches and manager.

OWHA interpretation of definitions

Chronic: Continuing for a long period of time; constant; prolonged; lingering; recurrent.

Hazing: To subject newcomers or initiate: pranks or humiliating horseplay, degrading initiating rites, or acts which a person is forced to participate in order to be accepted.

Screening

Screening is a continuum of steps taken over time, designed to identify any person, paid or unpaid, volunteer or staff; who poses a risk to children, youth or other vulnerable persons.

While doing a police record check is an important element of effective screening; it is by no means the only one, or even the most important step.

TEN STEPS TO SCREENING

1. JOB DESIGN
2. JOB DESCRIPTIONS
3. APPLICATION FORMS AND PROCESS
4. RECRUITMENT
5. INTERVIEWS
6. REFERENCE CHECKS
7. POLICE RECORD CHECKS
8. ORIENTATION AND TRAINING
9. SUPERVISION / EVALUATION
10. PARTICIPANT FOLLOW UP

Hockey Canada SPEAK OUT! Program

OWHA volunteers; who work with children, youth or other vulnerable persons are encouraged to attend the Hockey Canada Speak Out! Clinic.