



Created August 2023

EMHA Officials - Fan Abuse Policy

In the last several seasons, associations across the NOHA have seen a significant decrease in the number of registered Officials within the NOHA. This trend is very concerning, as Officials – like players and volunteers – are an integral part of the game.

While there are several reasons for the loss of Officials across Northern Ontario, one of the most significant reasons is abuse from team officials and from fans. It is very concerning, particularly when parents receive education on being a positive parent, that the EMHA dealt with several situations of abuse towards Officials this past season.

The Hockey Canada rule book provides the Official with methods to deal with abuse from participants of the game (i.e., penalties), whereas inappropriate actions from parents/fans towards Officials is not as clear.

Procedure

As a result of the above, NOHA has instituted the following procedure for dealing with inappropriate actions by parents/fans:

- Officials will be instructed to remove any fan who threatens, directs threats, or makes personal comments about the Official and/or their family;
- The Official will skate into a stationary position, make eye contact with the individual, and point to them and the lobby area;
- The Official will determine which bench to approach first and inform the Coach that if the individual does not leave within two (2) minutes, the game shall be suspended. The Official will communicate the same information to the opposing Coach;
- The Official shall be responsible to submit an incident report in the same manner that a game misconduct is reported. The report shall be forwarded to the District Council Director and Referee-in-Chief;
- The District Council Director will follow up with the Minor Hockey Association so that the matter can be dealt with appropriately. The Council Director shall also notify the Minor Hockey Association that any further similar actions from the parents/fans of the same team may result in a suspension.

Role of the Espanola Minor Hockey Association

Espanola Minor Hockey Association is committed to playing an active role in minimizing abuse against Officials and encouraging parents and spectators to be a positive participant in our children's activities.

Any loss of Officials creates a very negative situation and can also impact an Association financially if Officials need to be brought in for games.

To accomplish this goal, EMHA will take a **ZERO TOLERANCE** approach to any abuse of Officials. Any abuse of Officials resulting in ejection from the game, will also result in further suspension for the parent/fan, and potentially the associated player if necessary. EMHA members are responsible for their guests/associates attending games, and are expected to discourage and report any abuse witnessed.