

Hopkins Youth Hockey Association GRIEVANCE REPORTING & ESCALATION POLICY

1. Purpose & Scope

The purpose of this policy is to provide a fair, clear, and structured process for players, parents, coaches, fans, and volunteers to resolve grievances, disputes, or violations of the association's Codes of Conduct. This policy applies to all individuals associated with Hopkins Youth Hockey Association (HYHA).

This policy covers sportsmanship disputes, player/parent conflicts, coaching disagreements, and organizational policy violations.

Note: All allegations of physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, bullying, or harassment must be reported immediately to the SafeSport Compliance Officer and/or to local authorities, in accordance with local, state, and federal laws, and SafeSport guidelines. To make a SafeSport report, [start here](#). To make a criminal report, call 911 or your local police department's non-emergency number. Do not wait to fill out an internal grievance form in these critical situations; an internal grievance form should be filled out after you take these steps.

2. Immediate Staff Documentation Requirement

HYHA prioritizes swift tracking and transparent resolution of all issues.

Coaches and Team Managers are required to complete and submit the official Association Grievance Form immediately, as soon as a grievance, dispute, or significant complaint is brought to their attention. Parents with grievances should bring any issues to coaches and/or team managers. This ensures details are captured

accurately right away, regardless of which step of the escalation process the dispute is currently in.

3. Step-by-Step Escalation Process

Step 1: Team-Level Resolution & Documentation

Whenever possible and appropriate, disputes should be addressed where they began. This does not include SafeSport violations or criminal activities. All SafeSport violations need to be reported as mandated by USA Hockey and SafeSport, and all suspected crimes must be reported to law enforcement.

Criteria for team-level resolution as a first step include:

1. The issue is within a team or within the association (e.g. between two players in the association).
2. The issue does not involve a SafeSport violation or a violation of local, state, or federal law.
3. The issue is occurring for the first time.

Team-level resolution steps:

1. **Initial Discussion:** The aggrieved party (e.g., a parent or player) can request a private meeting with the Team Manager or Head Coach to discuss the issue. The Team Manager or any Coach can identify an issue and start this process. **If the issue is in-team**, e.g. between two players on the same team or between a player and a coach, a non-involved coach on the team may initiate the documentation and resolution attempt on his/her own.

2. **Immediate Logging:** Even if the issue is successfully resolved during this meeting, the Coach or Team Manager **must immediately fill out the Association Grievance Form** to log that the dispute occurred and note how it was resolved.
3. **Submission:** The form will be automatically routed to the **Discipline & Grievance Committee** within HYHA for internal record-keeping.

Note: For any co-op teams, we may see issues arise that meet “team-level” criteria above, but involve members of a team who are registered with more than one association. In these cases, HYHA will endeavor to work with the other relevant association(s) to conduct team-level mediation and resolution as described above. If such a resolution attempt is not workable, the incident will be escalated to Step 2. On co-op teams, all HYHA Codes of Conduct apply to any member registered with HYHA, be it a player, parent, coach, manager, or volunteer.

Step 2: Association-Level Escalation

If the team-level meeting does not yield a satisfactory resolution, if the grievance does not meet all of the team-level resolution criteria listed above, and/or if the grievance involves a continued pattern or sustained issue, the matter is escalated to the Director of Hockey Operations.

Criteria for association-level resolution include:

1. The issue **is not satisfactorily resolved at the team level**, in the estimation of the Coaches and/or Team Managers.
2. The issue **involves a suspected SafeSport violation or a violation of local, state, or federal law**.
3. The issue **is part of a documented pattern of behavior** rather than a first-time occurrence.
4. The grievance is **between an outside party and a member of the association**.

Note: For Hopkins/St. Louis Park girls’ co-op teams, when issues arise to this level, the Co-Chairs of the Joint Advisory Committee will lead this process, as outlined in the

Nordics Girls Youth Hockey Governance Document. For any other co-ops not governed by the Nordics Girls Youth Hockey Governance Document, the Presidents of all involved associations will meet to determine a fair process and next steps.

Step 3: Investigation and Committee Review

Upon escalation to Step 2, the Discipline & Grievance Committee will initiate an official review.

1. **Acknowledgment:** The association will acknowledge formal receipt of the escalated grievance within **2 business days**.
2. **Recusal:** Any member of the Discipline & Grievance Committee who has a conflict of interest (e.g. familial, business, or other close relationship with an involved party) will recuse him/herself from the case in question. The HYHA President will appoint a temporary replacement for any recused parties, from among current Board members. If the HYHA President recuses him/herself, the Vice President will appoint a temporary replacement for him/her.
3. **Fact-Finding:** The Committee will review the submitted Grievance Form(s) as well as any past, related documentation, and may interview the reporting party, the responding party, and any relevant witnesses to gather a complete factual account. A parent or guardian and at least two Committee members will be present for any interviews of minors.
4. **Confidentiality:** All details of the investigation will be kept confidential by the Committee, the HYHA Board Executive Committee, and any involved HYHA coaches and volunteers, to protect the privacy of the individuals involved.
5. **Participation:** Refusal to participate in interviews and other fact-finding activities may result in disciplinary action.

Step 4: Decision and Final Ruling

1. **The Ruling:** The Discipline & Grievance Committee will issue written findings and recommendations on next steps to the HYHA Board's Executive Committee for final approval.

2. **Notification:** All parties will be notified of the official decision and any required actions in writing within **10 to 14 business days** of the formal escalation.
 3. **Disciplinary Action:** If a policy or Code of Conduct violation is confirmed, disciplinary measures may represent a range of consequences, as described in HYHA Codes of Conduct.
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4. No Retaliation

HYHA maintains a zero-tolerance policy for retaliation. No individual who reports a grievance in good faith, or participates in an investigation, shall be subject to reprisal, harassment, or negative consequences from coaches, parents, players, or board members. Any retaliatory behavior will result in immediate disciplinary action, up to and including termination of membership, and/or volunteer, board, or paid/contract status for parents, coaches, and volunteers. Disciplinary action is subject to the policies of the HYHA Board and MN Hockey.

5. Appeals Process

If an involved party is dissatisfied with the decision, they may submit a formal written appeal to the Association President within **5 business days** of receiving the ruling. Appeals must present new evidence or demonstrate that the association's policy was not followed correctly. The Executive Committee's subsequent decision will be final and binding.