



Winterhurst Hockey Association (WHA)

Parent and Spectator Code of Conduct Policy

1. Purpose and Philosophy

Youth hockey exists to foster player development, character building, teamwork, and a lifelong love for the game. This policy ensures a safe, positive, and supportive environment for all participants. Parents and spectators are critical role models. They must exhibit excellent sportsmanship at all times.

2. Regulatory Alignment and Jurisdiction

This policy is in addition to any and all other relevant rules governing parental conduct issued by other organizations affiliated with the Winterhurst Hockey Association including, without limitation, the Cleveland Suburban Hockey League, USA Hockey, and the City of Lakewood.

3. Parent Responsibility for Guests and Family

Parents and legal guardians are fully responsible for the behavior of any spectators, family members, or friends who attend WHA events to support their child. Registered parents/guardians will assume all liability and are subject to the same disciplinary punishments resulting from the actions, misconduct, or violations committed by their guests.

4. Core Behavioral Expectations

By participating in or attending association events, parents and spectators agree to:

- **Prioritize Development:** Focus on player effort and skill progression rather than winning or losing.
- **Support All Players:** Applaud good plays and positive efforts by both teams.
- **Respect Team Staff:** Trust the coaches to lead the team and refrain from coaching from the stands.
- **Protect Rink Boundaries:** Avoid leaning over, pounding on, or touching the protective glass. Never throw objects onto the ice.
- **Maintain Privacy:** Stay completely clear of player bench areas and locker rooms unless authorized as a team official.

5. Prohibited Conduct and Zero Tolerance

The association enforces a zero-tolerance policy for the following behaviors:

- **Abuse of Officials:** Yelling at, mocking, intimidating, or arguing with referees and linespersons.
- **Harassment:** Using profanity, obscene gestures, or racial, ethnic, gender-based, or sexual slurs.



- **Physical Aggression:** Making physical threats or engaging in physical altercations with anyone at the facility.
- **Digital Misconduct:** Posting disparaging, bullying, or defamatory comments about players, coaches, or officials on social media.
- **Substance Impairment:** Attending games, practices, or events (includes coaches, volunteers or spectators) while displaying signs of public intoxication or other impairment from alcohol, cannabis, or illegal substances.

6. Enforcement and Penalties

Violations of this policy will result in immediate consequences, handled in accordance with league guidelines:

- **On-Site Eviction:** Referees, rink staff, or board members may halt play and order the immediate removal of any disruptive spectator from the building.
- **Review Board Investigation:** Incidents will be referred to the WHA Disciplinary Committee for evaluation.
- **Sanctions:** Penalties range from written warnings and temporary rink bans to the permanent expulsion of the family from the association.

7. The 24-Hour Rule

The association strictly enforces a mandatory "24-Hour Rule" regarding communication with team staff. Parents, guardians, and spectators may not contact a coach, assistant coach, or team manager to discuss game-related incidents, playing time, or coaching decisions until at least 24 hours have elapsed since the end of the game involving their child. This mandatory cooling-off period is designed to protect parents and coaches from interactions fueled by high emotion and anger. Violations of this rule will be treated as an infraction of this Code of Conduct and will be referred to the WHA Disciplinary Committee.
