



Findlay Adult Hockey League Disciplinary and Corrective Action Handbook

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Part I – Governance

1. Purpose

This Handbook establishes a consistent framework for discipline that protects player safety, preserves sportsmanship, supports league personnel, and maintains a fun recreational environment. Discipline is intended to correct behavior whenever reasonably possible; removal from the league is reserved for situations where lesser corrective measures cannot adequately protect the league and its participants.

2. Guiding Principles

- Player safety is the highest priority.
- Participation in the FAHL is a privilege, not a right.
- Discipline should be corrective whenever reasonably possible.
- Similar conduct should generally receive similar discipline.
- The Board and Disciplinary Team should ordinarily follow these policies but may deviate in extraordinary circumstances to uphold the philosophy of this Handbook.
- League personnel and participants deserve mutual respect.
- Future risk of repeated misconduct is an appropriate consideration.

3. Scope

Applies to conduct before, during, and after league activities, including league communications and conduct affecting league operations.

4. Definitions

Conduct Detrimental to the League – Conduct materially interfering with league operations, safety, sportsmanship, league personnel, or participant enjoyment.

Corrective Action – Any educational, administrative, or disciplinary measure authorized by this Handbook that is intended to protect participant safety, encourage compliance with league standards, preserve sportsmanship, support League Personnel, or otherwise further the Guiding Principles of this Handbook.

Disciplinary Panel – The individuals authorized under this Handbook to investigate incidents, make findings of fact, determine whether misconduct likely occurred, and

impose or recommend corrective actions. The composition of the Disciplinary Panel may vary depending on the circumstances of a particular matter, including the need for recusals, conflicts of interest, subject-matter expertise, or other considerations determined by the Board. Unless otherwise specified in this Handbook, references to the Disciplinary Panel include any duly constituted panel acting under the authority of the Board.

Eligible to Apply for Reinstatement – The status of a participant who has satisfied the minimum conditions established by the Board to request reconsideration of their eligibility to participate in the FAHL. Eligibility to apply for reinstatement does not create a right to reinstatement and does not imply that reinstatement will be granted.

Game Ejection – Removal from the remainder of a game without an automatic next-game suspension.

Hearing Panel – The Board or Disciplinary Panel responsible for conducting a hearing under this Handbook.

Institutional Knowledge – Information acquired by League Personnel while performing official league responsibilities that is relevant to the administration of league policies, participant conduct, disciplinary history, probation compliance, or the ongoing operation and welfare of the league.

League Personnel – Any individual acting on behalf of the FAHL in an official capacity, whether paid or unpaid. This includes, but is not limited to, Board members, officers, committee members, coordinators, staff, contractors acting on behalf of the league, referees, scorekeepers, schedulers, and other volunteers authorized by the league.

Participant – Any individual participating in, attending, or otherwise subject to the authority of the FAHL in connection with league activities, including players, substitute players, League Personnel, officials, scorekeepers, volunteers, spectators, and any other individual whose conduct is governed by this Handbook.

Probation – A review period during which future misconduct may result in enhanced discipline.

Protected League Functions – Actions performed by League Personnel while carrying out their official responsibilities, including officiating games, administering

discipline, scheduling, assigning teams, rating players, enforcing league policies, managing registrations, handling finances, and performing other duties on behalf of the league.

Supplemental Discipline – Discipline beyond penalties assessed by on-ice officials.

Term Suspension – A suspension imposed for a specified period of time after which the participant becomes eligible to request reinstatement. Completion of the suspension does not automatically restore eligibility to participate.

5. Authority

5.1 General Authority

The FAHL Board of Directors ("Board") is responsible for establishing league disciplinary policies and maintaining the safety, integrity, and orderly operation of the league.

The Board may delegate disciplinary responsibilities to Disciplinary Panels and other League Personnel as provided in this Handbook; however, the Board retains ultimate authority over all disciplinary matters.

The Board and Disciplinary Panels should ordinarily follow the procedures, standards, and disciplinary guidelines established by this Handbook. Because no policy can anticipate every circumstance, the Board may deviate from these guidelines in extraordinary circumstances when necessary to uphold the Guiding Principles contained within this Handbook. Any significant deviation should be supported by written findings explaining the basis for the decision.

5.2 Commissioner Authority

The Commissioner serves as the chief administrative officer of the FAHL and is responsible for administering this Handbook, coordinating disciplinary matters, and carrying out the authority delegated by the Board.

Unless otherwise reserved to the Board by this Handbook, the Commissioner may:

- receive incident reports, disciplinary referrals, and other information relating to participant conduct;

- determine whether reported matters reasonably warrant referral to a Disciplinary Panel for investigation;
- appoint the members of the Disciplinary Panel for each disciplinary matter from among the individuals authorized by the Board;
- assign and coordinate investigations, hearings, and other disciplinary proceedings, or delegate those administrative responsibilities to another qualified League Personnel member;
- replace members of a Disciplinary Panel when necessary because of recusal, unavailability, or other circumstances affecting the administration of a disciplinary matter;
- monitor compliance with corrective actions, probation, suspension conditions, and reinstatement conditions;
- communicate disciplinary decisions on behalf of the Board or Disciplinary Panel;
- exercise Emergency Authority as authorized by this Handbook;
- make administrative decisions reasonably necessary to administer this Handbook;
- correct clerical, typographical, or other non-substantive administrative errors in disciplinary records and decisions; and
- perform any other administrative responsibilities delegated by the Board.

The Commissioner may participate as a member of a Disciplinary Panel when appointed by the Board or when otherwise authorized by this Handbook. Nothing in this section authorizes the Commissioner to determine whether misconduct occurred or to impose corrective action except when serving as a duly appointed member of a Disciplinary Panel, exercising a tie-breaking vote under Section 5.9, or exercising Emergency Authority as provided elsewhere in this Handbook.

5.2.1 Referral of Matters

The Commissioner shall determine whether reported matters reasonably warrant referral to a Disciplinary Panel for investigation.

The Commissioner's review under this section is administrative in nature and is limited to determining whether the reported information, if reasonably believed to be true, could constitute conduct subject to investigation under this Handbook.

The Commissioner may decline to refer a matter when:

- the reported conduct, even if true, would not reasonably constitute conduct subject to supplemental discipline under this Handbook;

- the matter is clearly outside the authority or jurisdiction of the FAHL;
- the information provided is clearly insufficient to reasonably warrant an investigation; or
- the report is plainly frivolous, duplicative, or made in bad faith.

Nothing in this section prevents the Commissioner from referring any matter to a Disciplinary Panel whenever the Commissioner reasonably believes that further review would assist the fair administration of the league.

A decision not to refer a matter for investigation is an administrative determination only and shall not be interpreted as a finding that the reported conduct did or did not occur.

5.3 On-Ice Officials

On-ice officials are responsible for enforcing the playing rules during league games and assessing penalties authorized by the applicable playing rules.

Officials determine only in-game penalties and game administration. They do not determine supplemental discipline except where specifically authorized by league policy.

Nothing in this Handbook limits the authority of officials to assess penalties, misconducts, game ejections, game misconducts, match penalties, or other penalties authorized by the governing rulebook.

5.4 Disciplinary Panels

The Board shall determine which qualified League Personnel are eligible to serve on Disciplinary Panels.

For each disciplinary matter, the Commissioner shall appoint the members of the Disciplinary Panel from among those individuals authorized by the Board. When selecting Panel members, the Commissioner should consider availability, subject-matter expertise, workload, recusals, and any other circumstances reasonably affecting the fair and efficient administration of the matter.

Whenever reasonably practicable, a Disciplinary Panel should consist of three (3) members. Because the FAHL is a volunteer-operated organization, the Commissioner may appoint larger or smaller Panels when circumstances require.

Final disciplinary decisions shall not be made by fewer than two (2) participating Panel members.

The Commissioner may appoint different Panel members for different matters and may appoint specialized Panels to monitor compliance with probation, reinstatement conditions, or other ongoing disciplinary matters.

Members of a Disciplinary Panel may include Board members and other qualified League Personnel authorized by the Board.

5.5 Authority of Disciplinary Panels

Subject to the limitations established by this Handbook, a Disciplinary Panel may:

1. Receive incident reports.
2. Conduct investigations.
3. Review game video and other evidence.
4. Interview participants and witnesses.
5. Conduct educational meetings.
6. Issue written warnings.
7. Place participants on probation.
8. Conduct hearings when authorized.
9. Issue supplemental suspensions of up to five (5) games.
10. Recommend longer suspensions to the Board.
11. Publish, redact, or withhold Incident Reports.
12. Perform any additional responsibilities delegated by the Board consistent with this Handbook.

Unless otherwise required by this Handbook, disciplinary determinations shall be made by majority vote of the participating panel members.

5.6 Board Authority

The Board retains, within the league's jurisdiction, authority to:

- approve suspensions exceeding five (5) games;
- approve season-long suspensions;
- approve indefinite suspensions;
- approve permanent suspensions;
- determine reinstatement eligibility;

- approve reinstatement following indefinite or permanent suspension;
- interpret this Handbook when ambiguity exists;
- amend disciplinary policies;
- delegate disciplinary authority consistent with this Handbook.

The Board may also exercise original disciplinary jurisdiction whenever it determines immediate action is necessary to protect the safety, integrity, or orderly operation of the league, or when referral to a Disciplinary Panel would be impractical.

5.7 AAU Authority

AAU National Hockey Rules & Discipline Director will conduct hearings on all major/match penalties. The Disciplinary Panel and Board have the right to assess stricter penalties than are issued by AAU, but they cannot weaken any such decision.

All appeals will be heard under the governing rules of the Amateur Athletic Union (AAU) or other applicable governing authority.

The Board shall not have any authority over decisions rendered by AAU unless AAU authorizes such a decision.

5.8 League Personnel Appointments and Service

Service as League Personnel is a privilege rather than a right. Nothing in this Handbook shall be interpreted as creating a contractual right or entitlement to appointment, assignment, scheduling, continued service, or reappointment in any League Personnel position.

The Board retains the authority to appoint, assign, remove, suspend, replace, restrict, decline to appoint, decline to reappoint, or decline to schedule any individual serving in a League Personnel capacity whenever the Board reasonably determines that such action is in the best interests of participant safety, league operations, the efficient administration of the FAHL, or the Guiding Principles of this Handbook.

Such administrative personnel decisions may be made independently of, in conjunction with, or following disciplinary proceedings under this Handbook.

Nothing in this section limits the authority of the Board or Commissioner to assign, reassign, or replace League Personnel as otherwise authorized by this Handbook.

5.9 Emergency Authority

When the Board reasonably believes immediate action is necessary to protect the safety of participants or the orderly operation of the league, the Commissioner, or in the Commissioner's absence another Board member designed by the Board may temporarily suspend a participant from league activities pending review by a Disciplinary Panel or the Board.

Emergency suspensions should remain in effect only for the period reasonably necessary to complete an initial review.

5.10 Impartiality and Participation

Members of the Board and Disciplinary Panels are expected to administer discipline fairly, impartially, and in accordance with this Handbook.

Because the FAHL is a volunteer-operated organization, members of a Disciplinary Panel may simultaneously investigate incidents, evaluate evidence, determine whether violations occurred, and decide the appropriate disciplinary response. Participation in one stage of the disciplinary process does not, by itself, disqualify a member from participating in another stage.

A member should refrain from participating in a disciplinary matter only when the Board or Disciplinary Panel determines that the member has a material conflict of interest that would reasonably impair the member's ability to fairly evaluate the matter.

Examples of circumstances that may constitute a material conflict of interest include, but are not limited to:

- being an accused participant in the matter;
- being an active participant in the incident under review;
- having an immediate family member directly involved in the matter;
- having a significant personal, financial, or other interest in the outcome beyond ordinary league participation.

The mere fact that a participant's conduct was directed toward a member of the Board, a Disciplinary Panel, or other League Personnel because that individual performed a Protected League Function shall not, by itself, require recusal. Likewise, merely being the recipient of misconduct, harassment, threats, or retaliation arising from the performance of official league duties does not automatically create a material conflict of interest.

Participants shall not obtain a procedural advantage through misconduct. Accordingly, disciplinary proceedings shall not be delayed, invalidated, or otherwise affected solely because a participant has directed misconduct toward members of the Board, Disciplinary Panels, or other League Personnel while those individuals were performing Protected League Functions.

5.11 Deadlock Decisions

The Disciplinary Panel should ordinarily strive to reach decisions through discussion and consensus whenever reasonably possible.

If a Disciplinary Panel consisting of two members is unable to reach a unanimous decision, the Commissioner shall cast the deciding vote unless the Commissioner participated in the matter as a Panel member, has recused themselves, or is otherwise ineligible to participate.

If the Commissioner is unable to serve as the deciding vote, the Associate Commissioner shall serve in that role. If neither the Commissioner nor the Associate Commissioner is eligible to participate, the Board shall designate another eligible Board member to cast the deciding vote.

The individual serving as the deciding vote may participate in the Panel's deliberations after reviewing the investigation and relevant evidence but shall cast a vote only if necessary to resolve the deadlock. The deciding member should also review any information presented during the Panel's deliberations before casting the deciding vote.

This section is intended solely to resolve deadlocked Panel decisions. Nothing in this section limits the authority of the Board to review matters otherwise reserved to the Board under this Handbook.

The FAHL has the right to refer any issue to the Amateur Athletic Union (AAU) National Hockey Rules and Discipline Director for counsel or decision.

5.12 General Principles of the Disciplinary Process

The disciplinary process ordinarily consists of the following stages:

- Identification of a matter requiring review, including:
 - automatic review of all major penalties
 - automatic review of all ten-minute misconducts
 - automatic review of all game misconducts
 - automatic review of all match penalties
 - incident reports submitted by on-ice officials
 - incident reports submitted by league participants
 - referrals from the Commissioner, Board, or Disciplinary Panel
- Assignment of the matter to a Disciplinary Panel, when necessary
- Investigation and evidence gathering.
- Hearing, if required or deemed appropriate.
- Determination of whether league rules and/or policies were violated.
- Determination of the appropriate corrective action or discipline.
- Preparation of an Incident Report, when appropriate.
- Board review, when applicable.

The Board or Disciplinary Panel may modify this process when reasonably necessary to accommodate the circumstances of a particular matter, provided the participant receives a fair review consistent with the Guiding Principles of this Handbook.

Part II - Administration

6. Investigations

6.1 Purpose

The purpose of an investigation is to gather sufficient information to enable the Disciplinary Panel to determine whether a violation of league rules or policies occurred and, if so, what corrective action, if any, is appropriate. Investigations are intended to be fair, impartial, timely, and reasonably thorough. They are not intended to mirror formal judicial proceedings.

6.2 Matters Subject to Investigation

An investigation may be initiated through either a mandatory review or a discretionary referral.

6.2.1 Mandatory Reviews

The following matters shall automatically be reviewed by a Disciplinary Panel:

- all ten-minute misconduct penalties
- all game misconduct penalties
- any other penalties designated by the Board

The following matters shall be automatically reviewed by the AAU National Rules & Discipline Director:

- all major penalties
- all game misconduct penalties

An automatic review does not imply that supplemental discipline is warranted. It simply ensures that the incident receives consistent review.

6.2.2 Discretionary Referrals

The following matters may also be referred for investigation:

- incident reports submitted by on-ice officials;
- incident reports submitted by League Participants;
- referrals from the Commissioner;
- referrals from the Board;

- referrals from a Disciplinary Panel;
- conduct observed by League Personnel while performing Protected League Functions; and
- any other matter the Board reasonably believes may warrant supplemental discipline.

6.3 Assignment of Investigations

The Commissioner shall assign investigations to a Disciplinary Panel in accordance with Section 5. The Board may assign investigations only when exercising its original disciplinary jurisdiction under Section 5.6 or when otherwise provided by this Handbook.

The same Disciplinary Panel may investigate multiple related incidents involving the same participant when doing so promotes efficiency and consistency.

Nothing in this Handbook prohibits the Board from assigning a specialized Disciplinary Panel to monitor compliance with probation or other disciplinary conditions.

6.4 Conduct of Investigations

The Disciplinary Panel shall determine the scope of each investigation. Investigations may include any action reasonably necessary to understand the circumstances surrounding an incident, including:

- reviewing game video;
- reviewing referee and scorekeeper reports;
- receiving written statements;
- interviewing participants or witnesses;
- requesting additional information;
- reviewing prior disciplinary records;
- reviewing probation compliance;
- reviewing relevant electronic communications;
- consulting League Personnel possessing relevant Institutional Knowledge; and
- any other investigative step reasonably believed to assist the Panel.

Investigations need not include every available source of evidence. The Disciplinary Panel may conclude an investigation once it believes sufficient reliable information has been obtained.

6.5 Determination of Responsibility

After completing its investigation, the Disciplinary Panel shall determine whether it is more likely than not that the participant violated league rules or policies.

This determination shall be based upon the situation and circumstances of the incident under review.

When determining whether a violation occurred, the Disciplinary Panel may consider any information it reasonably believes to be relevant and reliable, including:

- game video;
- referee reports;
- scorekeeper reports;
- incident reports;
- written statements;
- witness interviews;
- photographs;
- electronic communications;
- admissions by participants; and
- other reliable evidence relating to the incident.

Except where directly relevant to the alleged violation, the participant's prior disciplinary history, probation status, or previous corrective actions should not be considered when determining whether the current violation occurred.

The Panel shall determine responsibility based upon the preponderance of the available evidence.

6.6 Determination of Corrective Action

If the Disciplinary Panel determines that a violation occurred, it shall then determine the appropriate corrective action consistent with this Handbook.

When determining the appropriate corrective action, the Panel may consider the totality of the circumstances, including:

- the seriousness of the violation;
- the actual or potential risk to participant safety;
- the participant's disciplinary history;
- prior warnings;
- probation status and compliance;
- prior educational efforts;
- acceptance of responsibility;
- cooperation during the investigation;
- likelihood of future misconduct;
- Institutional Knowledge acquired through official league responsibilities;
- the effect of the conduct upon league operations, sportsmanship, League Personnel, and participant enjoyment; and
- any aggravating or mitigating circumstances the Panel reasonably believes are relevant.

Prior interactions arising solely from the performance of Protected League Functions ordinarily constitute Institutional Knowledge rather than a personal conflict of interest and may be considered when determining the appropriate corrective action.

The purpose of considering a participant's disciplinary history and Institutional Knowledge is not to establish responsibility for the current violation, but to determine the corrective action most likely to protect the safety, integrity, and long-term welfare of the league.

6.7 Participant Cooperation

Participants are expected to cooperate with disciplinary investigations.

Participants shall not:

- knowingly provide false or misleading information;
- intentionally omit material information;
- attempt to influence witnesses through intimidation, coercion, or retaliation;
- interfere with an investigation;
- destroy or alter relevant evidence; or
- refuse reasonable requests for information without good cause.

Failure to cooperate may itself constitute conduct subject to supplemental discipline.

6.8 Findings

At the conclusion of an investigation, the Disciplinary Panel shall determine whether it is more likely than not that a violation of league rules or policies occurred.

If the Panel determines that no violation occurred, the matter shall be closed without supplemental discipline.

If the Panel determines that a violation occurred, it shall determine the appropriate corrective action consistent with this Handbook.

When appropriate, the Panel may also recommend additional action by the Board.

6.9 Documentation

The Disciplinary Panel shall maintain reasonable documentation of its investigation and findings.

Documentation may include incident reports, evidence reviewed, witness statements, disciplinary findings, hearing notes, and other records maintained in the ordinary course of league administration.

Such documentation constitutes league records and may be retained for future disciplinary reference, probation monitoring, reinstatement proceedings, or other legitimate league purposes.

6.10 Withdrawal from League Participation

A participant's resignation, withdrawal, or other cessation of league participation does not automatically terminate an investigation or disciplinary proceeding. The Board or Disciplinary Panel may, in its discretion, continue, suspend, or close the matter as the circumstances reasonably warrant.

7. Conduct Subject to Supplemental Discipline

7.1 General Standard

The FAHL reserves the right to impose supplemental discipline whenever a participant engages in conduct that is inconsistent with league rules, player safety, sportsmanship, or the Guiding Principles of this Handbook.

Supplemental discipline may be imposed regardless of whether an on-ice penalty was assessed.

Conduct that is not otherwise prohibited by the playing rules may nevertheless be subject to supplemental discipline when, viewed individually or as part of a pattern, it is inconsistent with the safety, sportsmanship, or recreational culture the FAHL seeks to promote.

The examples contained within this section are representative rather than exhaustive. Because no policy can anticipate every factual circumstance, conduct substantially similar to the examples described below may also be subject to supplemental discipline.

7.2 Conduct Affecting Player Safety

Participants are expected to avoid unnecessary physical contact and to conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the league's emphasis on safety and recreational play.

Supplemental discipline may be imposed for conduct involving unnecessary, excessive, reckless, retaliatory, or intimidating physical contact, regardless of whether such conduct independently constitutes an on-ice penalty.

Examples include, but are not limited to:

- intentional body checking;
- repeated or excessive shoving;
- unnecessary physical contact after the whistle;
- initiating unnecessary body contact away from the play;
- using physical contact to intimidate, antagonize, or provoke another participant;
- repeated contact intended to wear down, frustrate, or target another participant rather than make a legitimate hockey play;
- retaliatory physical contact;
- reckless body contact;

- deliberate attempts to injure another participant;
- escalating otherwise minor incidents into dangerous confrontations; and
- repeated conduct demonstrating an unwillingness to respect the league's non-checking standards.

The Disciplinary Panel may consider whether repeated instances of otherwise minor physical contact collectively demonstrate a pattern of conduct inconsistent with the league's emphasis on safe recreational hockey.

7.3 Sportsmanship and Respect

Participants are expected to conduct themselves with good sportsmanship and treat others with dignity and respect before, during, and after league activities.

Examples of conduct inconsistent with this expectation include:

- repeated personal insults;
- condescending or demeaning remarks directed toward another participant;
- excessive or persistent taunting;
- repeated unwanted or unsolicited verbal harassment ("chirping") after another participant has indicated it is unwelcome;
- intentionally antagonizing another participant for the purpose of provoking a confrontation;
- conduct intended to disrupt another participant's enjoyment of the league through repeated verbal abuse or intimidation;
- deliberately refusing ordinary acts of sportsmanship toward League Personnel because they performed a Protected League Function, when such conduct forms part of a broader pattern of disrespect toward league authority.
- engaging in repeated conduct reasonably intended to intimidate or antagonize another participant through unnecessary physical presence or contact.

Competitive banter and good-faith gamesmanship are recognized as part of hockey. However, conduct that becomes personal, abusive, persistent, or reasonably intended to create a hostile environment may be subject to supplemental discipline.

7.4 Harassment, Abuse, Discrimination, Intimidation, and Retaliation

The FAHL is committed to providing a recreational environment that is welcoming, respectful, and free from harassment and discrimination.

Examples include, but are not limited to:

- sexual harassment;
- unwelcome sexual comments or advances;
- hateful or discriminatory language;
- slurs or derogatory remarks directed toward protected characteristics;
- repeated personal attacks;
- bullying;
- intimidation;
- threats;
- retaliation against another participant or League Personnel;
- conduct reasonably intended to cause fear, humiliation, or emotional distress.

7.5 Conduct Directed Toward League Personnel

League Personnel perform Protected League Functions on behalf of the FAHL. The league depends upon participants who are willing to volunteer or serve in official capacities. Conduct directed toward League Personnel because they performed Protected League Functions undermines the league's ability to operate and may warrant enhanced disciplinary consideration.

Participants shall not:

- threaten, intimidate, harass, or retaliate against League Personnel because of league decisions or official responsibilities;
- attempt to pressure League Personnel into changing official decisions through intimidation or harassment;
- publicly or privately engage in abusive, malicious, or knowingly false attacks against League Personnel arising from the performance of Protected League Functions;
- engage in coordinated efforts to harass, discredit, or incite others against League Personnel because of official league decisions;
- target League Personnel with repeated hostility, contempt, or personal attacks arising from official league actions.

Nothing in this section prohibits participants from respectfully disagreeing with league decisions, expressing good-faith criticism, or utilizing established league procedures to request review of league actions.

Conduct directed toward a person because they performed a Protected League Function may be considered an aggravating factor when determining supplemental discipline.

7.6 Communications Concerning League Matters

Participants may communicate their questions, concerns, disagreements, and criticisms regarding league decisions and policies. Such communications shall occur privately and are not prohibited merely because they are critical of the FAHL, the Board, League Personnel, or a league decision.

Communications may become subject to supplemental discipline when, viewed individually or as part of a pattern of conduct, they become abusive, threatening, intimidating, harassing, retaliatory, knowingly false or materially misleading, personally targeted, or reasonably intended to interfere with the performance of Protected League Functions or the orderly operation of the league.

In determining whether communications cross this line, the Disciplinary Panel or Board may consider the content, context, frequency, audience, intended or reasonably foreseeable effect, whether the communication was directed toward a person performing a Protected League Function, whether the participant continued the conduct after being asked to stop, and whether the conduct forms part of a broader pattern.

Criticism of a league decision, disagreement with Board action, advocacy for a different league policy, or a good-faith request for review shall not, by itself, constitute misconduct.

7.7 Inciting Misconduct

Participants shall not encourage, organize, or incite others to engage in conduct that violates league rules or undermines the orderly operation of the league.

Examples include:

- encouraging retaliation against another participant;

- attempting to incite other participants to confront, harass, or intimidate another participant or League Personnel;
- encouraging participants to disregard league rules or disciplinary decisions;
- organizing or encouraging conduct intended to disrupt league operations;
- attempting to create hostility toward League Personnel because they performed Protected League Functions.

7.8 Conduct Detrimental to the League

Conduct detrimental to the league includes behavior that materially interferes with league operations, undermines participant confidence, damages the reputation of the league, or substantially diminishes the recreational experience of participants.

Examples include:

- repeated disregard for league policies;
- refusal to comply with disciplinary conditions;
- repeated harassment of participants or League Personnel;
- conduct demonstrating an unwillingness to support the recreational nature of the league;
- behavior that materially undermines the league's ability to provide a safe, fair, and enjoyable recreational environment.

7.9 Integrity of the Disciplinary Process

Participants are expected to cooperate honestly and in good faith with disciplinary proceedings.

Conduct undermining the integrity of the disciplinary process may itself constitute a disciplinary violation.

Examples include:

- knowingly providing false or misleading information;
- intentionally withholding material information;
- destroying or altering relevant evidence;
- attempting to influence witnesses through intimidation, coercion, or retaliation;
- interfering with an investigation;
- refusing to comply with disciplinary conditions;

- abusing the disciplinary process through knowingly false, frivolous, or bad-faith complaints;
- attempting to obtain a procedural advantage through misconduct.

7.10 Pattern of Conduct

The Disciplinary Panel and Board may consider whether individual incidents, when viewed collectively, demonstrate a continuing pattern of conduct inconsistent with the Guiding Principles of this Handbook.

Multiple incidents that might not independently justify significant discipline may collectively demonstrate an unwillingness or inability to safely, respectfully, and constructively participate in the league.

The purpose of considering patterns of conduct is not to punish participants for isolated mistakes, but to evaluate future risk, determine whether previous corrective efforts have been successful, and identify the corrective action most likely to protect the long-term safety, integrity, and recreational environment of the FAHL.

8. Hearings

8.1 Purpose

The purpose of a hearing is to provide an opportunity for meaningful communication between the participant and the FAHL before or after significant disciplinary action, when required or deemed appropriate.

Hearings are intended to promote fairness, encourage understanding of league expectations, allow participants an opportunity to be heard, and assist the Board or Disciplinary Panel in determining the corrective action most consistent with the Guiding Principles of this Handbook.

The purpose of the hearing is to allow the participant a meaningful opportunity to provide information before a final disciplinary decision is made.

Hearings are administrative proceedings and are not intended to mirror judicial or formal legal proceedings.

8.2 When Hearings Are Required

The FAHL recognizes that certain corrective actions require participants to be provided an opportunity to be heard before discipline is imposed.

Accordingly, the Disciplinary Panel or Board shall conduct a hearing before imposing:

- any Supplemental Suspension beyond an automatic suspension required by the governing playing rules;
- any suspension arising from a Match Penalty when required by the governing authority;
- any Term Suspension;
- any Indefinite Suspension;
- any Permanent Suspension; or
- any other corrective action for which a hearing is required by the governing authority.

The hearing shall occur before the Disciplinary Panel or Board reaches a final decision regarding the corrective action.

Nothing in this section prevents the Disciplinary Panel from investigating the matter, gathering evidence, reviewing video, interviewing witnesses, or conducting other investigative activities before the hearing.

Following the hearing, the Disciplinary Panel or Board shall determine the appropriate corrective action based upon the information obtained during the investigation and hearing.

8.3 Scheduling and Notice

Hearings shall be scheduled as soon as reasonably practicable after completion of the investigation or after the Board or Disciplinary Panel determines that a hearing is required.

The Hearing Panel shall make reasonable efforts to schedule the hearing at a date and time that permits participation by the participant and the members of the Hearing Panel.

Hearings may be conducted in person, by telephone, by video conference, or by another communication method determined by the Hearing Panel to be appropriate under the circumstances.

Participants shall receive reasonable notice of the hearing, including:

- the date and time of the hearing;
- the manner in which the hearing will be conducted;
- the general nature of the conduct under review; and
- any other information the Hearing Panel reasonably believes necessary to prepare for the hearing.

When the governing authority establishes minimum notice requirements, the FAHL shall comply with those requirements unless the participant voluntarily agrees to a shorter notice period.

A participant may voluntarily waive any applicable minimum notice period and agree to an earlier hearing.

8.4 Interim Participation Pending Hearing

Unless otherwise provided by the governing authority or this Handbook, participants shall remain eligible to participate pending the outcome of a required disciplinary hearing.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, participants shall be immediately suspended from participation pending a hearing whenever:

- required by the governing authority;
- a Match Penalty has been assessed;
- the matter involves alleged hateful or discriminatory language for which the governing authority requires immediate suspension;
- the matter involves an alleged Athlete Protection Policy violation requiring immediate suspension; or
- the Board determines that an immediate suspension is necessary to protect participant safety or the orderly operation of the league.

An interim suspension is administrative in nature and shall not be construed as a determination that misconduct occurred.

Participants placed on interim suspension shall remain suspended until the Hearing Panel or Board issues a final disciplinary decision.

8.5 FAHL Hearing Panel

Hearings shall ordinarily be conducted by the Disciplinary Panel or the Board, depending upon the authority responsible for the disciplinary matter.

The composition of the Hearing Panel may differ from previous Disciplinary Panels in accordance with the participation and recusal provisions contained elsewhere in this Handbook.

Whenever reasonably practicable, hearings should involve at least three members. However, no hearing shall be invalid solely because fewer qualified members were available to participate.

8.6 FAHL Hearing Procedures

Because disciplinary matters vary significantly, no single hearing format shall be required.

The Hearing Panel shall conduct each hearing in the manner it reasonably believes will best promote fairness, efficient fact-finding, participant understanding, and meaningful discussion.

The Hearing Panel may:

- explain the purpose of the hearing;
- summarize the conduct under review;
- explain the applicable league rules or policies;
- summarize the information obtained during the investigation;
- ask questions of the participant;
- allow the participant a meaningful opportunity to respond, provide additional information, and identify information the participant believes should be considered;
- ask follow-up questions;
- review relevant evidence;
- discuss the range of corrective actions authorized by this Handbook when doing so would assist the participant in understanding the disciplinary process; and
- conclude the hearing when it reasonably believes sufficient information has been obtained.

The Disciplinary Panel and Board shall approach each hearing with an open mind. Although members may develop preliminary opinions during the investigation, no final disciplinary decision shall be made until the participant has been provided a meaningful opportunity to be heard and the Panel or Board has considered the information presented during the hearing.

The Hearing Panel is responsible for maintaining the orderly conduct of the hearing. Participants, representatives, observers, and other attendees are expected to conduct themselves respectfully and refrain from interrupting, arguing with the Hearing Panel, engaging in abusive or disruptive conduct, or otherwise interfering with the orderly administration of the hearing.

If an individual engages in disruptive conduct, the Hearing Panel should ordinarily provide a warning and an opportunity to correct the behavior before taking further action. If the conduct continues, or if the Hearing Panel determines that the conduct materially interferes with the hearing, the Hearing Panel may take reasonable measures to restore order, including muting participants in remote hearings, directing individuals to refrain from further participation, removing individuals from the hearing, or taking other reasonable steps necessary to complete the hearing in an orderly manner.

Removal from a hearing for disruptive conduct does not prevent the Hearing Panel from completing the hearing or reaching a final disciplinary decision based upon the information available.

8.7 Participant Participation

Participants are expected to participate respectfully, honestly, and in good faith during hearings.

Participants shall be given a reasonable opportunity to respond to the allegations under consideration before the Disciplinary Panel or Board reaches a final disciplinary decision.

Participants may:

- explain their understanding of the events;
- respond to information presented during the investigation;
- provide additional relevant information;
- identify witnesses or other information they believe should be considered;

- explain any mitigating circumstances;
- accept responsibility for their conduct, when appropriate; and
- ask reasonable questions regarding league expectations or the disciplinary process.

Participants are expected to cooperate throughout the hearing. A participant's decision not to answer particular questions or to decline responsibility shall not, by itself, be considered evidence that a violation occurred.

8.8 Representation and Attendance

Hearings are intended to be informal administrative proceedings rather than judicial proceedings.

A participant may request that another person attend the hearing for support or assistance. The Hearing Panel shall determine whether the request is appropriate under the circumstances.

Unless expressly permitted by the Hearing Panel, non-participants may observe the hearing but shall not speak, ask questions, present arguments, or otherwise participate in the proceedings.

The Hearing Panel may permit a non-participant to provide relevant information or answer questions when it determines that doing so will assist in resolving the matter.

The Hearing Panel may establish reasonable procedures governing attendance and participation in order to preserve the orderly conduct of the hearing.

8.9 Failure to Participate

If a participant declines to participate in a hearing after being provided a reasonable opportunity to do so, the Board or Disciplinary Panel may proceed based upon the information available.

Failure to participate shall not prevent the Board or Disciplinary Panel from making disciplinary decisions.

8.10 Hearing Outcomes

After considering the information obtained during the investigation and the hearing, the Hearing Panel shall determine whether corrective action is appropriate and, if so, the corrective action most consistent with the Guiding Principles of this Handbook.

Following a hearing, the Hearing Panel may:

- determine that no additional corrective action is warranted;
- issue or modify corrective actions within its authority;
- recommend additional corrective actions to the Board;
- establish educational expectations;
- recommend conditions for future participation;
- recommend reinstatement, when authorized;
- deny reinstatement, when authorized; or
- take any other action authorized by this Handbook.

The Hearing Panel should document the basis for significant disciplinary decisions, particularly when imposing long-term suspensions or when materially departing from the ordinary disciplinary guidelines established by this Handbook.

8.11 External Appeal to AAU

A participant who wishes to challenge a final disciplinary decision of the FAHL may pursue any appeal rights available under the rules and procedures of the Amateur Athletic Union (AAU).

For FAHL hockey disciplinary matters, the participant shall direct an appeal to the AAU National Hockey Rules & Discipline Director, in accordance with the procedures and deadlines established by AAU.

The FAHL does not administer or decide appeals submitted to the AAU. The AAU shall determine whether an appeal is permitted, the applicable procedures, and the appropriate reviewing authority under its governing rules.

Unless otherwise required by AAU or expressly stated in the FAHL's written decision, submission of an appeal does not automatically stay, suspend, or otherwise alter the FAHL disciplinary decision.

8.12 Hearing Records

The FAHL may maintain reasonable records of disciplinary hearings, including written notes, correspondence, documentary evidence, audio recordings, video recordings, written decisions, or other records created or maintained in the ordinary course of league administration.

The Hearing Panel or Board may audio record or video record a hearing for administrative purposes when it determines that doing so is appropriate.

Any recordings or records created by the FAHL in connection with a disciplinary hearing constitute confidential league records maintained for administrative purposes.

Participants, representatives, observers, and other non-participants shall not audio record, video record, photograph, livestream, or otherwise create recordings of a hearing without the prior written authorization of the Board.

Hearing records, including any audio or video recordings created by the FAHL, are intended solely for the administration of league business. Such records are not public records and are not required to be disclosed, copied, or otherwise made available to participants except when disclosure is required by law or by the governing authority.

The FAHL may retain, archive, or dispose of hearing records in accordance with its record retention practices and the legitimate administrative needs of the league.

Part III – Corrective Actions

9. Guidelines for Corrective Actions

9.1 Purpose

The purpose of this chapter is to promote consistency, transparency, and fairness in the administration of supplemental discipline while preserving the discretion granted to the Disciplinary Panel and Board elsewhere in this Handbook.

These guidelines establish the ordinary range of corrective actions that should be considered for common categories of misconduct. They are intended to promote consistency and transparency but are not mandatory corrective action requirements.

The Disciplinary Panel and Board may depart from these guidelines whenever they reasonably determine that the specific facts and circumstances of a case warrant a different corrective action consistent with the Guiding Principles of this Handbook.

The purpose of these guidelines is not simply to recommend corrective actions for individual incidents, but to assist the Disciplinary Panel and Board in evaluating whether previous corrective efforts have been successful or whether additional measures are necessary to protect the safety, integrity, and recreational culture of the FAHL.

9.2 Progressive Corrective Actions

The FAHL recognizes that repeated misconduct ordinarily presents a greater concern than an isolated incident.

When determining the appropriate corrective action, the Disciplinary Panel and Board should consider whether previous corrective actions have successfully reduced the likelihood of future misconduct.

Participants who repeatedly engage in the same or substantially similar misconduct should ordinarily receive progressively more significant corrective actions unless mitigating circumstances reasonably justify a different outcome.

The passage of time between violations may reduce, but does not necessarily eliminate, the significance of prior misconduct. The Disciplinary Panel and Board may consider the similarity, frequency, seriousness, and overall pattern of prior violations when determining the appropriate corrective action.

Repeated misconduct occurring over an extended period may nevertheless demonstrate that previous corrective actions have not been effective.

9.3 Patterns of Misconduct

The Disciplinary Panel and Board shall evaluate a participant's overall conduct rather than viewing each disciplinary incident in isolation.

A participant's overall conduct may demonstrate a continuing pattern of misconduct through repeated violations of the same type of conduct, repeated violations of different types of misconduct, or a combination of both.

When evaluating whether a participant has demonstrated a pattern of misconduct, the Disciplinary Panel and Board may consider factors including:

- repeated violations of the same rule, policy, or standard;
- repeated violations of different rules, policies, or standards;
- the similarity of prior misconduct;
- the frequency of prior misconduct;
- the seriousness of prior misconduct;
- the participant's compliance with previous corrective actions or probation;
- previous educational conversations, warnings, or hearings;
- the participant's willingness to accept responsibility and correct the behavior;
- whether previous corrective actions have successfully changed the participant's conduct; and
- the participant's overall disciplinary history.

The passage of time between incidents may reduce, but does not necessarily eliminate, the significance of prior misconduct. The Disciplinary Panel and Board may consider the similarity, frequency, seriousness, and overall pattern of prior misconduct when determining the appropriate corrective action.

A participant may demonstrate a continuing pattern of misconduct even though no individual incident independently warrants significant corrective action.

The purpose of evaluating patterns of misconduct is not to increase discipline solely because multiple incidents have occurred. Rather, it is to determine whether previous corrective actions have been effective, whether the participant demonstrates an increasing risk of future misconduct, and whether additional corrective action is reasonably necessary to protect participant safety, League Personnel, league operations, and the recreational culture of the FAHL.

9.4 Assessment of Future Risk

The primary purpose of progressive corrective action is not merely to increase the severity of discipline for repeated misconduct, but to evaluate whether the participant's conduct demonstrates an increasing risk to participant safety, sportsmanship, League Personnel, or the orderly operation of the FAHL.

As previous corrective actions become less effective, more significant corrective actions may become appropriate.

A participant's overall disciplinary history may demonstrate escalating risk even when individual incidents involve different forms of misconduct.

The Disciplinary Panel and Board should evaluate whether the participant's conduct demonstrates:

- an increasing likelihood of future misconduct;
- an unwillingness to comply with league standards;
- an inability to safely participate in the recreational environment of the FAHL;
- repeated disregard for previous corrective actions;
- conduct detrimental to the long-term welfare of the league; or
- other circumstances indicating that additional corrective action is reasonably necessary.

9.5 Appendix A

The Board adopts Appendix A as guidance for the ordinary corrective actions that should be considered for common categories of misconduct. Appendix A is intended to promote consistency while preserving the discretion granted elsewhere in this Handbook. The examples and recommendations contained in Appendix A are advisory and do not create mandatory disciplinary requirements.

10. Corrective Actions and Disciplinary Sanctions

10.1 Purpose

The purpose of corrective action is to protect participant safety, preserve sportsmanship, support League Personnel, maintain the integrity of league operations, and encourage future compliance with league standards.

Corrective actions are intended to correct behavior whenever reasonably possible rather than punish participants. However, when corrective efforts have proven unsuccessful, or when participant safety or the welfare of the league cannot reasonably be protected through lesser measures, more restrictive corrective actions may be imposed.

10.2 Selection of Corrective Actions

After determining that a violation has occurred, the Disciplinary Panel shall determine the corrective action most appropriate under the circumstances.

The Panel should ordinarily select the least restrictive corrective action that it reasonably believes will:

- protect participant safety;
- preserve league integrity;
- encourage future compliance with league standards;
- support League Personnel;
- maintain the recreational nature of the FAHL; and
- uphold the Guiding Principles of this Handbook.

The Panel is not required to impose progressively more severe corrective actions in every case. Depending upon the seriousness of the conduct or the surrounding circumstances, any corrective action authorized by this Handbook may be imposed.

10.3 Aggravating Factors

The following factors may support more significant corrective action:

- conduct creating a significant risk of injury;
- repeated unnecessary physical contact inconsistent with the recreational nature of the league;

- intentional, retaliatory, or targeted conduct;
- repeated violations of league policies;
- conduct occurring while on Disciplinary Probation or Reinstatement Probation;
- failure to comply with previous corrective actions;
- refusal to accept responsibility;
- lack of cooperation during an investigation;
- attempts to conceal or misrepresent relevant facts;
- inciting others to engage in misconduct;
- targeting League Personnel because they performed Protected League Functions;
- a continuing pattern of misconduct;
- evidence that future misconduct is likely to occur.

10.4 Mitigating Factors

The following factors may support less restrictive corrective action:

- acceptance of responsibility;
- genuine remorse;
- cooperation during the investigation;
- voluntary efforts to correct the behavior;
- a previously positive disciplinary history;
- evidence that the conduct is unlikely to recur;
- provocation that, while not excusing the conduct, reasonably explains the participant's response;
- other circumstances the Panel reasonably believes support rehabilitation.

10.5 Available Corrective Actions

The Disciplinary Panel or Board may impose one or more of the following corrective actions:

1. Educational Conversation
2. Written Warning
3. Mandatory Educational Meeting
4. Disciplinary Probation
5. Supplemental Suspension
6. Term Suspension
7. Indefinite Suspension

8. Permanent Suspension

Corrective actions may be imposed individually or in combination.

10.6 Additional Corrective Actions

The Disciplinary Panel or Board may impose additional reasonable corrective actions designed to encourage rehabilitation, restore sportsmanship, protect league operations, or reduce the likelihood of future misconduct.

Examples include, but are not limited to:

- written apologies;
- in-person apologies;
- behavioral agreements;
- written acknowledgements of league expectations;
- participation in conflict resolution discussions;
- educational assignments;
- additional conditions attached to probation or reinstatement; and
- other reasonable corrective actions consistent with the Guiding Principles of this Handbook.

Corrective actions shall be reasonably related to the conduct at issue and shall not be imposed for punitive purposes alone.

Failure to comply with a required corrective action may result in additional disciplinary action.

10.7 Educational Conversation

An Educational Conversation is the least restrictive corrective action.

Its purpose is to address concerns before formal discipline becomes necessary by communicating league expectations and encouraging voluntary correction.

Educational Conversations are generally informal and need not become part of a participant's disciplinary record unless the Panel determines documentation is appropriate.

10.8 Written Warning

A Written Warning formally advises a participant that their conduct is inconsistent with league expectations.

Warnings should identify:

- the conduct involved;
- the applicable league standards;
- the expected corrective behavior; and
- the potential consequences of future violations.

Warnings may be issued with or without a hearing.

10.9 Mandatory Educational Meeting

The Disciplinary Panel may require a participant to attend an Educational Meeting before continuing league participation.

The purpose of the meeting is to ensure the participant understands league expectations, discuss corrective measures, answer questions, and determine whether continued participation can reasonably occur consistent with league standards.

Failure to participate without good cause may result in additional corrective action.

10.10 Disciplinary Probation

Disciplinary Probation is a defined review period during which a participant's conduct is subject to increased scrutiny.

Its purpose is to provide a participant with an opportunity to demonstrate sustained compliance with league standards while allowing the Disciplinary Panel to monitor future conduct.

The Panel may establish reasonable conditions of probation, including behavioral expectations, educational requirements, communication expectations, or other conditions designed to encourage successful participation.

Violations occurring during Disciplinary Probation may result in enhanced corrective action.

10.11 Supplemental Suspension

A Supplemental Suspension ordinarily removes a participant from league participation as a player unless the disciplinary decision expressly provides otherwise.

Unless otherwise provided by this Handbook, the Disciplinary Panel may impose Supplemental Suspensions of up to five (5) games.

Unless otherwise specified in the disciplinary decision:

- Suspensions apply to all participation as a player in the FAHL, regardless of the team for which the participant is rostered or serving as a sub.
- A participant suspended while serving as a sub shall ordinarily serve the suspension during games involving the participant's primary rostered team.
- A suspended participant shall not serve as a sub while the suspension remains in effect.
- A suspension does not prohibit a participant from serving as a referee, scorekeeper, or other authorized League Personnel unless expressly stated in the disciplinary decision.
- Nothing in this section limits the Board's authority to modify, suspend, terminate, or decline future League Personnel appointments or assignments pursuant to Section 5.7.
- Suspended games are counted only when the participant's applicable rostered team plays a scheduled league game.
- Suspensions shall be served in a manner that reasonably carries out the intent of the disciplinary decision.
- A participant shall not avoid, reduce, accelerate, or otherwise manipulate the service of a suspension through changes in roster status, sub participation, delayed registration, transfers between teams, or other actions inconsistent with the purpose of the suspension.
- The Disciplinary Panel or Board shall determine how a suspension is to be served whenever unusual circumstances arise or when necessary to preserve the intent of the disciplinary decision. Such determinations shall be final unless modified by the Board.
- Participants are not entitled to refunds, credits, or replacement games missed because of suspension.

- Attempting to participate as a player while suspended may constitute an additional disciplinary violation.

The written disciplinary decision should identify the suspension period, the games through which the suspension applies, and the first game for which the participant is eligible to return.

10.12 Term Suspension

A Term Suspension removes a participant from league participation for a specified period established by the Board.

Upon completion of the suspension period, the participant becomes eligible to apply for reinstatement. Completion of a Term Suspension does not automatically restore eligibility to participate in the FAHL.

When imposing a Term Suspension, the Board shall specify:

- the effective date of the suspension;
- the duration of the suspension; and
- the earliest date on which the participant may apply for reinstatement.

The written disciplinary decision should clearly identify this information so that the participant understands the duration of the suspension and when they may request reconsideration of their eligibility to participate.

Eligibility to apply for reinstatement does not create a right to reinstatement. A participant must successfully complete the reinstatement process described elsewhere in this Handbook before returning to league participation.

Term Suspensions require a two-thirds vote of the Board.

10.13 Indefinite Suspension

An Indefinite Suspension removes a participant from league participation for an unspecified period when the Board determines that it is not presently appropriate to establish a fixed period after which reinstatement should be considered.

An Indefinite Suspension remains in effect until the Board determines that the participant is eligible to apply for reinstatement or establishes other conditions under which reinstatement may be considered.

When imposing an Indefinite Suspension, the Board should ordinarily identify the conditions under which the participant may become eligible to apply for reinstatement. Such conditions may include a future review date, completion of specified corrective actions, or other reasonable requirements established by the Board. The Board may decline to establish such conditions when it determines that doing so would not be appropriate under the circumstances.

An Indefinite Suspension does not automatically expire, and a participant has no right to reinstatement solely because time has passed.

Indefinite Suspensions require a two-thirds vote of the Board.

10.14 Permanent Suspension

A Permanent Suspension permanently terminates a participant's eligibility to participate in the FAHL.

Permanent Suspension shall be reserved for extraordinary circumstances in which the Board determines that future participation cannot reasonably be reconciled with participant safety, the integrity of league operations, or the long-term welfare of the league.

A participant who has been permanently suspended has no expectation or right to future reinstatement.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, the Board may, in its sole discretion, reconsider a Permanent Suspension if it determines that extraordinary circumstances warrant doing so. Nothing in this Handbook shall be construed as requiring the Board to provide an opportunity for reinstatement following a Permanent Suspension.

Permanent Suspensions require a two-thirds vote of the Board.

10.15 Reinstatement Probation

Participants reinstated following a Term Suspension or Indefinite Suspension shall ordinarily be placed on Reinstatement Probation.

Reinstatement Probation is intended to assist participants in successfully returning to league participation while allowing the Board to monitor continued compliance with league standards.

The Board may establish reasonable conditions of Reinstatement Probation as part of the reinstatement process.

The duration, conditions, and successful completion of Reinstatement Probation shall be determined by the Board.

Additional provisions governing reinstatement are contained in Section 11.

11. Reinstatement

11.1 Purpose

The purpose of reinstatement is to provide a structured process through which participants serving a Term Suspension or Indefinite Suspension may request reconsideration of their eligibility to participate in the FAHL.

Reinstatement is intended to balance the FAHL's commitment to rehabilitation with its responsibility to protect participant safety, preserve sportsmanship, support League Personnel, and maintain the integrity and recreational culture of the league.

Eligibility to apply for reinstatement does not create a right to reinstatement.

11.2 Eligibility to Apply

A participant becomes eligible to apply for reinstatement only as provided in the disciplinary decision or elsewhere in this Handbook.

Eligibility to apply for reinstatement does not automatically restore eligibility to participate.

Participants remain suspended until the Board approves reinstatement.

11.3 Request for Reinstatement

A participant seeking reinstatement shall submit a written request to the Commissioner.

The request should ordinarily include:

- the participant's request for reinstatement;
- any information the participant believes the Board should consider;
- any explanation of circumstances that have changed since the suspension was imposed; and
- any other information relevant to the request.

The Board may request additional information before scheduling a reinstatement hearing.

11.4 Reinstatement Hearing

Before acting upon a request for reinstatement, the Board shall ordinarily conduct a reinstatement hearing.

The purpose of the hearing is to allow meaningful discussion regarding the participant's request, the participant's understanding of the conduct that resulted in suspension, any changes that have occurred since the suspension was imposed, and the participant's ability to successfully return to league participation.

Reinstatement hearings shall be conducted in accordance with the hearing procedures contained elsewhere in this Handbook unless the Board establishes reasonable modifications appropriate to reinstatement proceedings.

11.5 Factors Considered

When determining whether reinstatement is appropriate, the Board may consider any information it reasonably believes relevant, including:

- the conduct resulting in suspension;
- the participant's disciplinary history;
- acceptance of responsibility;
- compliance with previous corrective actions;
- compliance with suspension requirements;
- information presented during the reinstatement hearing;
- the likelihood of future misconduct;

- participant safety;
- the effect upon League Personnel and league operations;
- the recreational culture of the FAHL; and
- any other information the Board reasonably believes relevant.

The Board is not required to conclude that future misconduct is impossible. Rather, the Board should determine whether the participant's return presents a level of risk that is reasonably consistent with the Guiding Principles of this Handbook.

11.6 Board Action

Following the reinstatement hearing, the Board may:

- approve reinstatement;
- approve reinstatement subject to reasonable conditions;
- place the participant on Reinstatement Probation;
- defer the request and establish a future date upon which the participant may reapply;
- deny reinstatement; or
- take any other action authorized by this Handbook.

The Board shall communicate its decision in writing.

11.7 Reinstatement Probation

Participants reinstated following a Term Suspension or Indefinite Suspension shall ordinarily be placed on Reinstatement Probation.

The Board may establish reasonable conditions designed to support a successful return to league participation and reduce the likelihood of future misconduct.

The duration of Reinstatement Probation shall be determined by the Board.

Failure to comply with probation conditions may result in additional corrective action, including removal from the league.

11.8 Effect of Reinstatement

Approval of reinstatement restores a participant's eligibility to participate in the FAHL subject to any conditions established by the Board.

Unless otherwise provided in the Board's written decision, a reinstated participant shall be subject to any applicable Reinstatement Probation and shall remain responsible for complying with all league rules, policies, and corrective actions.

Reinstatement does not erase, expunge, or otherwise remove a participant's prior disciplinary history. Previous disciplinary actions remain part of the participant's league record and may be considered in future disciplinary proceedings to the extent permitted by this Handbook.

Nothing in this section limits the Board's authority to consider the participant's successful completion of probation, subsequent positive conduct, or the passage of time when evaluating future disciplinary matters.

11.9 Future Requests

If reinstatement is denied, the Board may establish the earliest date upon which the participant may submit another request for reinstatement.

Nothing in this Handbook requires the Board to reconsider a request before the date established by the Board.

The Board may decline to establish a future eligibility date when it determines that doing so would not be appropriate under the circumstances.

12. Written Decisions and Incident Reports

12.1 Purpose

The purpose of this chapter is to establish consistent procedures for communicating disciplinary decisions, documenting corrective actions, and, when appropriate, informing league participants of disciplinary matters.

Disciplinary communications are intended to promote transparency, participant understanding, consistency in the administration of league policies, and confidence in the fairness of the disciplinary process. They are not intended to embarrass, shame, or publicly criticize participants.

Nothing in this chapter limits the authority of the Disciplinary Panel or Board to communicate with participants as otherwise authorized by this Handbook.

12.2 Written Decisions

The FAHL shall communicate significant disciplinary decisions to the affected participant in writing.

Written Decisions document the findings of the Disciplinary Panel or Board, communicate the corrective action imposed, identify any participant responsibilities, and establish a clear administrative record of the disciplinary matter.

A Written Decision shall ordinarily be issued whenever the Disciplinary Panel or Board imposes:

- a Written Warning;
- a Mandatory Educational Meeting;
- Disciplinary Probation;
- a Supplemental Suspension;
- a Term Suspension;
- an Indefinite Suspension;
- a Permanent Suspension; or
- any other corrective action the Disciplinary Panel or Board determines should be formally documented.

Educational Conversations may be documented through an email, memorandum, or other informal written communication when the Disciplinary Panel determines that documentation would assist future league administration or help clarify participant expectations.

Where applicable, written decisions imposing discipline shall advise the participant of any appeal rights available under the governing rules of the Amateur Athletic Union (AAU), including the procedure for contacting the applicable AAU reviewing authority as defined in section 8.11.

12.3 Contents of Written Decisions

A Written Decision should ordinarily include, as applicable:

- a brief summary of the conduct giving rise to the disciplinary matter;
- the findings of the Disciplinary Panel or Board;

- the corrective action imposed;
- the effective date of the corrective action;
- the duration of any suspension or probation;
- any applicable conditions or participant responsibilities;
- the participant's eligibility to apply for reinstatement, when applicable;
- any additional information the Disciplinary Panel or Board reasonably believes necessary to communicate its decision.

Written Decisions are intended to summarize the basis for the disciplinary decision. They are not intended to reproduce every witness statement, piece of evidence, or deliberation considered during the disciplinary process.

12.4 Incident Reports

The Disciplinary Panel may prepare an Incident Report summarizing the findings of a disciplinary investigation when it determines that doing so would promote transparency, educate league participants, encourage consistent application of league policies, or otherwise serve the best interests of the FAHL.

Incident Reports are educational and administrative communications intended to help participants better understand league expectations and the consistent application of this Handbook.

Incident Reports are summaries prepared for league purposes. They are not intended to be complete transcripts of investigations or hearings and should not be construed as complete statements of all evidence considered by the Disciplinary Panel or Board.

Incident Reports should ordinarily focus on the conduct, the applicable league standards, and the corrective action imposed rather than unnecessarily emphasizing the identity of the participant or including details that are not reasonably necessary to achieve the educational purpose of the report.

12.5 Publication of Incident Reports

The decision whether to publish an Incident Report shall be made by the Disciplinary Panel.

Publication of an Incident Report is discretionary. The Disciplinary Panel may determine that publication is appropriate, inappropriate, or should be delayed based upon the circumstances of the matter.

In determining whether to publish an Incident Report, the Disciplinary Panel may consider factors including:

- the educational value of publication;
- the need to promote transparency or consistency;
- participant privacy;
- ongoing investigations;
- participant safety;
- the interests of the league; and
- any other factors the Disciplinary Panel reasonably believes relevant.

Nothing in this Handbook requires every disciplinary matter to result in a published Incident Report.

12.6 Redactions and Confidential Information

The FAHL may redact or omit information from Written Decisions or Incident Reports whenever it reasonably determines that doing so is appropriate.

Examples include:

- personal identifying information;
- medical information;
- witness identities;
- information protected by law or governing authority;
- confidential investigative information; or
- other information that the Disciplinary Panel or Board determines should remain confidential.

The level of detail included in a published Incident Report shall be determined by the Disciplinary Panel.

12.7 Official League Records

Written Decisions, investigative materials, hearing records, correspondence, and other disciplinary records maintained by the FAHL constitute the official administrative record of the disciplinary matter.

Incident Reports are summaries prepared for league participants and are not the official disciplinary record.

The official disciplinary record may contain information not included in a Written Decision or Incident Report.

The Board shall establish administrative policies governing the retention, storage, and disposal of disciplinary records and other records maintained under this Handbook.

12.8 Corrections

The Commissioner may authorize corrections to Written Decisions or Incident Reports to correct clerical errors, typographical errors, incorrect dates, incorrect rule citations, or other non-substantive inaccuracies.

Corrections made under this section do not constitute reconsideration or modification of the underlying disciplinary decision unless expressly stated by the Disciplinary Panel or Board.

If a material factual error affecting the substance of the disciplinary decision is discovered, the matter shall be referred to the Disciplinary Panel or Board for further consideration in accordance with this Handbook.

Appendix A - Recommended Corrective Action Guidelines

A.1 Purpose

The purpose of this Appendix is to provide practical guidance to the Board and Disciplinary Panels when determining appropriate corrective actions for common categories of misconduct.

This Appendix supplements, and should be read together with, Sections 9 and 10 of this Handbook. It is intended to promote consistency, transparency, and fairness while preserving the discretion granted elsewhere in this Handbook.

Because no two disciplinary matters are identical, the examples, aggravating factors, mitigating factors, and recommended corrective actions contained in this Appendix are advisory rather than mandatory. The Board and Disciplinary Panel may depart from these recommendations whenever the specific facts and circumstances of a matter reasonably warrant a different outcome consistent with the Guiding Principles of this Handbook.

A.2 How to Use These Guidelines

The categories contained in this Appendix are organized according to the nature of the participant's conduct rather than by specific playing rule violations. A single incident may involve multiple categories of misconduct, and the Board or Disciplinary Panel should consider the totality of the participant's conduct rather than evaluating each action in isolation.

When applying these guidelines, the Board and Disciplinary Panel should ordinarily consider:

- the seriousness of the conduct;
- the actual or potential risk of injury;
- whether the conduct was intentional, reckless, retaliatory, or accidental;
- whether the conduct escalated an otherwise manageable situation;
- the participant's disciplinary history;
- the effectiveness of previous corrective actions;
- aggravating and mitigating circumstances;
- the likelihood of future misconduct; and

- the corrective action most likely to protect participant safety, preserve sportsmanship, support League Personnel, and maintain the recreational culture of the FAHL.

A.3 Relationship to the Playing Rules

The playing rules establish penalties that may be assessed during a game by on-ice officials. This Appendix serves a different purpose.

The Board and Disciplinary Panel evaluate whether supplemental discipline is appropriate after considering the totality of the circumstances, including conduct that may not have resulted in an on-ice penalty or conduct that extends beyond the playing rules.

Conversely, not every major penalty, game misconduct, or match penalty will necessarily result in supplemental discipline. The purpose of supplemental discipline is to determine the corrective action, if any, that is reasonably necessary to protect participant safety, preserve sportsmanship, maintain confidence in league administration, and uphold the Guiding Principles of this Handbook.

A.4 Recommended Corrective Actions

Each category of misconduct contained in this Appendix generally includes five components:

Purpose

A brief explanation of why the conduct is significant and how it affects participant safety, sportsmanship, league operations, or the recreational culture of the FAHL.

Representative Examples

Illustrative examples of conduct commonly falling within the category. These examples are not exhaustive and do not limit the authority of the Board or Disciplinary Panel to address substantially similar conduct.

Additional Considerations

When evaluating this category of misconduct, the Board and Disciplinary Panel should also consider the aggravating and mitigating factors identified in Section 10 of this Handbook, together with the circumstances described below.

Ordinarily Appropriate Corrective Actions

General guidance regarding the types of corrective actions that should ordinarily be considered. These recommendations are intended to promote consistency and should not be interpreted as mandatory disciplinary requirements.

Commentary

Commentary provides additional guidance regarding the purpose, philosophy, or practical application of a particular category of misconduct. Commentary is intended to assist future Boards and Disciplinary Panels in applying these guidelines consistently by explaining the considerations that commonly influence disciplinary decisions.

Commentary does not establish additional rules or independent grounds for discipline. Rather, it explains the reasoning behind the guidelines, identifies recurring themes observed in league administration, and provides context that may assist the Board or Disciplinary Panel when evaluating circumstances that are not expressly addressed elsewhere in this Appendix.

Because every disciplinary matter presents unique facts and circumstances, Commentary should be considered together with the Guiding Principles of this Handbook and should not be interpreted as limiting the discretion of the Board or Disciplinary Panel.

A.5 General Philosophy

The FAHL is an adult recreational hockey league whose primary objectives are participant safety, sportsmanship, fairness, and enjoyment of the game. Accordingly, the Board and Disciplinary Panel should ordinarily place greater weight on conduct that:

- creates an unreasonable risk of injury;
- intentionally or recklessly escalates conflict;
- demonstrates a pattern of repeated misconduct;

- targets League Personnel because they performed Protected League Functions;
- undermines the integrity of league operations or disciplinary proceedings; or
- demonstrates an unwillingness or inability to safely and respectfully participate in the recreational environment of the FAHL.

The Board and Disciplinary Panel should ordinarily view a participant's willingness to disengage from conflict as an important indicator of future risk. Conversely, conduct that continues, renews, or escalates a confrontation after opportunities to disengage may warrant more significant corrective action because it substantially increases the likelihood of injury and undermines the recreational culture the FAHL seeks to promote.

Nothing in this Appendix limits the authority of the Board or Disciplinary Panel to evaluate unique circumstances or impose corrective actions authorized elsewhere in this Handbook when necessary to uphold its Guiding Principles.

A.6 Categories of Misconduct

A.6.1 Purpose

Participant safety is the FAHL's highest disciplinary priority. Conduct that intentionally or recklessly creates a risk of injury, particularly conduct that exceeds the normal expectations of recreational hockey, will ordinarily warrant significant corrective action.

Because the FAHL is a non-checking recreational league, participants are expected to exercise restraint and avoid unnecessary physical contact. Conduct that intentionally increases the risk of injury, retaliates against another participant, or escalates an otherwise manageable situation should ordinarily be viewed more seriously than conduct occurring during the normal course of play.

The categories in this section are intended to assist the Board and Disciplinary Panel in evaluating common forms of player safety misconduct. They are not exhaustive and should be applied together with the Guiding Principles of this Handbook.

A.6.2 Dangerous Stick Infractions

Purpose

Participants are expected to maintain control of their sticks at all times. The intentional or reckless misuse of a stick presents one of the greatest risks of serious injury in hockey and will ordinarily warrant significant corrective action.

Representative Examples

Examples include, but are not limited to:

- swinging or attempting to swing a stick at another participant;
- retaliatory slashing;
- aggressive or excessive slashing intended to intimidate or injure;
- intentional or reckless contact to the head or neck with a stick;
- intentional contact to the groin with a stick;
- spearing;
- butt-ending;
- throwing a stick at or toward another participant; and
- other reckless or intentional stick use creating an unreasonable risk of injury.

Ordinarily Appropriate Corrective Actions

Dangerous stick infractions will ordinarily result in a Supplemental Suspension.

Where the conduct demonstrates an intent to injure, creates a substantial risk of serious injury, results in significant injury, or reflects an extreme disregard for participant safety, the Board should ordinarily consider whether a Term Suspension or other significant corrective action is appropriate.

Repeated dangerous stick infractions should ordinarily result in progressively more significant corrective action in accordance with Section 9 of this Handbook.

Additional Considerations

In addition to the aggravating and mitigating factors identified in Section 10 of this Handbook, the Board and Disciplinary Panel should consider:

- whether the stick was used as a weapon rather than during a hockey play;
- whether the contact involved the head or neck;
- whether the participant attempted multiple swings;
- whether the conduct occurred in retaliation.

Commentary

The Disciplinary Panel should distinguish between accidental stick contact occurring during a legitimate hockey play and a participant who intentionally or recklessly uses a stick as a weapon. While every case must be evaluated on its own facts, retaliatory or deliberate stick use ordinarily presents substantially greater concerns than inadvertent contact.

A.6.3 Illegal Body Contact

Purpose

The FAHL is a non-checking recreational league. Participants are expected to compete for the puck without intentionally delivering body checks or using excessive force against opposing participants.

Intentional body contact that exceeds what is reasonably necessary to play the game safely undermines the recreational nature of the league and creates an increased risk of injury.

Representative Examples

Examples include, but are not limited to:

- intentional body checking;
- charging;
- boarding;
- checking from behind;
- cross-checking delivered with excessive force;
- avoidable late hits;
- pursuing another participant for the purpose of initiating unnecessary physical contact;
- repeated or excessive shoving before, during, or after play, including after the whistle;
- intentionally using physical contact to intimidate, antagonize, retaliate against, or target another participant; and
- other intentional or reckless body contact creating an unreasonable risk of injury.

Ordinarily Appropriate Corrective Actions

Illegal body contact that intentionally or recklessly endangers another participant will ordinarily result in a Supplemental Suspension.

Particularly dangerous body contact, repeated violations, conduct resulting in significant injury, or conduct demonstrating a disregard for participant safety may warrant Board consideration of a Term Suspension or other significant corrective action.

Additional Considerations

In addition to the aggravating and mitigating factors identified in Section 10 of this Handbook, the Board and Disciplinary Panel should consider:

- multiple strides prior to contact;
- vulnerable position of the opposing participant;
- whether the participant had an opportunity to avoid the contact;
- whether the contact was delivered solely to intimidate.

Commentary

Because the FAHL prohibits intentional body checking, conduct that might be viewed as routine in a checking league may warrant substantially greater corrective action in the FAHL. The Disciplinary Panel should consider not only the force of the contact, but also whether the participant had a reasonable opportunity to avoid or reduce the contact.

Repeated unnecessary physical contact directed toward a particular participant may demonstrate harassment, retaliation, targeting, or a pattern of misconduct rather than isolated illegal body contact. In such cases, the Disciplinary Panel should evaluate the participant's overall conduct rather than the physical contact alone.

A.6.4 Head Contact

Purpose

Contact involving a participant's head or neck presents a heightened risk of serious injury, including concussion and other traumatic injuries. Participants are expected

to avoid unnecessary or reckless contact involving the head regardless of whether the contact occurs with a stick, body, arm, hand, elbow, or other object.

Because of the increased potential for serious injury, intentional or reckless head contact should ordinarily be viewed as a significant aggravating factor when determining corrective action.

Representative Examples

Examples include, but are not limited to:

- intentional or reckless contact to the head with a stick;
- punching or striking another participant in the head;
- elbowing or forearm contact to the head;
- shoulder or body contact directed primarily at the head;
- checking or charging resulting in significant head contact;
- unnecessary contact with the head after play has stopped;
- grabbing, pulling, or twisting an opponent's facemask or cage in a manner creating an unreasonable risk of head or neck injury; and
- other intentional or reckless conduct creating an unreasonable risk of head injury.

Ordinarily Appropriate Corrective Actions

Head contact resulting from intentional or reckless conduct will ordinarily result in a Supplemental Suspension.

Conduct resulting in significant injury, demonstrating an intent to injure, or reflecting an extreme disregard for participant safety may warrant Board consideration of a Term Suspension or other significant corrective action.

Additional Considerations

In addition to the aggravating and mitigating factors identified in Section 10 of this Handbook, the Board and Disciplinary Panel should consider:

- deliberate targeting of the head or neck;
- significant injury or concussion;
- repeated head contact violations.

Commentary

Head contact presents risks that often extend beyond the immediate incident. The Disciplinary Panel should consider both the nature of the contact and the foreseeable risk of serious injury, even when no significant injury ultimately occurs.

A.6.5 Violent or Aggressive Conduct

Purpose

The FAHL expects participants to maintain self-control throughout league activities. Conduct that intentionally uses violence, threats of violence, or aggressive acts outside the normal play of hockey presents an unacceptable risk to participant safety and undermines the recreational environment of the league.

Representative Examples

Examples include, but are not limited to:

- kicking or attempting to kick another participant with a skate blade;
- spitting at or toward another participant;
- ripping or forcibly removing another participant's helmet;
- throwing a stick or other equipment at or toward another participant;
- punching, striking, or attempting to strike another participant outside the normal course of play;
- deliberately using a stick or other equipment as a weapon;
- physical attacks occurring after play has stopped; and
- other violent or aggressive conduct creating an unreasonable risk of injury.

Ordinarily Appropriate Corrective Actions

Violent or aggressive conduct will ordinarily result in a Supplemental Suspension. Conduct demonstrating an intent to injure, creating an extraordinary risk of serious injury, involving repeated violent behavior, or otherwise presenting a significant threat to participant safety should ordinarily be referred to the Board for consideration of a Term Suspension or other significant corrective action.

Additional Considerations

In addition to the aggravating and mitigating factors identified in Section 10 of this Handbook, the Board and Disciplinary Panel should consider:

- use of a skate blade or equipment as a weapon;
- vulnerable or defenseless participant;
- actual injury;

Commentary

Violent or aggressive conduct differs from unsafe hockey play because it reflects a participant's decision to intentionally escalate conflict beyond the ordinary physical nature of the game. When evaluating these incidents, the Disciplinary Panel should consider not only the act itself, but also whether the participant demonstrated a willingness to regain self-control once opportunities to disengage became available.

A.6.6 Failure to Disengage

Purpose

Participants are expected to take reasonable opportunities to disengage from conflict once play has stopped or once a confrontation has otherwise become controllable. Conduct that continues, renews, or escalates a confrontation after opportunities to disengage exist substantially increases the risk of injury and undermines the recreational culture of the FAHL.

Representative Examples

Examples include, but are not limited to:

- continuing an altercation after the whistle;
- intentionally joining an altercation that has already begun, including as a third participant;
- leaving the players' bench, penalty bench, or another area to participate in an altercation;
- pursuing another participant to continue a confrontation after play has stopped;
- continuing physical or verbal confrontations in the penalty box, locker room, hallway, parking area, or other league-controlled areas;
- continuing to engage after officials or other participants have separated those involved;

- encouraging, directing, or inciting others to participate in an altercation; and
- otherwise refusing reasonable opportunities to disengage from a confrontation.

Ordinarily Appropriate Corrective Actions

Failure to disengage will ordinarily result in a Supplemental Suspension.

Conduct involving multiple participants, extraordinary escalation, significant injury, repeated failures to disengage, or conduct demonstrating an unwillingness to regain self-control should ordinarily be referred to the Board for consideration of a Term Suspension or other significant corrective action.

Additional Considerations

In addition to the aggravating and mitigating factors identified in Section 10 of this Handbook, the Board and Disciplinary Panel should consider:

- whether the participant joined an existing altercation;
- whether officials had already intervened;
- whether the participant pursued another participant;
- whether the confrontation continued in another location.

Commentary

A participant's willingness to disengage from conflict is an important indicator of sportsmanship, self-control, and future risk. When a participant has a reasonable opportunity to allow a confrontation to end but instead chooses to continue or escalate the situation, the likelihood of additional misconduct or injury may increase significantly.

When evaluating these incidents, the Disciplinary Panel should consider whether the participant made reasonable efforts to restore control of the situation or instead took affirmative actions that prolonged, renewed, or intensified the confrontation. This consideration should be evaluated together with the participant's overall conduct, disciplinary history, and all other relevant facts and circumstances.

A.6.7 Abuse of Officials and League Personnel

Purpose

League Personnel perform Protected League Functions essential to the safe, fair, and orderly operation of the FAHL. Participants are expected to treat League Personnel with respect, even when they disagree with officiating decisions, disciplinary actions, or other league decisions.

Conduct directed toward League Personnel because they performed Protected League Functions may undermine the league's ability to recruit and retain volunteers, interfere with league operations, discourage impartial decision-making, and erode confidence in league administration. Accordingly, such conduct may warrant enhanced corrective action.

Representative Examples

Examples include, but are not limited to:

- threatening, intimidating, or harassing a referee, scorekeeper, Board member, or other League Personnel;
- repeatedly directing abusive or demeaning language toward League Personnel;
- using slurs or other highly offensive language toward League Personnel;
- attempting to intimidate League Personnel into changing or avoiding official decisions;
- attempting to improperly influence officiating or disciplinary decisions through pressure, harassment, or abuse;
- retaliating against League Personnel because they performed a Protected League Function;
- engaging in public or private smear campaigns, knowingly false accusations, or coordinated efforts intended to discredit League Personnel because of official league actions;
- encouraging or inciting others to harass, intimidate, or retaliate against League Personnel; and
- other conduct that materially interferes with League Personnel in the performance of their official responsibilities.

Ordinarily Appropriate Corrective Actions

Abuse directed toward League Personnel should ordinarily result in corrective action beyond an Educational Conversation when the conduct is intentional, repeated, retaliatory, or materially interferes with the performance of Protected League Functions.

More significant corrective action should ordinarily be considered when the conduct includes threats, intimidation, retaliation, repeated misconduct, coordinated harassment, attempts to improperly influence official decisions, or demonstrates an unwillingness to respect the authority necessary for the orderly administration of the league.

Additional Considerations

In addition to the aggravating and mitigating factors identified in Section 10 of this Handbook, the Board and Disciplinary Panel should consider:

- whether the conduct arose because the individual was performing a Protected League Function;
- whether the conduct was intended to influence, intimidate, or retaliate against League Personnel;
- whether the conduct was isolated or part of a continuing pattern;
- whether multiple League Personnel were targeted;
- whether the conduct interfered with league operations or discouraged volunteers from performing their duties; and
- whether the participant continued the conduct after being warned or given opportunities to stop.

Commentary

The FAHL depends upon volunteers and other League Personnel who are willing to make difficult decisions, enforce rules, and administer the league fairly. Participants remain free to respectfully question decisions, express disagreement, and utilize established league procedures to seek review of league actions.

The distinction is not whether a participant criticizes a decision, but whether the participant's conduct becomes abusive, retaliatory, intimidating, or otherwise directed at League Personnel because they fulfilled their official responsibilities. Protecting individuals who perform Protected League Functions helps preserve impartial decision-making, encourages volunteer participation, and supports the long-term stability of the league.

A.6.8 Integrity of League Processes

Purpose

The FAHL depends upon participants acting honestly and in good faith when interacting with League Personnel and participating in league administrative processes. Conduct intended to interfere with investigations, disciplinary proceedings, league administration, or other official league processes undermines confidence in the fairness and integrity of the league and may warrant significant corrective action.

Representative Examples

Examples include, but are not limited to:

- knowingly making false or materially misleading statements during an investigation or hearing;
- knowingly submitting false, frivolous, or bad-faith complaints;
- intentionally withholding material information during an investigation;
- destroying, altering, concealing, or attempting to conceal relevant evidence;
- intimidating, threatening, coercing, or retaliating against witnesses or participants because of their involvement in a league matter;
- encouraging another person to provide false or misleading information;
- attempting to improperly influence or interfere with an investigation or disciplinary proceeding;
- attempting to manipulate, evade, delay, or otherwise frustrate the intended effect of a corrective action or suspension;
- abusing league procedures for purposes of harassment, retaliation, or personal advantage; and
- other conduct that materially interferes with the fair administration of league processes.

Ordinarily Appropriate Corrective Actions

Conduct undermining the integrity of league processes should ordinarily result in corrective action beyond an Educational Conversation because it interferes with the FAHL's ability to administer league business fairly and consistently.

More significant corrective action should ordinarily be considered when the conduct is intentional, repeated, involves multiple participants, materially affects the outcome of a league proceeding, or demonstrates a continuing unwillingness to cooperate honestly with league administration.

Additional Considerations

In addition to the aggravating and mitigating factors identified in Section 10 of this Handbook, the Board and Disciplinary Panel should consider:

- whether the conduct was deliberate or inadvertent;
- whether the conduct materially affected, or was reasonably capable of affecting, the outcome of a league matter;
- whether the participant attempted to correct or withdraw the misconduct;
- whether the conduct formed part of a broader pattern of dishonesty or interference with league administration; and
- whether the conduct demonstrates an increased likelihood of future non-compliance with league processes.

Commentary

League disciplinary proceedings rely upon participants providing honest information and cooperating in good faith. The Board and Disciplinary Panel need not establish that misconduct successfully altered the outcome of a proceeding before taking corrective action. Conduct that is reasonably intended to interfere with the fair administration of league processes may itself undermine participant confidence and the orderly operation of the FAHL.

At the same time, this section is not intended to discourage participants from reporting concerns, disagreeing with league decisions, or presenting differing accounts of disputed events. Participants remain free to honestly describe their understanding of events, even when the Board or Disciplinary Panel ultimately reaches a different conclusion. Corrective action under this section should ordinarily be reserved for conduct involving intentional dishonesty, bad faith, or material interference with league processes rather than good-faith disagreements regarding the facts.

A.6.9 Sportsmanship and Respect

Purpose

The FAHL exists to provide an organized, fun, competitive, and safe recreational hockey experience. Participants are expected to compete while demonstrating

respect for teammates, opponents, officials, League Personnel, spectators, and the game itself.

Conduct that unnecessarily creates hostility, targets other participants, or undermines the recreational culture of the league may warrant corrective action even when it does not involve significant physical contact.

Representative Examples

Examples include, but are not limited to:

- harassment, bullying, or repeated unwanted conduct directed toward another participant;
- taunting, baiting, or intentionally antagonizing another participant beyond the normal competitive nature of the game;
- inciting or encouraging others to engage in misconduct or retaliatory behavior;
- repeated or excessive verbal abuse directed toward another participant;
- hateful, discriminatory, or degrading language directed toward any participant or other person;
- personal attacks, threats, or communications intended primarily to demean, embarrass, or intimidate another person;
- public or private communications intended to unfairly damage another participant's reputation through knowingly false or misleading statements;
- refusing to comply with customary acts of sportsmanship when done as retaliation or as part of a broader pattern of misconduct;
- repeated unsportsmanlike conduct demonstrating a disregard for the recreational culture of the league; and
- other conduct materially inconsistent with the standards of sportsmanship and respect established by this Handbook.

Ordinarily Appropriate Corrective Actions

Sportsmanship violations should ordinarily result in corrective actions proportionate to the seriousness, frequency, and overall impact of the conduct.

Repeated harassment, discriminatory conduct, retaliation, or conduct demonstrating an unwillingness to treat others with basic respect should ordinarily result in progressively more significant corrective actions and may warrant Board review when appropriate.

Additional Considerations

In addition to the aggravating and mitigating factors identified in Section 10 of this Handbook, the Board and Disciplinary Panel should consider:

- whether the conduct formed part of a continuing pattern;
- whether a particular participant was repeatedly targeted;
- whether the conduct was intended to provoke retaliation or create hostility;
- whether the participant continued the conduct after being asked to stop; and
- whether the conduct materially affected the enjoyment, safety, or participation of others.

Commentary

Competitive hockey naturally involves emotion, disagreement, and spirited interaction between participants. This section is not intended to discourage respectful disagreement, ordinary competitive communication, or isolated emotional reactions.

Rather, the purpose of this section is to address conduct that crosses the line from healthy competition into harassment, intimidation, retaliation, discrimination, or repeated disrespect that undermines the recreational environment the FAHL seeks to provide.

A.6.10 Other Conduct Detrimental to the League

Purpose

No disciplinary Handbook can reasonably anticipate every form of misconduct that may arise. This section provides guidance for addressing conduct that is materially inconsistent with the Guiding Principles of this Handbook but is not specifically identified elsewhere in this Appendix.

Representative Examples

Examples include, but are not limited to:

- conduct materially interfering with league operations;
- repeated disregard for league policies or administrative requirements;

- misuse of league resources or authority;
- conduct that significantly damages the reputation or integrity of the FAHL;
- repeated behavior demonstrating an unwillingness to comply with reasonable league expectations; and
- other conduct that the Board or Disciplinary Panel reasonably determines is detrimental to the safety, sportsmanship, fairness, or orderly administration of the league.

Ordinarily Appropriate Corrective Actions

Corrective actions should be selected based upon the nature of the conduct, the participant's disciplinary history, the likelihood of future misconduct, and the extent to which the conduct is inconsistent with the Guiding Principles of this Handbook.

Because this category is intended to address unusual or unforeseen circumstances, the Board and Disciplinary Panel should exercise particular care to ensure that corrective actions remain consistent with the philosophy, standards, and procedural protections established elsewhere in this Handbook.

Additional Considerations

In addition to the aggravating and mitigating factors identified in Section 10 of this Handbook, the Board and Disciplinary Panel should consider:

- whether the conduct is substantially similar to another category of misconduct described in this Appendix;
- whether the conduct demonstrates a broader pattern of behavior;
- whether existing categories adequately address the conduct; and
- whether applying this section is necessary to uphold the Guiding Principles of this Handbook without creating inconsistent disciplinary outcomes.

Commentary

This section is intended to preserve the flexibility necessary to administer the league fairly as new situations arise. It should not be used to avoid applying more specific categories of misconduct when those categories reasonably describe the participant's conduct.

Whenever practical, the Board and Disciplinary Panel should first consider whether the conduct falls within one or more of the categories identified elsewhere in this

Appendix. This section should ordinarily be reserved for situations involving genuinely novel circumstances or misconduct that materially undermines the league but is not otherwise addressed by these guidelines.

A.7 Relationship Between Categories

Participant misconduct frequently involves more than one category described in this Appendix. A single incident may include conduct affecting player safety, failure to disengage, abuse of League Personnel, sportsmanship violations, interference with league processes, or other forms of misconduct occurring before, during, or after the same event.

The categories contained in this Appendix are intended to assist the Board and Disciplinary Panel in identifying and evaluating the nature of a participant's conduct. They are not intended to require separate corrective actions for each applicable category or to create a formula for determining discipline.

When multiple categories apply, the Board and Disciplinary Panel should evaluate the participant's conduct as a whole, including the sequence of events, the participant's intent, the actual or potential risk of injury, the participant's disciplinary history, and the likelihood of future misconduct. Corrective actions should address the participant's overall conduct and the purposes of discipline identified elsewhere in this Handbook rather than mechanically increasing discipline based solely upon the number of applicable categories.

Similarly, a participant's conduct may reasonably fall within more than one category even though the conduct consists of a single act. Identifying multiple applicable categories does not constitute multiple disciplinary violations, but instead reflects the different considerations the Board and Disciplinary Panel should evaluate when determining an appropriate corrective action.

The Board and Disciplinary Panel should also recognize that misconduct often develops over time rather than through a single isolated act. A participant's actions before, during, and after an incident may all be relevant in determining whether the participant demonstrated self-control, accepted opportunities to disengage, cooperated with league processes, and remains capable of participating safely and respectfully within the recreational environment of the FAHL.

Nothing in this Appendix limits the authority of the Board or Disciplinary Panel to consider the totality of the circumstances or to exercise the discretion granted elsewhere in this Handbook.

The purpose of these guidelines is not to eliminate discretion, but to promote the consistent exercise of discretion through the application of common principles, sound judgment, and the Guiding Principles of this Handbook.