



## CONFLICT OF INTEREST

North Delta Minor Hockey Association must meet high ethical standards in order to merit the trust of its membership, neighbouring Associations, PCAHA, BC Hockey, Hockey Canada, its sponsors and vendors.

The integrity of NDMHA depends on ethical behaviour throughout the organization, and fair, well-informed decision-making. The ability to make decisions is sometimes affected by other interests (personal or professional) of individuals in the Association. Such conflict of interest situations are a regular part of organizational and personal life and cannot simply be eliminated. The objective of this policy is to permit NDMHA to manage conflict of interest situations successfully and to resolve them fairly.

This policy applies to all members of the Board, membership at large including players, and those in contract positions. A conflict of interest is a situation in which a person has a private or personal interest sufficient enough to appear to influence the objective exercise of his or her volunteer or contract duties with the Association.

**Members of the Board, team officials and all volunteers are responsible for managing conflict of interest situations in order to ensure that behaviour and decision-making throughout the Association are not influenced by conflicting interests.**

**“Private or personal interest”** refers to an individual’s self-interest (i.e. to achieve financial profit or avoid loss, or to gain another special advantage or avoid a disadvantage); the interests of the individual’s family or close friends.

**“Objective exercise of duties”** refers to an individual’s ability to carry out her or his responsibilities in the best interest of the Association.

### **Types of Conflict:**

A Board member, Coach, Manager, or any other volunteer of the Association may be in a conflict of interest situation that is:

1. Actual or real, where their official duties are or will be influenced by their private interests.
2. Perceived or apparent, where their official duties appear to be influenced by their private interests.
3. Foreseeable or potential, where their official duties may be influenced in the future by their private interests.



### **Examples:**

Self-interested funding, contracting or hiring when a person uses a position in NDMHA to influence a decision.

Improper influence: when a person solicits or accepts some form of benefit in return for influencing hockey activities or promoting someone else's interests in the Association.

Inappropriate outside activity: when a person's activities outside the Association are in conflict with the interests of NDMHA.

Accepting undue benefits, such as gifts or favors which place a person under obligation to the donor (Member, Association, Sponsor, or Coach).

### **Prevention**

NDMHA is a supported organizational culture in which people freely take responsibility for both "self-declaring" possible conflicts of interest, and respectfully raising possible conflicts faced by others in the Association. This culture makes it possible to avoid any such situations from arising in the first place. The Board has the responsibility to implement appropriate practical preventive measures, such as clearly defining policy and procedures as well as providing education to the membership on what is considered questionable vs outright not appropriate.

- Even though it is extremely difficult to obtain Coaches, Managers and other team roles there is a perception to be in conflict if the team officials are spouses or immediate relatives. This is specific to Head Coaches, Managers and Treasurers.
- Members of the Board are inclusive of the above notation of perceived influence if their spouse or immediate relative holds a position that is in a direct reporting relationship. Eg. Divisional Manager and a Rep C Coach or Manager.
- It is recognized that volunteerism is necessary to make the association run smoothly and experience is helpful for team official positions but Executive Board members should minimize their roles on their players teams to non official positions. All Executive Board members with intentions of taking on a team role responsibility will be required to be voted on as per **Bylaw 5.5 (i)**. Appointed Board members should notify the Board of intentions and provide an opportunity for discussion regarding any possible conflict.
- Positions of the Executive who are required to participate in discipline activities or mitigate conflicts in their regular duties should not be considered for a Committee that addresses complaints or incidents. These positions include President, VP1, VP2, Risk Manager and all Divisional Managers.



## **Managing**

Where prevention is not the solution, conflict of interest situations must be managed. Here are the steps to be taken by those involved in such situations, working together and supporting one another's ethical responsibilities:

1. **Declare it.** Ensure transparency by self-declaration, and by making sure that a record of the declaration is made.
2. **Discuss it.** In a doubtful situation, take a moment for a quick word with the chair of your meeting or committee. If in a team setting ask for a moment with the manager or coach. Undertake a full dialogue with the group or team, if the situation warrants it.
3. **Deal with it.** Measures to mitigate or eliminate a conflict of interest will depend on what is appropriate to the severity of the situation. If necessary elevate the situation to the appropriate level.

Options include:

- a. **Restrict the involvement of the individual or both parties.**
- b. **Recruit a third party to assist.**
- c. **Remove the individual from affected duties.**
- d. **Relinquish the private interest.**
- e. **Resign from the duties.**
- f. **Document what has been done.**

## **Policy Application:**

This policy must be explained to all new Board members, new Coaches, team officials, and those on contract. At that time of explanation, there must be agreement and acceptance to abide by this policy and the Association's Code of Conduct. If necessary, disclosure of possible conflict situations are to be to the President or Risk Manager in confidence. Conflict situations will be brought to the appropriate third person on the Executive for discussion of options and notation.

The President or Risk Manager will indicate to each individual whether any further action is necessary to manage the possible conflicts of interest disclosed. Actions might include the following, depending on the severity of the conflict:

- a. Declaring the conflict to all concerned before discussion or decision-making;
- b. Withdrawing from parts of activities;
- c. Withdrawing from all aspects of activities or role.

The Board is the final authority on resolving disputes of this nature, for example when an individual does not agree with the perception that he or she is a conflict of interest.

The Risk Manager is the authority in dealing with real conflicts of interest which are discovered "after the fact". Not disclosed in the first instance. **Refer to Policy D03.**



For the purposes of this policy, the President is the appropriate authority in all matters relating to the affairs of the Board Members in conjunction with the Risk Manager; also to any issues specifically involving the Risk Manager's own affairs, this will be in conjunction with either VP. Any issues involving the President's own affairs will be dealt with by the Risk Manager in conjunction with either VP of the board. If any of the conflicts warrant action regarding a Board member, a third Executive member is to be sought to review and assist bringing to the Board for discussion and next steps.