



**WEST HAMILTON
YOUTH
SOCCER
CLUB
CLUB POLICIES**

HARASSMENT POLICY Reviewed January 2002

EQUAL PLAYING TIME POLICY Passed March 2002

**City of Hamilton ZERO TOLERANCE Reviewed February 2002
POLICY FOR VIOLENCE IN RECREATIONAL PROPERTIES AND FACILITIES**

WEST HAMILTON YOUTH SOCCER CLUB (WHYSC) WHYSC HARASSMENT POLICY

1. STATEMENT OF POLICY

1.1 There will be no tolerance of harassment in WHYSC.

1.2 WHYSC is committed to providing a sport environment in which all individuals are treated with respect and dignity. Each individual has the right to participate in an environment which promotes equal opportunities and prohibits discriminatory practices.

1.3 WHYSC is committed to the education of all of its members in the area of harassment.

1.4 This policy applies to all players, as well as to all executive members, coaches, officials, volunteers and spectators. WHYSC encourages the prompt reporting of all incidents of harassment, regardless of who the offender may be.

1.5 For the purposes of this policy, harassment can occur in the following places:

- at soccer matches, tournaments, and in training sessions;
- at WHYSC business functions, such as meetings, conferences, training sessions, and workshops
- during WHYSC-related travel;
- over the telephone; or
- elsewhere if the person harassed is there as a result of WHYSC-related responsibilities

1.6 Notwithstanding this policy, every person who experiences harassment continues to have the right to seek assistance from the Ontario Council of Human Rights, even when steps are being taken under this policy.

1.7 An investigation under this policy shall follow the process of natural justice, as described in this policy.

2. DEFINITIONS

2.1 HARASSMENT:

Behaviour including comments, conduct or gestures which is insulting, intimidating, humiliating, hurtful, malicious, degrading, or otherwise offensive to an individual or group of individuals or which creates an uncomfortable environment, or which might reasonably be expected to cause embarrassment, insecurity, discomfort, offence, or humiliation to another person or group, including, but not limited to:

- written or verbal abuse or threats;
- physical assault;
- unwelcome remarks, jokes, innuendoes, or taunting about a person's body, sexual orientation, attire, age, ethnic or racial origin, religion, etc.;
- displaying of sexually explicit, racist or other offensive or derogatory material, sexual, racial, ethnic or religious graffiti;
- practical jokes which cause awkwardness or embarrassment, endangering a person's safety or negatively affecting performance;
- leering or other suggestive or obscene gestures;
- intimidation;
- condescension, paternalism, or patronizing behaviour which undermines self-respect or adversely affects performance or working conditions;
- conduct, comments, gestures or contact of a sexual nature that is likely to cause offence or humiliation or that might, on reasonable grounds, be perceived as placing a condition of a sexual nature on employment or any opportunity for selection, training or advancement;
- false accusations of harassment motivated by malice or mischief, and meant to cause other harm, is considered harassment;
- sexual harassment;
- acts of retaliation towards an individual making an harassment complaint as described herein.

2.2 ABUSE: Abuse can be physical, emotional or sexual.

- **Physical Abuse** – using physical force or actions that result, or could result in injury
- **Emotional Abuse** – a pattern of hurting an individual's feelings to the point of damaging their self-respect. It includes verbal attacks on the individual, insults, humiliation or rejection.
- **Sexual Abuse** – occurs when an individual is used without consent by someone for sexual stimulation or gratification.

2.3 **Sexual Harassment:** One of a series of incidents involving unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favours, or other verbal conduct of a sexual nature.

2.4 **Harassment Officer:** A member of the WHYSC Harassment Review Committee. This will usually include the President, Vice President and each of the age group conveners.

2.5 **Harassment Review Committee:** this committee will meet when required, to review any complaint of harassment and, if necessary, decide on any disciplinary action.

3. EDUCATION

3.1 WHYSC is committed to the prevention of harassment through the education of its members.

3.2 The policy described herein will be reviewed at all coaches' orientation sessions.

3.3 Key components of this policy will be posted at all WHYSC events.

4. RESPONSIBILITY

4.1 The WHYSC executive is responsible for the implementation of this policy.

4.2 The WHYSC will identify and designate Harassment Officers

4.3 The WHYSC will act quickly on any complaint of harassment with the goal of resolving the situation fairly and of preventing future occurrences, including determining and enforcing appropriate discipline, if required.

5. CONFIDENTIALITY

5.1 In all reported instances, a prompt, thorough, fair investigation will take place giving careful consideration to protect the rights and dignity of all people involved.

6. COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

6.1 A person who thinks he or she has been subjected to, or witnessed conduct which constitutes harassment under this policy (the "Complainant") is encouraged to make it known to the person responsible for the conduct (the "Respondent") that the behaviour is unwelcome, offensive and contrary to this policy.

6.2 If confronting the Respondent is not possible, or if after confronting the Respondent the conduct continues, the Complainant should seek the advice of a Harassment Officer.

6.3 Upon receiving the complaint, the Harassment Officer shall obtain from the Complainant and Respondent statements, outlining the details of the incident(s) and the names of any witnesses.

6.4 At the first meeting between a Harassment Officer and the Complainant, the Harassment Officer shall determine under which of the following categories the complaint falls:

- **Minor Complaint:** those which can be resolved at the time of the complaint, by the Harassment Officer, the Complainant, the Respondent and any other member of WHYSC involved in the incident. Resolution in this case implies that all those involved are satisfied with the outcome;
- **Serious Non-Urgent Complaint:** those that can not be resolved at the time of the complaint, but which do not require any immediate action;
- **Serious Urgent Complaint:** those that require immediate action, either to prevent ongoing harassment or due to perceived need for police involvement.

6.5 After making this decision, the following actions should be taken by the Harassment Officer:

- **Minor Complaint:** a brief report of the incident should be prepared by the Harassment Officer and filed with the Harassment Review Committee;

- **Serious Non-Urgent Complaint:** the Harassment Officer should obtain a written signed report of the incident from the Complainant, the Respondent and any witnesses. The matter will be reviewed at a meeting of the Harassment Review Committee, at which time, the Complainant and Respondent may make comments to the Committee. At this time the Harassment review Committee may make one of the following decisions outlined in section 6.7:
- **Serious Urgent Complaint:** in this case, the Harassment Officer should ensure that the police are called immediately. Depending on the outcome of the police action, it may be necessary for the Harassment Review Committee to meet to make further disciplinary decisions.

6.6 In all cases, it should be made clear to the Complainant that other avenues of recourse are available, including the right to file a complaint with the Ontario Council of Human Rights or, where appropriate, to contact the police where the conduct may be an offence pursuant to the Criminal Code.

6.7 The Harassment Review Committee may contact the police if they feel that the conduct of the Complainant or the Respondent may be an offence pursuant to the Criminal Code.

6.8 Following the meeting of the Harassment Review Committee, this Committee shall prepare an Investigation Report, which shall contain:

- a summary of the relevant facts;
- a determination as to whether the facts in question constitute harassment as defined in this policy;
- if the act(s) constitute harassment, a recommended disciplinary action against the Respondent.

6.9 When recommending disciplinary action to be taken, the Harassment Committee shall consider factors such as :

- the nature of the harassment;
- whether the harassment involved any physical contact;
- whether the harassment was an isolated incident or part of an ongoing pattern;
- the nature of the relationship between the Complainant and the Respondent;
- the relative age of the Complainant and/or Respondent;
- whether the Respondent had been involved in previous harassment incidents;
- whether the Respondent retaliated against the Complainant.

6.10 Recommended disciplinary actions may include one or more of:

- requirement for a written apology;
- temporary suspension from WHYSC duties or privileges;
- termination of WHYSC duties or privileges;
- expulsion from WHYSC membership.

APPEALS

6.11 An appeal may only be heard if there are sufficient grounds for the appeal. Sufficient grounds for appeal are restricted to the following:

- the WHYSC failing to follow procedures set out in the harassment policy;
- the Harassment Review Committee's decision was influenced by bias;
- the Harassment Review Committee's decision was based on a misunderstanding of the evidence;
- the Harassment Review Committee's decision was unreasonable based on the facts and circumstances.

6.12 A Complainant or Respondent who is dissatisfied with the decision of the Harassment Review Committee may initiate an appeal. He or she will serve the WHYSC Executive Council with a 'Notice of Appeal and Request for Hearing' not more than 30 days after the date he or she receives the Investigation Report.

6.13 The Notice of Appeal and Request for Hearing shall be in writing and shall set out the grounds for appeal, and facts in support of the grounds for appeal.

6.14 Upon receipt of a Notice of Appeal and Request for Hearing, the WHYSC shall appoint an Appeal Panel to hear the appeal.

- 6.15 Once an Appeal Panel has been appointed, the Appeal Panel shall consider the grounds for appeal and determine if there are sufficient grounds for the appeal.
- 6.16 If the Appeal Panel determines that there are not sufficient grounds for the appeal, the Appeal Panel will dismiss the appeal and notify WHYSC and the parties to the complaint, in writing, of its decision.
- 6.17 If the Appeal Panel determines that there are sufficient grounds for the appeal, and decide that the outcome of this process warrants a change in the decision, as outlined in the Investigation Report, and then this will be reflected in the Appeal Report.
- 6.18 The decision of the Appeal Panel will be final.

7. REVIEW AND APPROVAL

- 7.1 This policy was approved by WHYSC Executive Council on: February 26, 2002

Appendix I

Suggested Guidelines for the Prevention of Harassment – (SO)
Internal Education and Communication of Policy

1. Include information on abuse and harassment as part of orientation to new members and volunteers.
2. Include compliance with policy as part of membership eligibility.
3. Support and distribute information concerning educational workshops/seminars explaining the policy and process as part of annual meetings, volunteer training, athlete camps and/or where ever else deemed appropriate.
4. Actively participate in a recognized educational module on volunteer/staff screening.

WEST HAMILTON YOUTH SOCCER CLUB (WHYSC) WHYSC EQUAL PLAYING TIME POLICY

Overview: The WHYSC Executive approved the following statement during the 2001 soccer season: WHYSC is a house league club with a strong participation philosophy; therefore, our regulation states that **"all players dressed for a game, as much as possible, should get equal playing time"**.

What does this mean? Some have suggested that it is not possible to be absolutely equal, and this is especially true at the older age groups where we do not have strictly defined shifts. However, it is possible to try to be absolutely equal.

Equal means:

"equal within the practical constraints of getting players on and off the field at appropriate times".

Equal does not mean:

"equal unless I need to play my best players more in order to win the game".

"Equal but I only have one good centre forward, so he/she plays the whole game".

It is important that we adhere strictly to this for a number of reasons. The players who are not being played, so that the best players get more time, are being cheated out of time they have paid for, but more importantly we are trying to foster self confidence, and being told you are only good for half the playing time of a team-mate does nothing but damage confidence. We take great pains to balance our teams by giving more high-mid level players to the team that did not get the best player, but this only works if the team with the best player cannot play him/her for the entire game. If a coach cheats on a couple of shifts and plays their best player a bit more, other coaches notice and tend to respond in kind.

WHYSC Rules and Regulations govern Equal Playing Time:

Regulation 3.9 states: All players dressed for a game, as much as possible, should get equal playing time.

Regulation 12.4 also applies for the older age groups (U13, U14, U16, U18), where competition is engaged at Divisional play:

Regulation 12.5 Divisional teams will operate according to the principles of equal Playing time defined in Regulation 3.9.

Regulation 12.6 In the event that the numbers wishing to play for a Divisional team are greater that can be reasonably accommodated in a single team, a *rota* system will be operated. The *rota* system will be operated according to the principle of equal playing time.

Regulation 12.7 The principle of equal playing time may be relaxed for goalies, as in a competitive situation it may not be possible to change goalies during a game.

Regulation 16, Protests (Soccer Related) and Regulation 17, Discipline (Soccer Related) establish the procedures for dealing with issues concerning the application of this policy.

1. STATEMENT OF POLICY

- 1.1 Within each game, each player must have equal playing time, within the practical constraints of getting players on and off the field at appropriate times.
- 1.2 Each player shall be played equally regardless of ability.
- 1.3 WHYSC is committed to providing a sport environment in which all individuals are treated with respect and dignity. Each individual has the right to participate in an environment which promotes equal opportunities.

FORMAL COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

- 2.1 A person who thinks he or she has been subjected to, or witnessed conduct which constitutes a complaint under this policy (the "Complainant") is encouraged to approach an Officer of the Club (first preferable option, a Convener, second, other Club Officers such as the President, Vice-President, etc.) to take action concerning a person responsible for the conduct (the "Respondent").
- 2.2 Upon receiving the complaint, the Officer shall obtain from the Complainant and Respondent statements, outlining the details of the incident(s) and the names of any other informants.
- 2.3 At the first meeting between an Officer and the Complainant, the Officer shall either:
 - **Resolve the complaint at the time of the complaint**, by the action of the Officer, Complainant, the Respondent or any other "Officer" of WHYSC involved in the incident. Resolution in this case implies that all those involved are satisfied with the outcome. A brief report of the incident should be prepared by the Officer and filed with the Executive Committee.
 - **Determine that the complaint can not be resolved at the time of the complaint**, and should be submitted in writing to the Protest (Soccer Related) Committee and follow the procedure established in WHYSC Regulation 15.
- 2.4 Depending on the decision of the Committee, it may be necessary for a Discipline Committee to make disciplinary decisions as established in WHYSC Regulation 16.
- 2.5 In all cases, it should be made clear to the Complainant that decisions of Club Committees are binding, but that other avenues of recourse are available, including the right to file an appeal with the Hamilton and District Soccer Association (H. & D.S.A.).
- 2.6 Discipline procedures shall conform to the Ontario Soccer Association guidelines on discipline. Refer to Administration Guide: section on Discipline.
- 2.7 Following the meeting of the Protest Committee, this Committee shall prepare a Report, which shall contain:
 - a summary of the relevant facts;
 - a determination as to whether the facts in question constitute a contravention of equal playing time, as defined in this policy;
 - if the act(s) constitute an offence, resulting in recommended disciplinary action against the Respondent.
- 2.8 Recommended disciplinary actions may include one or more of:
 - requirement for game monitoring;
 - requirement for an apology;
 - temporary suspension from WHYSC duties or privileges;
 - termination of WHYSC duties or privileges;
 - expulsion from WHYSC membership.

3. REVIEW AND APPROVAL

- 3.1 This policy was approved by WHYSC Executive Council on: March 25, 2002

City of Hamilton

ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY FOR VIOLENCE IN RECREATIONAL PROPERTIES AND FACILITIES:

Policy Statement:

The City of Hamilton's recreational properties and facilities, including but not limited to, arenas, recreation centres, outdoor pools and parks sports pitches, exist to provide residents with opportunities to participate in sport and other recreational activities in a safe and positive environment. Prominent among residents making use of the recreational properties and facilities are the children of Hamilton. The City will ensure the most supportive climate possible for Hamilton children, so that they can enjoy their sport, and learn about competition, teamwork, sportsmanship and fair play.

As with many Ontario communities, Hamilton's minor sport system is managed and operated by volunteers. These community-minded citizens contribute in many ways to the success of minor sport in Hamilton. It is the City's responsibility that they, too, have the ability to work in a safe and positive environment.

It is critical, then, for the City, through its Department of Culture and Recreation to do all things necessary to ensure that prevented measures are in place so that incidents of violent or inappropriate behaviour do not occur in its recreational properties and facilities.

Included in this commitment is an understanding that organizations using City recreational properties and facilities must take PRIMARY responsibility for the behaviour of all associated with them: players, officials and spectators.

Statements of Principle:

1. Participation by children in sport is an important element in the human development process.
2. To ensure maximum enjoyment and benefits from participation in sport, the maintenance of a safe and positive environment is essential.
3. The rules of each of the games exist to protect the players. Referees/officials are charged to ensure the fair and even application of the rules, and to ensure safety of the players.
4. The City must put measures in place to ensure the safety of referees/officials, as well as organizers of minor sport, who are for the most part volunteers.
5. Violent or abusive behaviours, such as verbal threats and insults, attempts to intimidate as well as physical assault have no place in the City's recreational properties and facilities.
6. Promotion of spectator "positive cheering" will assist in the reduction of violent behaviours in City recreational properties and facilities.
7. Our volunteers are charged with the education of our youth on the ideals of sportsmanship, fair play and appropriate behaviour.

Goals of the Policy:

1. To reduce or eliminate violence from City recreational properties and facilities, inclusive of outdoor sport pitches.
2. To promote positive cheering behaviours among spectators and fans.
3. To increase the level of understanding among spectators and fans of the importance of creating a positive and supportive environment for children's sport.

Definition of Violence:

The focus of this Policy is on the behaviour of non-players, except for those situations in which a player engages in a violent act outside the area of play. For the purposes of this Policy violence includes, but is not limited to, the following behaviours;



- loud verbal assaults
- threats and attempts to intimidate
- throwing of articles in a deliberate and aggressive manner
- aggressive approaches to another individual
- physical striking of another individual
- attempts to goad or incite violence in others
- vandalism to building or property
- racial or ethnic slurs
- illegal consumption of alcohol or drugs

The Consequences:

Individuals who engage in any of the above behaviours will be subject to immediate ejection from the property or facility and a mandatory suspension from all City recreational properties and facilities for a period of time not less than two months. Two months is a minimum period only, and may be extended by the City's Director of Culture and Recreation (the Director).

Those individuals, who are identified and suspended in accordance with this Policy, shall further be prohibited from holding any positions within the City's affiliated sport community for a period of two years. Incidents may be reported to the City of Hamilton Police Service. Criminal charges may follow.

There will be no reconsideration by the City with respect to the length of a suspension or prohibition. Where new information is available, a suspended individual may request reconsideration of the facts on which the suspension is based. Such request must be addressed to the Director, who will consider the new information and make his or her decision. ALL DECISIONS OF THE DIRECTOR ARE FINAL. Those individuals desiring reconsideration must include with their request, payment of a non-refundable (unsuccessful) administration fee in the amount of \$250.00. In the event that the applicant is successful we will refund the administration fee.

Where vandalism has been perpetrated, not only will the individuals responsible be subject to suspension as outlined above, but will be required to reimburse the City for the cost of repair, together with an additional administration charge of 100% of such cost.

Education:

The Department of Culture and Recreation, with its local sports partners, will undertake a promotional and educational campaign aimed at raising awareness among parents, volunteers and spectators of the Zero Tolerance Policy and, in particular, the importance of their role in creating a positive playing atmosphere.

This component will include posters to be hung in all recreational facilities and properties; circulation of the policy to all stakeholders as well as posting of the policy in all City recreational facilities and properties; and inclusion of reference to the policy in affiliate organization newsletters/handbooks.

It is anticipated that the education and promotional campaign will have an immediate impact, but will need to be an ongoing effort. Staff and volunteer organizations will work together continually to raise awareness of the policy.



Implementation:

The policy will take effect for the new City of Hamilton on September 1, 2001. Pending implementation, existing policies and practices of the old municipalities comprising the new city will remain in effect and will continue to be enforced.