



South Tahoe Amateur Hockey Association Dispute Resolution Policy

Most problems and disputes involving members of STAHA can be resolved in an amicable fashion. (***) Compromise is preferable to more severe forms of resolution. However, for severe or repeated matters that cannot be resolved without implementation of formal discipline, a formalized Dispute Resolution Process will be followed. This will involve a Dispute Resolution Panel (DRP) that is appointed by the STAHA Board. The DRP will investigate complaints and make recommendations for discipline to the STAHA Executive Board.

Upon report of an incident or violation, *which should be documented in an email or written letter to the Board*, the president of the STAHA Board will initiate the information gathering procedure to be conducted by the DRP. If initial assessment indicates imminent danger to people or the STAHA program, the president will issue notice of immediate suspension of the people involved in the incident until the review has been concluded. The subject(s) of the potential discipline will be provided with (1) written notice and (2) opportunity to be heard by the Review Panel. Review proceedings will be handled in as timely a manner as possible, with a goal of a two-week window from initiation of written complaint to conclusion of the Dispute Resolution Panel.

The following outlines the steps that STAHA and the Dispute Resolution Panel will take to ensure the actions taken by STAHA are appropriate.

1. **Dispute Resolution Panel** -The STAHA Board will have a Dispute Resolution Panel (DRP) in place to organize and run review proceedings if and when they are needed for disputes and severe repeated disciplinary issues. The DRP will be comprised of volunteers solicited from STAHA members in good standing. The DRP selected will be qualified to conduct the proceedings, and will be disinterested and unbiased. In the event that any member of the Panel has interest in the incident under review, this individual will be dismissed from such review. There will be an alternate to the Panel who will fill the vacancy of any dismissed person for the duration of the review of such a pertinent incident. The Panel will at all times be made up of an odd number of members, ensuring that a majority vote will

prevail at the end of Review Panel proceedings. Ideally this panel will have representation across all player levels. Members of the Executive STAHA Board will not serve on the Panel as they will be responsible for final determination.

2. **Gather Information** - The Panel will start its process by investigating and gathering facts. Required information to be documented includes: names of those involved, witnesses to the incident(s), dates and location at which it occurred, and any pertinent background history on the player, parent, volunteer, or spectator involved.
3. **Access to All Information** - All members of the Panel will have access to information about the incident in order to ensure a fair process and potential disciplinary recommendation. *Great care will be exercised to keep confidential all information that is collected and discussed.*
4. **Written Notice** - Written notification of Review proceedings will be provided to the individual(s) facing discipline. (*) Written response from the individual will be admitted for review, as part of the Panel's consideration. If requested, a meeting will be set for the individual to meet with the Panel, the individual will be given reasonable opportunity to address and explain the situation. (**)
5. **Dispute Resolution Panel Recommendation** - The Review Panel will be limited to gathering facts and making recommendations. The Panel will issue in writing their findings and recommendations to the Executive Board for resolution and/or discipline.
6. **The STAHA Executive Board will review recommendations put forth by the Dispute Resolution Panel** - The purpose of an independent panel is to get different perspectives to keep the program healthy, vital, and operating fairly. Having placed value in the Review Process by empowering a committee to research and investigate an issue at this level, the Executive Board will take very seriously the finding and recommendations of the DRP. The Executive Board may ~~choose to~~ modify the final decision, and, in such a case, will provide justification to both the Panel and those individuals involved in the incident.
7. **Final Decision Notification** - The STAHA President will issue written notice of the decision, including a description of the incident/violation and any sanctions that will be imposed. This will be done within 24 to 48 hours of the recommendation of the Review Panel.
8. **Right to Appeal** - The individual(s) will have the right to appeal. Should such appeal be warranted, a meeting will be established with the individual(s) and the STAHA Executive Board. (*, **) A decision will be overturned only if it can be shown that: 1) The Panel has

one or more interested parties; 2) There was a lack of notice, or procedure was not followed; or, 3) The sanctions are arbitrary or capricious. If the decision is upheld, it is final and binding.

*** All individuals subject to review proceedings have the right to Due Process.**

**** All minors must have a parent or legal guardian present for any questioning by the Review Panel.**

***** SafeSport issues are *not* subject to the Dispute Resolution Process. SafeSport violations are dealt with outside of our organization and involve STAHA's SafeSport coordinator and CAHA legal counsel only.**

Examples of disputes to be handled directly and without process:

- Parental disagreements amongst adults.
- Player disagreements amongst children.
- Incidents that take place outside of STAHA sanctioned events.

Examples of disputes to be addressed by Dispute Resolution Proceedings:

- Gross or repeated violations of STAHA code of conduct policy.
- Gross violations of USA Hockey code of conduct.
- Excessive complaints about any one coach/volunteer/parent/player.

Examples of discipline or sanctions as determined by the Disciplinary Review Panel:

- Probation, to include close monitoring.
- Suspension from one or more games/practices.
- Behavior contracts.
- Acknowledgement and apology issued in writing.
- In extreme circumstances, removal from the Organization.