

Williams Lake Women's Hockey League

Harassment Policy

The Williams Lake Women's Hockey League (WLWHL) is committed to a sport and work environment in which all individuals are treated with respect and dignity. Each individual has the right to participate and work in an environment which promotes equal opportunities and prohibits discriminatory practices.

Harassment is a form of discrimination and is prohibited by the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and by Human Rights legislation in every province and territory of Canada. Harassment/discrimination is offensive, degrading and threatening. In its most extreme forms, harassment can be an offence under Canada's Criminal Code.

Purpose

1. WLWHL will not tolerate harassment. Members found to have engaged in conduct constituting harassment/discrimination, may be disciplined and/or suspended to the full extent of this policy and the law.
2. The objectives of this policy are:
 - a. to prevent discrimination and harassment on the grounds of race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, sex, sexual orientation, age, marital status, family status, ability or religious affiliations;
 - b. to alert the fact that harassment is an offence under the law;
 - c. to establish the types of behaviour that shall be considered offensive;
 - d. to establish a mechanism for receiving complaints of harassment and provide a procedure to deal with these complaints; and
 - e. to create an awareness of the nature and types of harassment.
3. For the purposes of this policy, retaliation against an individual for having filed a complaint under the policy, or for having participated in any procedure under the policy, or for having been associated with a person who filed a complaint or participated in any procedure under the policy, will be treated as harassment, and should not be tolerated.
4. Any such policy shall require all those applicable to take assertive action should they feel that they are being subjected to harassment and to foster an environment free of harassment by attempting to stop incidents of harassment whether there is a complaint or not. Any failure to take appropriate corrective action may be interpreted as condoning the prohibited behaviour.

5. Notwithstanding the existence of a policy, every person continues to have the right to seek assistance from the BC Human Rights Commission or other avenues.

Application

6. The harassment policy applies to all directors, officers, administrators, volunteers, coaches, athletes, officials, and members of the organization. Every member shall avoid and shall discourage others' expressions or displays of prejudice, bigotry, sexual comments or racial slurs. Even the appearance of bigotry or prejudice can damage mutual respect between teams, athletes, management, staff, etc.
7. For the purposes of this policy, sport harassment can occur in the following places:
 - a. at sporting events, competitions, and in training sessions;
 - b. at sport related social functions;
 - c. at the business functions relating to the sporting activity and its member clubs, such as meetings, training sessions, and workshops;
 - d. during sport related travel;
 - e. through any form of communication device/system including but not limited to telephone, email, websites, social media apps;
 - f. any formal or informal location where the harassment of a person is a result of their sport related involvement.

Definition of Harassment

8. Harassment is any improper behaviour by any person towards another which a person knows or ought to know would be unwelcome. This behaviour includes comments, conduct or gestures which are 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, offense, or humiliation to another person or group, including, but not limited to:
 - a. written or verbal abuse or threats;
 - b. physical assault;
 - c. unwelcome remarks, jokes, innuendos, or taunting about a person's body, sexual orientation, attire, age, marital status, ethnic or racial origin, religion, etc;
 - d. displaying of sexually explicit, racist or other offensive or derogatory material, or sexual, racial, ethnic or religious graffiti;
 - e. practical jokes which directly or indirectly cause awkwardness or embarrassment, endangering a person's safety or negatively affecting performance;
 - f. hazing or initiation rights;
 - g. leering or other suggestive or obscene gestures;

- h. intimidation, through the suggestion or offer of a reward or privilege or through threats of retaliation related to speaking out about harassment;
- i. condescension, paternalism, or patronizing behaviour which undermines self-respect or adversely affects performance or working conditions;
- j. 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;
- k. false accusations of harassment motivated by malice or mischief, and meant to cause other harm, is considered harassment;
- l. sexual harassment, including a single event or a series of incidents involving unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favours, or other verbal conduct of a sexual nature including, without limitation, the following:
 - i. when such conduct might reasonably be expected to cause embarrassment, insecurity, discomfort, offense, or humiliation to another person or group;
 - ii. when submission to such conduct is made either implicitly or explicitly a condition of sport related activity;
 - iii. when submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as a basis for any sport decision (including, but not limited to, team selection);
 - iv. when such conduct has the purpose or the effect of interfering with a person's work/sport performance/experience or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive work/sport environment.

Confidentiality

- 9. WLWHL understands that it can be extremely difficult to come forward with a complaint of harassment and that it can be devastating to be wrongly convicted of harassment.
- 10. Confidential information shall not be disclosed to outside parties, including without limitation, the name of the complainant, the circumstances giving rise to a complaint, or the name of the respondent, unless such disclosure is required by a disciplinary or other remedial process.
- 11. All records of complaints, including contents of meetings, interviews, results of investigations and other relevant material should be kept confidential except where disclosure is required by a disciplinary or other remedial process or where required to disclose by statute.
- 12. In all reported instances, a prompt, thorough, fair investigation should take place giving careful consideration to protect the rights and dignity of all people involved. The regular

procedures associated with privacy and confidentiality will be observed at all times, including the sealing of all documents upon the conclusion of the investigation.

13. Complaints of harassment will be handled through the WLWHL's *Discipline and Complaint Policy*.