



Ontario Rural Softball Association (“ORSA”)

Disciplinary Policy

This policy applies to Members of the Ontario Rural Softball Association (“ORSA”) where the team member refers to all categories of Members as defined in the By-Laws of the ORSA as well as individuals engaged in activities with the ORSA but not limited to directors, officers, managers, coaches, players and all volunteers.

Any league, association, coach, manager, player or member of the ORSA association violating the By-Laws, Policies or Operating Rules or refusing to abide by the decision of the Board of Directors shall be suspended. All Members of Ontario Rural Softball Association (ORSA) and all participants in the activities of ORSA are expected to comply at all times with the By-laws, policies, rules and regulations of ORSA and to abide by the ORSA Code of Conduct.

In this Policy, the term Ontario Rural Softball Association (*ORSA Official/Director*) refers to Board Members, Zone Directors, Tournament Directors, game Umpires, Tournament UICs, or Umpire Program personnel.

The term *Discipline Committee* refers to a 3-person committee appointed by the President and comprised of the President or a designate, a Director from the involved Zone, and one other individual. The Committee will appoint its own Chair.

The term *Discipline Appeal Committee* refers to a 3-person committee appointed by the President and comprised of three ORSA Directors who have not been involved with the discipline process or the incident. The Committee will appoint its own Chair.

Disciplinary Policy Involving Individuals at ORSA Sanctioned Events

All Members of the ORSA are expected to:

- Demonstrate through words and actions the spirit of sportsmanship, sports leadership and ethical conduct
- Treat others with respect and refrain from negative or disparaging remarks or conduct
- Avoid and reject non-medical use of drugs or the use of performance enhancing drugs or methods
- Consume alcohol and tobacco products responsibly in association with the ORSA events
- Refrain from any behaviour that constitutes harassment, where harassment is defined as comment or conduct directed towards an individual or group, which is offensive, abusive, racist, sexist, degrading or malicious
- Refrain from any behaviour that constitutes sexual harassment, where sexual harassment is defined as unwelcome sexual advances or conduct of a sexual nature,

when submitting to or rejecting this conduct influences decisions which affect the individual, such conduct has the purpose of diminishing performance, or such conduct creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment.

- Comply at all times with the By-Laws, policies and regulations of the ORSA, as adopted and amended from time to time, including complying with any contracts or agreements executed with or by the ORSA.

Types of Infractions

Failure by a Member to achieve the expected standard set out above may result in an infraction and the imposition of discipline. Infractions are divided into two types, minor and major, which are dealt with using different procedures.

Minor infractions are single incidents of breaching the expected standards of conduct that generally do not result in harm to others.

Examples of **minor infractions** include, but are not limited to:

- Single instances of disrespectful comments or behaviour directed towards others
- Single instances of unsportsmanlike conduct
- Single instances of non-compliance with policies and rules of the ORSA

All disciplinary situations involving minor infractions will be dealt with by the appropriate person having authority over the Member involved. This person may include but is not restricted to, a board member, division co-ordinator, game umpire, tournament UIC, committee volunteer, or any other person holding a position of authority in the given circumstances. **The 2024 Softball Ontario Ejection Policy is in effect.**

Major infractions are instances of misconduct that result, or have the potential to result, in harm to other persons, to the ORSA, or to the sport of softball.

Examples of major infractions include but are not limited to:

- Repeated minor infractions
- Activities or behaviour that interferes with a competition or with any athlete's preparation for a competition
- Pranks, jokes or other activities that endanger the safety of others
- Deliberate disregard for the policies and rules of the ORSA
- Conduct that intentionally damages the image, credibility or reputation of the ORSA
- Behaviour that constitutes harassment, sexual harassment or sexual misconduct
- Abusive use of alcohol, any use of alcohol by minors, use of illicit drugs and narcotics or use of banned performance enhancing drugs or methods

Major infractions will be reviewed and decided using the disciplinary procedures set out in this policy.

Reporting an Infraction (Major or Minor)

Any individual may report to an Official of the ORSA a complaint of an infraction. Such complaint must be in writing and must be made within 14 days of the alleged infraction. For the purposes of this section, an "Official" is any person in a responsible position with the Ontario Rural Softball Association.

Upon receiving a complaint, the Official will provide it immediately to the President or designate, if the President is not available or not able to act in their capacity.

The Ontario Rural Softball Association may determine that an alleged major or minor infraction warrants immediate suspension of the Member pending investigation, a hearing and a disciplinary decision.

Upon receiving a complaint of a major infraction, the President will review the complaint and may:

- Dismiss the complaint if they consider it to be trivial or vexatious
- Determine that the complaint does not fall within the jurisdiction of this policy and refer it to the appropriate body having jurisdiction
- Direct that the infraction be dealt with informally, as a minor infraction, by the person having appropriate authority
- Determine that the incident is so serious that the member should be suspended immediately, pending resolution of the incident using this Policy
- Refer the matter to the discipline committee to deal with as a major infraction

Notices:

- a) In cases of automatic suspension, confirmation of the suspension shall be communicated in writing by the Divisional Coordinator.
- b) In cases where there is a Discipline Committee, the Chairman of the Discipline Committee will communicate all decisions in writing to all individuals affected.
- c) If an appeal is received, it must be filed within seven (7) days from the date of notice of decision was received. Appeal MUST be in writing to the Association Secretary, with a copy to the President.
- d) If a hearing is necessary, the President or delegate will notify the individual alleged to have committed a major infraction within fourteen (14) days. Copies of the incident report and the umpire's report (if applicable) shall be provided.
- e) The individual appealing will be given ten (10) days of written notice of the date, time and place of the hearing.

No Hearings at Tournament – Suspension or eligibility hearings shall not be handled at a tournament site.

Flagrant Offence – When any person causes an offence of a flagrant nature, such as the use of obscene language, or an assault (physical or verbal) upon a player, coach, manager, umpire or Board of Directors' member, that person shall be immediately removed from the game and said person, if a member of an Association affiliated team, shall automatically be suspended until a hearing is held concerning the alleged offence. The Umpire shall, within twenty-four (24) hours thereafter, forward full particulars to the President or their Delegate with a copy to the Provincial Umpire-in-Chief.

Team Suspension – If a team competing in the U11, U13, U15 or U17 Division is suspended, such suspension shall be served by the coaches and manager of such team and not the team players.

Any incident at an ORSA-sanctioned event that is deemed by an ORSA Official/Director associated with the event to warrant disciplinary action will be reported to the ORSA Office by means of an Incident Report.

If the incident is referred to the Discipline Committee, the person(s) named in the report will be notified that a Discipline Committee Meeting is being held. The Chair of the Discipline Committee will inform the person(s) named in the report that they may submit a written statement as to their role in the incident, to be received at the ORSA Office within 10 days.

The Discipline Committee Chairman will gather the necessary information from appropriate sources, including the person(s) named in the report, and will designate a time and location for a meeting of the Discipline Committee.

The Disciplinary Committee will review all information received and, if it feels sufficient information is available, a decision will be made. The Disciplinary Committee may also determine that it should convene a hearing of the parties and witnesses to obtain further information to ensure a fair decision.

The Disciplinary Committee may determine that no further action should be taken in regard to the incident, in which case the matter will be closed. If the Discipline Committee determines that further action should be taken, it may decide to impose a Reprimand, Probation or Suspension, using the ORSA Constitution: General Playing Rules, Rule: Suspensions and Expulsions as a guideline.

A person disciplined may appeal the decision of the Discipline Committee. The appeal must be made within 14 days to the Discipline Appeal Committee, who will review the matter using fair procedures, and may uphold, modify or overturn the Discipline Committee decision.

Any person who is suspended under this Policy may request a review of the suspension, in writing, on or after its anniversary. Such a review will be conducted by the Discipline Committee that imposed the suspension.

Disciplinary Policy Involving Individuals Suspended by a League

When a league suspends a person, they may forward the report to the ORSA Office with a request that the league suspension be recognized by ORSA and be extended to all ORSA-sanctioned events.

Upon receiving the request, the President will refer it to the Discipline Committee. The Chair of the Discipline Committee will notify the person suspended that a Discipline Committee Meeting is being held, and will invite the person suspended to submit a written statement as to the request, to be received at the ORSA Office within 10 days.

The Discipline Committee will review all information received from the league and from the person suspended, and will make a decision to deny or agree to the request. If the decision is to agree to the request, the person suspended may appeal this decision. This process does not change the original league suspension.

Any person who has had a league suspension extended to all ORSA sanctioned activity may request a review of the suspension, in writing, on or after its anniversary. Such a review will be conducted by the Discipline Committee that extended the suspension to all ORSA activity.

Policy Name: Disciplinary Policy

Ratification Date: April 11, 2022

Review Date: April 2028