



Valley Ball Hockey

Association Fair Play

Policy

2024-02-08

Fair Play Mission Statement

The mission statement of Fair Play is to foster a culture characterized by Safety, Respect, and Development within the Valley Ball Hockey Association (VBHA). This objective is achieved by setting forth a standard of acceptable behavior and attitude among all stakeholders, including Board Members, Parents (spectators), Spectators, Coaches, Players, and Officials, throughout all phases of the game - before, during, and after.

By adhering to these principles, Fair Play aims to cultivate a positive environment within the VBHA, wherein individuals uphold values of safety, demonstrate respect for one another, and actively contribute to the development of players, coaches, and officials alike. Through this commitment to sportsmanship and mutual regard, Fair Play endeavors to enrich the experience of all involved in Valley Ball Hockey, thereby promoting camaraderie, growth, and enjoyment within the association.

Fair Play Program

Fair Play aims to cultivate a positive environment within the Valley Ball Hockey Association (VBHA), where safety, respect, and development are paramount. Upholding these values contributes to the association's growth and well-being. By promoting sportsmanship and mutual respect, Fair Play enhances the experiences of players, coaches, and officials, fostering camaraderie and enjoyment within the VBHA community. In essence, Fair Play strives to make the VBHA an inclusive and nurturing environment for all.

Fair Play Liaison

Each team within the Valley Ball Hockey Association (VBHA) will appoint a Fair Play Liaison, who may also serve as the Team Manager unless the Team Manager is the spouse of a coach. The responsibilities of the Fair Play Liaison include:

1. Receiving and reporting any fair play issues, concerns, or compliments to the Fair Play Committee.
2. Observing team games for fair play and refraining from addressing issues immediately, unless a major offense occurs necessitating immediate disciplinary action (e.g., verbal abuse of an official by a parent).
3. Receiving communication from coaches regarding any modifications to fair play, such as a shortened bench due to missing or injured players.
4. Distributing fair play oaths to parents, players, and coaches for signature.
5. Collecting and retaining all signed fair play oaths until the conclusion of the season.

Fair Play Committee

The Fair Play Committee, distinct from VBHA board members, comprises six individuals appointed by the VBHA board, each serving a two-year term. The committee includes one coach from each division (Pup, Peewee, Minor, Major, and Junior), and a Chair who isn't affiliated with these divisions. The Chair reports to the Board and ensures adherence to the Fair Play Policy and other relevant policies.

The Committee, appointed annually, is composed of five members chosen by the VBHA board. Nominations are open to any board member, with coordination by the Vice President, Head of Coaches, and Team Managers Coordinator.

Criteria for committee construction include representation across age divisions, affiliation as a VBHA coach or team manager, availability for meetings and game attendance, and selection of a Chair responsible for scheduling and liaising with the board.

Responsibilities of the Committee include program implementation, member education, and reporting of fair play issues to the Board. Investigations into complaints involve dialogue with involved parties, adherence to progressive discipline guidelines, and recommendations to the Board or Disciplinary Committee.

The Committee handles complaints from various sources, ensuring timely investigation during the 12-week Spring season. Members accused of offenses recuse themselves from discussions, with the Chair informing the Board. The Board receives reports of offenses, and in rare cases, the Disciplinary Committee may request a review, providing necessary documentation for consideration.

BASIC PRINCIPLES OF FAIR PLAY

Respect the rules

Respect the players and Parents

Respect the Coaches, Officials, and their decisions

Have everyone participate, as equally as possible

Maintain your self-control at all times

Fair Floor Time

Fair Floor Time, a cornerstone of our Fair Play Policy, ensures that all players have equitable opportunities to participate in organized ball hockey. The following assumptions guide our approach:

1. All players desire involvement in organized ball hockey
2. All players seek equal playing time.
3. Coaches prioritize the best interests of all players.
4. All stakeholders, including coaches, players, parents, spectators, and officials, uphold respect for each other and the game.

Guidelines for benches across divisions:

U9 (Peanut)

Rolling lines is required throughout the game, exposing players to diverse situations and positions. Rarely, a player may be prioritized due to game dynamics, yet the aim remains equal playing time. At the Peanut level during the regular season, there should not be any designated full-time goalies. Instead, a rotation should be established among players who volunteer for the position. If there is a shortage of volunteers, coaches should encourage as many players as possible to try goaltending. During playoffs and/or provincials, coaching staff may choose to select and stick with a specific goaltender based on team strategy and performance.

U11 (Pup)

Rolling lines is the preferred approach, though exceptions may occur during power plays or critical game junctures. In Pup games, the primary goal is to ensure nearly equal playing time for all players, with discrepancies exceeding a minute considered rare and possibly necessitating reporting to the fair play liaison. Regarding goaltending, no full-time goalies should be designated during the regular season at the Pup level. Instead, a rotation among willing players is encouraged. If only one player volunteers for the position, it is acceptable. During playoffs and/or provincials, coaching staff may opt to select a specific goaltender for strategic reasons. Equal playing time remains the goal!

U13 (PeeWee)

Rolling lines is optimal, though positional play may impact playing time. Coaches exercise discretion in such instances, ensuring close-to-equal playing time. Goalie rotation is recommended, with playoffs permitting set choices. At this age division, goalies are drafted as full-time players, allowing the possibility for a goaltender to play full-time. However, if multiple volunteers exist, coaches must ensure all willing participants have the opportunity to play goalie at least once. If no volunteers are available, the Goaltender Call-Up Policy should be implemented. During playoffs and/or provincials, the coaching staff may opt to stick with a specific goaltender based on team needs and strategic considerations.

U15, U17, U20 (Minor, Major, Junior)

Rolling lines is advised, acknowledging positional dynamics. Coaches manage discrepancies, aiming for equitable playing time. Full-time goaltenders are preferred, with coaches' discretion regarding additional participants and playoff decisions.

These guidelines ensure fairness and inclusivity across all divisions, fostering a positive and enriching environment for players, coaches, and stakeholders alike.

If any others would like to participate is at the discretion of the coaches if they will allow another goalie to play. If no one is available to play, the Goaltender Call-Up Policy should be followed.

Fair Play Codes of Conduct of Players

All players affiliated with the VBHA are representatives of the Association, their communities, and their teams. It is essential for all players to recognize that ball hockey is a recreational pursuit. While the VBHA encourages competitiveness, players must adhere to the rules of the game and uphold the principles of Safety, Respect, and Development throughout all ball hockey activities. Participation in ball hockey is a privilege, not an entitlement.

Players agree to adhere to the following Fair Play Code:

- 1) I will engage in ball hockey because I personally desire to, not solely due to external pressure from others or my coaches.
- 2) I will manage my emotions and refrain from behaviors such as fighting, disrespectful language, gate slamming, stick banging, trash-talking, and arguing with officials, as these actions can disrupt the game for everyone.
- 3) I will strive to be a cooperative team player, valuing teamwork and utilizing my abilities to contribute positively to the team.
- 4) I understand that while winning is desirable, the enjoyment of the game, skill improvement, friendship development, and giving my best effort are equally important.
- 5) I will demonstrate respect towards my teammates and opponents alike.
- 6) I will acknowledge and appreciate good performances by both my team members and opponents.
- 7) I will prioritize the safety of all players by adhering to the rules of the game.
- 8) I will always show respect towards my coaches and officials, recognizing their role in providing opportunities for learning and playing ball hockey.
- 9) I understand that the team's philosophy prioritizes fun, skill development, and winning, in that order.
- 10) I will refrain from using offensive, abusive, racist, or sexist language or behavior towards anyone, including on social media platforms.
- 11) I acknowledge that academic pursuits take precedence over ball hockey commitments.

Play Code of Conduct for Parents/Guardians

Parents and guardians serve as role models for all players on the floor. It's important for parents and spectators to recognize that ball hockey is a recreational activity, and players participate because of the opportunities provided by parents and their enjoyment of the game. The safety and well-being of the child must always be paramount. While every parent desires success for their child, it's important to understand that mistakes are part of the learning process. It's crucial not to impose adult expectations onto young players and to remain positive and supportive at all times.

Parents and guardians agree to adhere to the following Fair Play Code:

- 1) I will demonstrate positivity and support towards all players, coaches, and officials, regardless of the team they represent.
- 2) I will encourage my child to play by the rules and handle conflicts without resorting to hostility or violence.
- 3) I will support the entire team, not just my child.
- 4) I will leave coaching responsibilities to the coaching staff and will address any concerns with the Head Coach, Team Manager, Fair Play Liaison, or Team Representative. If upset, I will observe a 24-hour cooling-off (Mandatory) period before expressing complaints, except in urgent situations.
- 5) I will inform all spectators accompanying me about the FAIR Play Program and take responsibility for their adherence to the code.
- 6) The team's philosophy prioritizes fun, skill development, and winning, in that order.
- 7) I will refrain from using offensive, abusive, racist, or sexist language or behavior towards anyone, including on social media platforms.
- 8) I understand that my child's safety and well-being are paramount, and I will adhere to all guidelines established by the Association and Coaches.

Fair Play Code of Conduct for Coaches

Coaches within the VBHA hold significant roles as mentors and ambassadors for their teams. While competitiveness is encouraged, adherence to the rules of the game and fostering a fun and equitable environment for all players are paramount. Coaches must maintain emotional and physical self-control, refrain from using foul language, and ensure fair treatment of all players during practices, games, and other team activities. The primary goal is to cultivate a love for the game while prioritizing Safety, Respect, and Development.

Coaches agree to adhere to the following Fair Play Code:

- 1) Ensure all players receive equal instruction, support, and playing time.

- 2) Refrain from ridiculing or yelling at players for mistakes or poor performance, instead fostering confidence and enjoyment.
- 3) Teach players to play fairly, respect the rules, officials, opponents, and spectators.
- 4) Serve as positive role models, providing constructive feedback and encouraging skill improvement.
- 5) Prioritize the needs of players over those of coaches or parents.
- 6) Emphasize respect, teamwork, and a passion for the game among players.
- 7) Respect other coaches within the system and collaborate for the benefit of all players.
- 8) Embrace the team philosophy of prioritizing fun, skill development, and winning, in that order.
- 9) Refrain from using offensive, abusive, racist, or sexist language or behavior towards anyone, including on social media platforms.
- 10) Commit to reporting any incident directly violating the Fair Play policy to the Fair Play Liaison or Committee, who will in turn escalate the issue to the Board for resolution.

Fair Play Code of Conduct for VBHA Board Members:

As representatives of the Valley Ball Hockey Association (VBHA), board members commit to upholding the following Fair Play principles:

- 1) Treat all individuals with respect and dignity.
- 2) Adhere to the Association's constitution, rules, bylaws, and guidelines, making decisions that prioritize the best interests of players and the association.
- 3) Abide by the rules and regulations established by the Canadian Ball Hockey Association.
- 4) Ensure that all volunteers comply with the Association's constitution, rules, bylaws, and guidelines, with a commitment to upholding standards and providing support.
- 5) Work collaboratively with parents, volunteers, coaches, and officials to promote awareness of the Fair Play program among children.
- 6) Support volunteers in their crucial roles within the Association.
- 7) Serve as positive role models, emphasizing Safety, Respect, and Fun over winning, through collaboration with coaches, officials, volunteers, and parents.
- 8) Refrain from using offensive, abusive, racist, or sexist language or behavior towards anyone, including on social media platforms.

OFFICIALS

The VBHA officials agree to abide by the following Fair Play Code:

- 1) Strive to officiate each game to the best of our abilities, regardless of the ball hockey category.
- 2) Show respect towards fellow officials, players, coaches, and fans at all times
- 3) Represent ourselves and the game's rules fairly and accurately.
- 4) Maintain unquestionable impartiality and professionalism, keeping an appropriate

distance from teams.

- 5) Treat everyone fairly regardless of gender, origin, color, sexual orientation, religion, political belief, or economic status.
- 6) Direct comments or criticism towards performance rather than individuals.
- 7) Demonstrate high personal standards and project a positive image of officiating and the sport.
- 8) Treat all ball hockey participants with respect and encourage self-discipline among officials.
- 9) Accept the inevitability of mistakes and avoid letting frustration impact professionalism. It's ok to make mistakes!
- 10) Refrain from using offensive, abusive, racist, or sexist language or behavior towards anyone, including on social media.

COMMON CONCERNS ABOUT FAIR PLAY

Some parents may say their association doesn't need a Fair Play Program.

Fair Play contends that if all participants consistently respected the rules, opponents, officials, and ensured everyone's involvement while maintaining self-control, programs like Fair Play wouldn't be necessary. However, in reality, the fundamental principles of Fair Play are often lacking in ball hockey. Many associations face issues such as spectators abusing officials, coaches, players, and other volunteers, alongside a pervasive 'win-at-all-costs' mentality that limits player participation. Thus, Fair Play programs are essential in associations to address and mitigate such negative incidents.

Some parents may say they don't agree with equal or fair floor time for all players, especially at competitive levels of ball hockey.

Fair Play aims to boost our association's size, stature, and inter-league success by encouraging all players to participate and develop, regardless of skill level. Prioritizing inclusivity and skill development for every player strengthens our association's depth. As games become more competitive, exposing all players to higher levels of play, like playoffs or provincial tournaments, becomes essential. This approach not only benefits individual players but also contributes to our association's overall growth and success.

FAIR PLAY INTERVENTIONS

Interventions are crucial to ensuring that any breach of the Fair Play Policy by VBHA members is promptly and consistently addressed, irrespective of the individuals involved. Instances requiring intervention to uphold the Fair Play Policy include coaches shortening their bench during games, inappropriate spectator behavior, inappropriate player behavior on and off the floor, supporting coaches in dealing with players and/or parents, inappropriate coach behavior towards players,

Fair Play participant behavior at other rinks during games, Team Manager requests for support in handling difficult parents, and abuse of officials by Fair Play participants.

In situations where a member of the VBHA or a spectator/visitor breaches the Fair Play Policy, progressive discipline will be implemented. Progressive discipline is a structured process for addressing behavior that falls short of the expected standards of the VBHA. Its primary aim is to help individuals recognize and address areas for improvement.

Progressive discipline involves increasingly formal steps to provide feedback to the individual, allowing them to correct their behavior. The ultimate goal is to enhance the individual's performance and behavior, rather than to punish them. The process is designed to assist individuals in overcoming behavior challenges and aligning with the VBHA's expectations of maintaining the five basic principles of Fair Play.

Typical steps in a progressive discipline system may include:

Step 1

Discuss the individual's behavior and its impact on other participants. Review and reinforce the Fair Play Pledge/Principles with the individual, which may involve parents/guardians depending on the individual's age. Resolutions may include a verbal apology from a parent or youth to a coach or other participant, a coach explaining his/her actions, or restating guidelines to a player or parent.

Step 2

Verbally reprimand the individual(s) involved, clearly articulating how their behavior/actions breached Association standards. Resolutions may include a verbal apology from a parent or youth to a coach or other participant, a coach explaining his/her actions, or restating guidelines to a player or parent.

Step 3

A formal warning will be issued to the individual or their parents, depending on the age of the youth involved. This warning will explicitly outline that continued display of unacceptable behavior or conduct may result in suspension from the Association. Resolutions may include a written apology from a parent or youth to a coach or other participant, a coach explaining actions in writing, and restating guidelines to a player or parent.

Step 4

Report the individual to the Discipline Committee for review where it may be determined if suspension from participating in Ball Hockey for an escalating number of days (coaches/players/officials) or from entering the Arena (parents/spectators). Start with one day/game/activity and escalate to five if necessary.

Step 5

Report the individual to the Discipline Committee for review where it may be determined if termination of membership of the individual in the VBHA for the remainder of the season, i.e. a player will not be permitted to play for the Association. Parents/spectators/coaches will not be permitted into ball hockey venues/arenas for the remainder of the season.

In cases of more serious behavior, such as intentionally injuring a player, coach, spectator, or official, or engaging in drinking/drug use while representing the VBHA, the Fair Play Committee of VBHA may directly report to the disciplinary body for appropriate action. The Fair Play Liaison is tasked with reporting any incident to the Fair Play Committee for documentation purposes. The committee will establish a file system with three color-coded tabs, managed by the Chair of the Fair Play Committee:

- 1) Red: Any negative comments by a player, parent, or coach from the coach's own team.
- 2) Yellow: Any negative comments by a player, parent, or coach from a different team.
- 3) Green: Any positive comments from any VBHA member; the names of the individuals making negative comments could be omitted.

At the beginning of each new ball hockey season, the following oaths are to be distributed and signed.

Fair Play Oath – PLAYERS

All VBHA players represent the Association, their communities, and their teams. They recognize that ball hockey is recreational and are encouraged to be competitive within the rules. Players prioritize SAFETY, RESPECT, AND DEVELOPMENT in all activities. Playing ball hockey is seen as a privilege by governing bodies, not a right.

All players will agree to abide by the following FAIR PLAY Code:

- I will play ball hockey because I want to, not just because others or my coaches want me to.
- I will control my temper – “fighting” and “mouthing off”, slamming gates, banging sticks spoil ball hockey for everybody.
- I will do my best to be a true team player.
- I will remember that winning isn’t everything – that having fun, improving skills, making friends and doing my best are also important.
- I will respect my teammates and my opponents.
- I will acknowledge all good plays/performances – those of my team and of my opponents.
- I will respect the safety of other players by playing within the rules of the game.
- I will respect my coaches and officials at all times and remember that they are providing me with an opportunity to learn and play the game of ball hockey.
- Fun, learning skills and winning is the philosophy of this team, and in this order.
- I will not use offensive, abusive, racist or sexist language or behaviour towards anyone at anytime, including social media.
- I understand that school is more important than ball hockey.

Signature of Player: _____

Date:

Signature of Parent/Guardian: _____

Date:

_____ (No parent/guardian signature required for Major & Junior)

VBHA Representative: _____

Date:

Fair Play Oath – PARENTS/GUARDIANS

Parents/guardians are role models for all players on the floor. Parents and other spectators must understand that ball hockey is a recreational activity NOT an NHL farm club. The players are on the floor because you, as a parent/guardian, have given them the opportunity to participate in a ball hockey program and your son/daughter enjoys playing the game. The best interest of the child pertaining to safety and well-being must be of foremost importance. Every parent wants his or her son/daughter to do well on the floor but realize mistakes will be made. Do not judge any young player by heightened standards. DON'T JUDGE OR IMPOSE ADULT EXPECTATIONS ONTO PLAYERS in ball hockey!

No player loses a game or makes a mistake on purpose. BE POSITIVE AND SUPPORTIVE TO ALL PLAYERS.

All parents/guardians agree to abide by the following FAIR PLAY Code:

- I will be positive and supportive to ALL players, coaches and officials from both the home team as well as visiting teams.
- I will encourage my child to play by the rules and to resolve conflicts without resorting to hostility or violence.
- I will support the whole team, not just my child.
- I will leave the coaching to the coaching staff; I will communicate any concerns to the Head Coach or Team Representative. If I am upset I will wait a 24-hour cooling-off period before registering my complaint, unless it is an urgent matter.
- I will inform all spectators attending the game with me about the FAIR Play Program.
- Fun, learning skills, and winning is the philosophy of this team, and in this order.
- I will not use offensive abusive, racist, or sexist language or behaviour towards anyone at any time.
- I understand that the safety and well-being of my child is of utmost importance and therefore, I will follow all guidelines put forth by the Association and Coaches.
- I understand that school takes precedence over ball hockey.

Name of Child/Children involved in VBHA: _____

Signature of Parent/Guardian:_____

Date: _____

VBHA Representative: _____

Date: _____

Fair Play Oath – COACHES

VBHA coaching volunteers serve as role models for their teams and ambassadors for the association. They're encouraged to maintain competitiveness within the game's rules. The primary goal of coaching staff is to ensure all players have fun and participate fully.

- Always maintain emotional and physical self control when in the presence of your players. Use of foul language is prohibited
- Give every player fair and equal treatment during practices, games, and any other activities you oversee.
- Your main goal is not to win titles but to ensure your players have fun and maintain their love for the game of ball hockey.
- Always encourage, foster, and maintain SAFETY, RESPECT AND DEVELOPMENT.
- Control your player's tempers and actions on the floor. You are accountable for your player's actions in the rink!
- Communicate with a player's parents if you are having a problem. If this is unproductive then you will seek assistance from the association board of directors.

Coaches agree to abide by the following FAIR PLAY code:

- We will ensure that all players get equal instruction and playing time.
- We will not ridicule or yell at players for making mistakes or for performing poorly. We will remember that players play to have fun and must be encouraged to have confidence in themselves.
- We will teach our players to play fairly and to respect the rules, officials, players, spectators and their opponents.
- We will act as positive role models, providing positive reinforcement
- We fully understand the needs of our players come first, and not the needs of coaches or parents.
- We will emphasize respect, and teamwork, and attempt to build a love for the game in our players. We will respect other coaches within our system and work with them to ensure maximum benefit to players.
- We will not use offensive, abusive, racist, or sexist language or behaviour towards anyone at any time, including social media.
- We agree that any incident that is in direct violation of this Fair Play policy must be reported to the Fair Play Committee. Who in turn will hand over the issue to the Board.

Signature of Coach: _____

Date: _____

VBHA Representative: _____

Date:

Fair Play Oath – VALLEY BALL HOCKEY ASSOCIATION (VBHA) BOARD MEMBERS

The VBHA board members agrees to abide by the following Fair Play Code:

- We will treat all individuals with respect and dignity.
- We will abide by the Associations constitution, rules, by laws and guidelines and will only make decisions that are in the best interest of the players and the association.
- We will abide by all rules and regulations set down by Canadian Ball Hockey Association.
- We will strive to ensure that all volunteers of the Association abide by the Associations constitution, rules, by laws, and guidelines and in some cases heighten the rules but never lessen them.
- We will work with parents, volunteers, coaches and officials to ensure every child is aware of the Fair Play program.
- We will strive to ensure all our volunteers are supported in their very important roles within the Association.
- By acting as role models and through working with coaches, officials, volunteers and parents we aim to teach kids that Safety, Respect, Development and Fun are more important than winning.
- We will not use offensive, abusive, racist or sexist language or behaviour towards anyone at anytime.
- We understand that school takes precedence over ball hockey.

Signature of Board Member: _____

Date:

VBHA President/Vice President: _____

Date:

Fair Play Oath – OFFICIALS

The VBHA officials agree to abide by the following Fair Play Code:

- We will do the best job possible for each game no matter what the category of ball hockey.
- We will always show respect for our fellow officials, players, coaches and fans.
- We will represent ourselves and the rules of the game as fairly and as accurately as possible at all times.
- We will always be unquestionably impartial, keeping a professional and appropriate distance from teams.
- We will uphold the philosophy and right of all ball hockey participants to "Fair Play" and penalize accordingly all violet acts.
- We will treat everyone fairly within the context of their activity, regardless of gender, place of origin, colour, sexual orientation, religion, political belief, or economic status.
- We will direct comments or criticism at the performance rather than the individual.
- We will display high personal standards and project a favourable image of our sport and officiating.
- We will refrain from public criticism of participants and fellow officials, even when I am a spectator.
- We will treat all other ball hockey participants with due respect and encourage all officials to maintain a high standard of self-discipline.
- We will accept the fact that we will make mistakes, but we will not get frustrated or let this learning process affect my performance or my professionalism.
- By acting as role models and through working with coaches, other officials, volunteers and parents/guardians we aim to teach kids that Safety, Respect and Fun are more important than winning.
- We will not use offensive, abusive, racist or sexist language or behaviour towards anyone at anytime, including social media.

Signature of Official: _____

Date:

VBHA Representative: _____

Date:
