



RINGETTE BC

Communication and Issues Management Guidelines for Provincial Programs

1. Introduction

The purpose of these guidelines is to support Ringette BC members participating in Ringette BC provincial programs in the management of issues and minor complaints that would not be admissible under the Ringette BC Discipline and Complaints policy. This document will provide a review of expectations and processes for addressing issues within programs.

Members of Ringette BC Provincial Programs include

- Coaches
- Team Staff
- Parents
- Athletes
- Ringette BC Staff
- IST & other Program Volunteers

These guidelines apply to all programs that are operated by Ringette BC, these include, but are not limited to

- Excellence Ringette Program
- Team BC U16 & U19
- U14 Train to Excel
- U14 Team BC
- Male Competition Development Program
- BC Winter Games
- Canada Winter Games

These guidelines do not apply to issues that occur with other levels of play overseen by Leagues or Local Associations. Ringette BC encourages Leagues and Local Associations to adopt similar guidelines for the programs that fall under their jurisdiction.

2. Communication Guidelines

It is expected that all Ringette BC members, including coaches, parents, athletes and administrators will communicate with each other in a respectful professional manner. Any disrespectful communication, whether verbal or digital, will not be tolerated and members not meeting expectations will be subject to disciplinary action. All communication, whether in person, verbal, or electronic, must follow the Rule of Two, where no adult or person in a position of authority may communicate with an athlete or minor without another screened adult present. For more information on the Responsible Coaching Movement, Rule of Two and Safe Sport, please visit the links below.

- Coaches Association of Canada - [Safe Sport](#)
 - o [Safe Sport Training Toolkit](#)
- Coaching Association of Canada - [Responsible Coaching Movement](#)
 - o [Rule of Two](#)

2.1 Jurisdiction within Ringette BC programs

Coaches and Team Staff

You are encouraged to reach out to your Team BC Coaches about

- Feedback – areas to improve, areas to focus on
- Team Dynamics
- Attendance & Team Schedule
- Preparedness

- Athlete Wellness and Development

Coaches will not entertain discussions about playing time at an event. Conversations regarding playing time can be requested after an event, and should be centered around athlete development, not questioning the coach's decision.

Managers

You can reach out to your Team Manager(s) about

- Day to Day Team operations
- Volunteer opportunities
- Team Logistics

Ringette BC

You should reach out to Ringette BC with questions related to

- Overall Program and team structure (ie. Competition structure, approved program calendar, approved competitions)
- Safe Sport questions or concerns
- Escalated Concerns
- Discipline and Complaints Policy and Process

2.2 Team Communication

It is required that any team communication follows the Rule of Two. Coaches will communicate with athletes in person, or via electronic means, while following the standards outlined by the Responsible Coaching Movement. The same is expected of administrators, team staff, and athletes. It is recommended in communication between parents and coaches, that at least two bench staff are included. Team staff may designate a first point of contact for parents amongst their rostered staff, or designate another team line of communication.

Coaches will be encouraging athletes to take accountability and responsibility for their development and participation in the Team BC Program, including contacting coaches with questions, attendance updates, or other concerns. Parents are welcome and encouraged to support their athlete in the preparation for these conversations or follow up to seek clarification. Parents may request to be present for any conversation their athlete may have with their coaching staff, though the expectation would be that the athlete is still leading their end of the meeting.

Coaches, Team Staff and Ringette BC Staff have the authority to defer conversations to a later time or date, given a variety of variables and circumstances, which may include the current environment, emotional state of those involved, or other duties the individual is required to complete.

Coach / Athlete Meetings

Any athlete meetings or conversations with coaches should take place in a space that provides privacy to the athlete, while also transparency to protect athletes, coaches, and any other individual involved. The following factors should be considered when selecting a location

- Conversation cannot be heard by others, though may be in the view of others
- The space is neutral, such as a team meeting room or quiet space in a hotel lobby or arena
- If a hotel room is the only viable option, the door of the room must be kept open, and the parent informed ahead of the meeting to provide consent.

As above, parents may request to be a part of Coach/Athlete meetings, though it is encouraged that athletes lead the conversation.

Athlete Group Chat

Athlete Group chats are a great way for athletes to stay connected. It is required that no less than two screened coaches or team staff are a part of **any** athlete group chat. Expectations related to conduct and communication apply to any form of communication, including group chats, emails, texts or any other form of digital communication.

Parent Group Chats

Parent Group chats provide opportunities for parents to connect about logistics, competition and score updates, and other program related updates. Parent group chats **are not** a place to discuss team issues, complaints, concerns or question the decisions of coaches, team staff or administrators. If any parent has a concern or question, they are encouraged to reach out to the related party directly, or to Ringette BC to discuss the issue and potential ratification. Reaching out immediately is in the best interest of the team to prevent tension around a potential situation.

3. Member Expectations

All Ringette BC Program Members are expected to conduct themselves, at all times, in the spirit of fair play and in a responsible manner, that is a positive representation of the Province of British Columbia, Ringette BC, and Ringette Canada. Such conduct is expected of participants throughout the entire duration of their participation in the Program.

All members should strive to create a positive, supportive and inclusive environment that creates a safe space for all other members involved. Any member that is found to have acted in a way that jeopardizes the safe and supportive participation of another member, be found to be acting in a manner that is degrading or belittling to the program or another member, or acting in a way that is contrary to Ringette BC's policy's and applicable codes of conduct, will be subject to sanctions as noted in the Issues Management and Resolution section below.

3.1 Policies

Applicable policies include, but are not limited to

- [1.10-General-Sport-Rules-Update-November 2022](#)
- [1.11 Safety and Equipment](#)
- [1.12 Concussion and Intervention](#)
- [1.13 Misconducts, Match Penalties, and Suspensions](#)
- [1.14 Risk Management and Safety](#)
- [1.15 Conduct of Members](#)
- [1.16 Anti-Doping Policy](#)
- [1.19 Illness Policy](#)
- [2.4 Athlete Absence and Injury Policy](#)
- [2.5 Team BC Selection Policy](#)
- [3.2 Good Standing](#)
- [3.4 Conflicts of Interest Policy](#)
- [3.5 Social Media Policy](#)
- [3.6 Discipline and Complaints Policy](#)
- [3.7 Appeals Policy](#)
- [3.11 Use of Ringette BC Logo](#)

- [3.12 Communication](#)
- [3.13 Amendments to Policy](#)
- [3.14 Harassment Policy](#)
- [3.16 Transgender – Inclusion Policy \(updated Nov 2021\)](#)

3.2 Conduct

Ringette BC Program Members will be required to read and adhere to the applicable codes of conduct noted below.

Team BC Athletes

- [Ringette BC Athlete Code of Conduct – U14 and Above](#)
- [Excellence Ringette Program Athlete Agreement](#)
- [BC Universal Code of Conduct](#)
- [Universal Code of Conduct to Prevent and Address Maltreatment in Sport](#)

Team BC Coaches

- [Ringette BC Coaches Code of Conduct](#)
- Excellence Ringette Program - Coach Contract
- Excellence Ringette Program - Coach Contract, Team BC addendum
- [BC Universal Code of Conduct](#)
- [Universal Code of Conduct to Prevent and Address Maltreatment in Sport](#)

Other Team Staff & Volunteers

- [Ringette BC Volunteer Code of Conduct](#)
- [Universal Code of Conduct to Prevent and Address Maltreatment in Sport](#)

Team BC Parents & Spectators

- [Ringette BC Parent Code of Conduct](#)
- [Ringette BC Spectator Code of Conduct](#)
- [BC Universal Code of Conduct](#)
- [Universal Code of Conduct to Prevent and Address Maltreatment in Sport](#)

4. Issues Management

Ringette BC is committed to providing support to athletes, parents, and coaches in our Provincial Programs. To best support all members, it is imperative that issues and questions are brought forward and addressed in an appropriate and timely manner. Minor complaints should be received within 21 days of an incident. All potential issues will be documented in a safe, secure, and private location for future reference and record keeping.

The steps below should be followed when a member has an issue with a Ringette BC program

4.1 Team Related Issue

1. Approach the appropriate first contact (Coach, Team Manager), as per the jurisdiction section noted above
2. Set up a time to address the issue at a time that is agreed upon by all parties
3. Decide upon a resolution, action or support as required.
4. If an issue cannot be resolved in a ten (10) minute conversation, or three (3) email replies, Ringette BC must be contacted to support.

5. If any issue above needs to be addressed more than two (2) times, Ringette BC must be involved in the third attempt.

At any time during the steps above, Coaches may provide updates to, or ask for support from Ringette BC.

If the steps above are skipped, Ringette BC will encourage and support members in having initial conversations with the appropriate individuals to successfully handle the issue and mitigate future conflict.

4.2 Program Related Issues, Escalated Concerns & Safe Sport Concerns

1. Approach Ringette BC, as per the jurisdiction section noted above.
2. Set up a time to address the issue at a time that is agreed upon by all parties
3. Decide upon a resolution, action or supports as required.

4.3 Issues Management and Conflict Resolution

After Ringette BC is notified of an issue, or brought in to support in issues management at the program or team level, there are 3 steps that could occur. Steps may occur concurrently, or in sequential order with reoccurring instances.

1. Informal Conversation regarding issues with the identified member(s).
2. Formal Warning regarding issue/situation, including a letter of expectations that addresses the areas of concern and expected behaviour
3. Suspension and/or sanctions

During all steps, issues will be documented to support future conversations and actions.

Ringette BC will support members through conversations, aiming to provide an amicable, agreed upon resolution for all parties, that may include future actions or communication. Should action be required beyond problem solving conversations, Ringette BC may apply additional sanctions that could include, but are not limited to

- Temporary Suspensions
- Limiting access to facilities and/or team events
- Education

Should issues continue to arise after a letter of expectation is distributed, and/or sanctions are applied, the member may be subject to more long term suspensions or facility restrictions.

5. Discipline and Complaints

On May 27th, 2024, the Ringette BC Board of Directors approved an updated Discipline and Complaints Policy, along with the implementation of an Independent Third-Party Safe Sport Complaint Reporting mechanism.

The updated policy includes:

- The purpose and application of the policy
- How to report a Safe Sport complaint to the Independent Third-Party

- The admissibility of complaints
- Explanation of process 1 and process 2 complaints and options for resolution
- Provisional Measures
- Three appendices: Investigation procedure, publication guidelines, minor issues and administrative jurisdiction

Resources:

- 3.6 Ringette BC Discipline and Complaints Policy - [HERE](#)
- Ringette BC Safe Sport Webpage – [HERE](#)
- Ringette BC Safe Sport Complaint Reporting Mechanism Webpage - [HERE](#)

Minor Issues and Complaints:

The Independent Third-Party service provided by Ringette BC is primarily for the use of complaints relating to abuse and maltreatment.

The following issues that occur within Ringette BC programs are typically managed by Ringette BC as an organization and should not be submitted to the Independent Third Party as a complaint.

This is a non-inclusive list of examples related to Code of Conduct:

- Behaviour by spectators towards team staff or officials
- Coach disagreements about team practices, game rosters, etc.
- Athlete comments or behavior about their own team play or one-time comments to other athletes that breach the UCCMS and/or are unsportsmanlike
- Inappropriate or profane language by spectators or team staff or other Organizational Participants either in person, online, or on a live video feed

The following non-inclusive list of administrative issues are governed by the administrative and/or operational policies of Ringette BC:

- Athlete registration
- Athlete evaluation or team selection
- Practice time or game scheduling
- Assignment of Team staff
- Approval process for over or under-age athletes