

BRITISH COLUMBIA LACROSSE ASSOCIATION

1. CODE OF CONDUCT

1.01 All individuals affiliated with the BCLA shall:

- i) Attempt at all times to work toward the goals and objectives of the BCLA and the game of Lacrosse, and towards the betterment of its members.
- ii) Strive to heighten the image and dignity of the Association and the sport of Lacrosse as a whole, and to refrain from behavior which may discredit or embarrass the Association or the game.
- iii) Always be courteous and objective in dealings with other members.
- iv) Except when made through proper channels, refrain from unfavorable criticism of other members or representatives of the BCLA.
- v) Strive to achieve excellence in the sport while supporting the concepts of Fair Play and Drug-free sport.
- vi) Show respect for the cultural, social and political values of all participants in the sport.
- vii) As a guest in another province or foreign country, abide by the laws of the host jurisdiction and adhere to any social customs concerning conduct.

1.02 Conduct to Protect Children:

The safety, rights, and well-being of children is a priority of the BC Lacrosse Association (BCLA) and its membership. We nurture supportive relationships with children while balancing and encouraging appropriate boundaries. All staff, members and participants are expected to treat children with respect and dignity. They are to establish, respect and maintain appropriate boundaries with all children and families involved in activities and programs delivered by the BCLA and its members. All interactions and activities with children should be known to, and approved by, the member association and the parent/guardian of the child. For more information about Conduct to Protect Children - <https://www.protectchildren.ca/en/about-us/>.

1.03 An individual's conduct shall be in question when they:

- i) Breach any of the above Section 1.
- ii) Use their position within the BCLA for unauthorized personal and/or material gains.
- iii) Willfully circulate false, malicious statements, derogatory to any other member of the Association.
- iv) Willfully ignore or break the By-Laws, policies and/or rules and regulations of the BCLA.
- v) Counsel others to ignore or break the by-laws, policies, and/or rules and regulations of the BCLA.
- vi) Code of Conduct hearings will only be heard for offences not already covered by properly constituted penalties approved by the BCLA in all Directorates, Technical Support Groups and League Agreements.

1.04 General:

- i) The BCLA endorses the principles of natural justice and due process which allows any individual the right to a hearing and an appeal of any action which affects their rights.
- ii) The BCLA and its member governing bodies agree to honor and enforce disciplinary action taken by those governing bodies upon the completion of due process.

1.05 British Columbia Universal Code of Conduct (BC UCC):

The BC Lacrosse Association accepts all language contained in the British Columbia Universal Code of Conduct (BC UCC). A copy of the code is hosted on the viaSport BC website here: https://www.viasport.ca/sites/default/files/BC_UCC_2021.pdf.

2. Code of Conduct Complaint Policy

Purpose

It is recognized that most Member Associations, Directorates, Commissions, Leagues, and Technical Support Groups may have complaint and discipline processes. The BCLA Code of Conduct Discipline Committee will hear code of conduct complaints, outside of game play, when these member governing bodies are unable to make a decision and/or refer an egregious code of conduct complaint to the BCLA.

This policy will ensure that any irresponsible behavior or conduct occurring within sanctioned lacrosse activities and events and any other alleged breaches of governing documents can be reported and managed equitably and fairly through the BCLA Code of Conduct Discipline Committee. Further, this policy will specify the organization, procedures and functions of the code of conduct complaint process of the BCLA.

Standards

1. This Policy applies to all Individual Registrants and all Member Associations under the jurisdiction of the BCLA when engaged in any sanctioned lacrosse-related activities.
2. Discipline action may only be taken against an Individual Registrant or Member Association of the BCLA for misconduct, or attempted misconduct, occurring at the time of the incident and cannot be retroactively charged for incidents prior to registration of such person or organization.
3. Any person who is a parent/guardian or acting as a team official, administrator, match official, or associated with sanctioned lacrosse activities shall be considered an Individual Registrant regardless of whether they have registered to do so.
4. The sanctions outlined in this Policy represent the minimum that may be imposed by the BCLA and/or a member governing body. Member governing bodies shall not incorporate sanctions within their own disciplinary rules that fall below those specified in this Policy.

Raising A Code of Conduct Complaint

5. Code of conduct complaints should come forward when an Individual Registrant or Member Association:
 - a.) Breaches any aspects of the code of conduct outlined in BCLA General Operating Policy Section 1 "Code of Conduct";
 - b.) Uses its position within the BCLA for unauthorized personal and/or material gains;
 - c.) Willfully circulates false, malicious statements, derogatory to any other member of the BCLA; and/or
 - d.) Willfully ignores or breaks the by-laws, policies and/or rules and regulations of the BCLA;
6. Code of conduct hearings of the Code of Conduct Discipline Committee will only be heard for offenses not already covered by properly constituted penalties approved by BCLA member governing bodies.

Jurisdiction

7. The BCLA and its Code of Conduct Discipline Committee shall have direct jurisdiction in the following matters:
 - a.) Any code of conduct issues or complaints, outside of game play, involving players, coaches, team officials, parents/guardians, leagues, or officials.
 - b.) Egregious issues that have been referred from other member governing bodies, including Member Associations, Directorates, Commissions, Leagues, and Technical Support Groups.
8. The BCLA Board at its discretion may authorize an external panel to hear any complaints on their behalf or appoint an independent third party to conduct an investigation to determine the facts of the complaint prior to involving the Code of Conduct Discipline Committee. All findings made by an external panel or independent third party will be upheld by the Code of Conduct Discipline Committee.

Natural Justice and Duty to Act Fairly

9. This Policy follows the principles of natural justice aimed to provide Individual Registrants and Member Associations with a fair hearing.
10. All Individual Registrants and Member Associations have the right to and/or must be provided the right to:

- a.) A process free of bias: the members of the Code of Conduct Discipline Committee are unbiased, in that they are impartial and unprejudiced, and are reasonably perceived to be unbiased;
- b.) Prior notice: advance access to relevant information that identifies the allegations and contains sufficient information for respondents to respond to the allegations and participate meaningfully in the decision-making process.
- c.) Fair hearing: the respondent is afforded a timely and reasonable opportunity to participate in the hearing, and may either represent themselves, or be represented by a person of their choosing and the members of the Code of Conduct Discipline Committee genuinely consider the respondent's submissions in making their decision.

Confidentiality

11. Members of the Code of Conduct Discipline Committee will ensure that everything disclosed to them during the course of their work, including but not limited to the facts of the case, the contents of their deliberations, and the decisions taken, remains confidential.

Conflict of Interest

12. Members of the Code of Conduct Discipline Committee must decline to participate in any meeting concerning a matter in which they are in a real or perceived conflict of interest. Such instances include, but are not limited to the following:
 - a.) If the member in question has a direct interest in the outcome of the matter; or
 - b.) If the member has already dealt with the case under different circumstances.
13. The parties subject to any proceeding before the Code of Conduct Discipline Committee can raise an objection to a member of the Code of Conduct Discipline Committee hearing the case whom they believe to be biased or in a conflict of interest. The Chair, or designate, of the Committee must decide on any claim of bias or conflict of interest.
14. Proceedings that have involved a committee member whom the Chair, or designate, has ordered not to participate will be considered null and void.

Member Association Compliance

15. The BCLA and its member governing bodies agree to honor and enforce disciplinary action taken by the Code of Conduct Discipline Committee upon the completion of due process.

Limitation Period for Complaint

16. Submission of a code of conduct complaint must occur within 30 days of the infringement. In the event of serious misconduct, the BCLA Board may extend these timelines at their discretion.
17. If required, the BCLA Board may refer incidents of serious misconduct to the appropriate legal authorities.
18. Similar acts of misconduct may be considered a second or third offense if they occur within the above-noted timeframe.
19. Allegations of corruption are not subject to a limitation period from the BCLA.

Limitation Period for the Enforcement of Sanctions

20. The limitation period for the enforcement of sanctions is up to lifetime.
21. The limitation period begins on the day on which the decision comes into force.

Sanctions

22. The following sanctions at the discretion of the Code of Conduct Discipline Committee may be applied:
 - a.) Written Warning - A warning is a reminder of the substance of a disciplinary rule allied with the threat of a sanction in the event of a further infringement.
 - b.) Reprimand - A reprimand is an official written pronouncement of disapproval sent to the perpetrator of an infringement.
 - c.) Fine – The Code of Conduct Discipline Committee may impose monetary sanctions. These minimum fines may be increased based on the weight of evidence presented in the case. The Code of Conduct Discipline Committee decides the terms and time limits for payment.

- d.) Suspension – The Code of Conduct Discipline Committee may impose a suspension, for a specific length of time, from partial or all lacrosse related activity based on the weight of evidence presented in the case.
- e.) Expulsion - The Code of Conduct Discipline Committee may revoke membership, for a specific length of time or from all lacrosse related activity based on the weight of evidence presented in the case.
- f.) Return of Awards - The person required to return an award shall return the benefits received, and in particular sums of money and symbolic objects (medal, trophy).
- g.) Other sanctions as determined by the Code of Conduct Discipline Committee.

Composition

- 28. The Notice of Complaint (see clauses 38 - 41) should be submitted to the BCLA Executive Director, who upon review of complaint, will send confirmation of receipt to the complainant.
- 29. Within five (5) business days of receipt of complaint, the Executive Director will forward the complaint to the BCLA Board who will then determine the merit, at their next Board meeting, of whether a Discipline Committee should be formed. The Board may dismiss all or part of the complaint if it determines that:
 - a.) The complaint is not within Code of Conduct Discipline Committee jurisdiction;
 - b.) The complaint was not filed within an applicable time limit;
 - c.) The complaint was made in bad faith or filed with an improper purpose or motive.
- 30. If a Code of Conduct Discipline Committee is not warranted, the Vice President - Operations will inform the complainant.
- 31. If the BCLA Board determines a Code of Conduct Discipline Committee is warranted, that Code of Conduct Discipline Committee will be convened within thirty (30) business days.
- 32. The Chair of the Code of Conduct Discipline Committee will be the Vice President - Operations or a designate.
- 33. On an annual basis, the Vice President – Operations will establish a list of potential candidates to sit on the Code of Conduct Discipline Committee. This Code of Conduct Discipline Committee Membership List will be formed in consultation with the Chairs of the Minor, Senior, Recreation and Field Lacrosse Directorates, the Chairs of the BC Lacrosse Officials Group, the BC Lacrosse Volunteer Leadership Technical Support Group and the BC Lacrosse Coaches Group, who will each nominate five (5) potential candidates to participate in Code of Conduct Discipline Committee hearings.
- 34. The Chair of the Code of Conduct Discipline Committee, or designate, with the assistance from the BCLA Executive Director, will choose individuals from the Code of Conduct Discipline Committee Membership List to participate in a Code of Conduct Discipline Committee hearing.
- 35. The Chair of the Code of Conduct Discipline Committee, or designate, will inform the respondent of the complaint submitted against them within five (5) business days of the BCLA Board making a decision to form a Code of Conduct Discipline Committee. The Chair of the Code of Conduct Discipline Committee, or designate, will also inform the complainant if a Code of Conduct Discipline Committee hearing is proceeding within five (5) business days.
- 36. Each Code of Conduct Discipline Committee hearing will have a quorum of three.
- 37. The BCLA President and Vice President – Operations has the authority to amend or extend all related Code of Conduct Discipline Committee timelines.

Notice of Complaint

- 38. The Notice of Complaint should be submitted to the BCLA Executive Director and must include the following:
 - a.) The complainants name, address, phone number(s) and e-mail address;
 - b.) Identify the reason for the complaint;
 - c.) State the outcome requested.
- 39. All supporting documents must be submitted within ten (10) business days of the Notice of Complaint being submitted to the Executive Director and include the following:
 - a.) All relevant evidence;
 - b.) All relevant witness statements.

40. The Code of Conduct Discipline Committee shall commence formal review of the complaint within thirty (30) business days, outlining an expected schedule for completion to the complainant, respondent, and BCLA.
41. Review of the complaint will include a review of all relevant evidence submitted from the complainant and respondent.

Hearings

40. Proceedings of the Code of Conduct Discipline Committee will be closed to individuals who are not named parties or legal representatives unless all parties involved in the proceedings agree to admit the individual(s).
41. A hearing may be in any combination of in-person or virtual.
42. The Chair, or designate, will record the hearing. This recording will be forwarded to the BCLA to keep on file.
43. The Chair, or designate, has the right to adjourn a hearing, if required, and provide reasons for the adjournment. The Chair, or designate, must ensure that the adjournment does not impact any of the parties in a negative way.

Witnesses

44. Witnesses may be invited to a hearing if the Code of Conduct Discipline Committee determines they could add further clarifications to the proceedings.
45. The Code of Conduct Discipline Committee has the right, if necessary, to ask questions to the witnesses for a full and fair disclosure of the matters relevant to the hearing.
46. The Chair, or designate, may limit the examination of the witness if the Chair, or designate, is satisfied that the questions have been answered.

Decisions

47. The Code of Conduct Discipline Committee may attach terms or conditions to a decision.
48. The Code of Conduct Discipline Committee's decision is effective on the date on which it is issued, unless otherwise specified, and will not be held in abeyance during any appeal process.
49. The Chair, or designate, must communicate the Committee's final decision in writing within seven (7) business days to the parties affected by the decision, and give reasons for the decision. A copy of this letter must be sent to the BCLA to keep on file.

Failure to Respect Decisions

50. Any financial or non-financial decision that has been pronounced against a person or organization by the Code of Conduct Discipline Committee shall be enforced by the BCLA and its member governing bodies, in accordance with the standards established by this policy and in compliance with the applicable disciplinary procedures.

Appeals

51. Appeals of any decision, or disciplinary action from the Code of Conduct Discipline Committee or other member governing body involving players, coaches, parents/guardians, leagues, officials, or team officials for all jurisdictions of the BCLA should be made to the Appeal Committee (see: BCLA Appeal Policy, Appendix A, BCLA General Operating Policy).