



## **DISPUTE RESOLUTION POLICY**

### **Definitions**

1. The following term has this meaning in this Policy:
  - a) “*Individuals*” – All categories of membership defined in the Ringette Ontario Bylaws, as well as all individuals employed by, or engaged in activities with, Ringette Ontario including, but not limited to, athletes, coaches, convenors, referees, officials, volunteers, managers, administrators, committee members, and directors and officers of Ringette Ontario.

### **Purpose**

2. Ringette Ontario supports the principles of Alternate Dispute Resolution (ADR) and is committed to the techniques of negotiation, facilitation, and mediation as effective ways to resolve disputes. Alternate Dispute Resolution also avoids the uncertainty, costs, and other negative effects associated with lengthy appeals or complaints, or with litigation.
3. Ringette Ontario encourages all Individuals to communicate openly, collaborate, and use problem-solving and negotiation techniques to resolve their differences. Ringette Ontario believes that negotiated settlements are usually preferable to outcomes resolved through other dispute resolution techniques. Negotiated resolutions to disputes with and among Individuals are strongly encouraged.

### **Application of this Code**

4. This Policy applies to all Individuals.
5. Opportunities for Alternate Dispute Resolution may be pursued at any point in a dispute within Ringette Ontario when all parties to the dispute agree that such a course of action would be mutually beneficial.

### **Filing a Dispute**

6. Any Individual may file a dispute with the Ringette Ontario office. The dispute must be in writing and signed and must be filed within fourteen (14) days of the alleged incident or decision. Anonymous disputes may be accepted at the sole discretion of Ringette Ontario.
7. A dispute filed outside of the fourteen (14) day period must provide a written statement giving reasons for

an exemption to this limitation. The decision to accept, or not accept, the dispute outside of the fourteen (14) day period will be at the sole discretion of Ringette Ontario. This decision may not be appealed.

### **Facilitation and Mediation**

8. The dispute will first be referred to Ringette Ontario's Executive Director (or designate) for review, with the objective of resolving the dispute via Alternate Dispute Resolution and/or mediation.
9. If all parties to a dispute agree to Alternate Dispute Resolution, a mediator or facilitator, acceptable to all parties, shall be appointed to mediate or facilitate the dispute.
10. The mediator or facilitator shall decide the format under which the dispute shall be mediated or facilitated and shall specify a deadline before which the parties must reach a negotiated decision.
11. Should a negotiated decision be reached, the decision shall be reported to, and approved by, Ringette Ontario. Any actions that are to take place as a result of the decision shall be enacted on the timelines specified by the negotiated decision, pending Ringette Ontario's approval.
12. Should a negotiated decision not be reached by the deadline specified by the mediator or facilitator at the start of the process, or if the parties to the dispute do not agree to Alternate Dispute Resolution, the dispute shall be considered under the appropriate section of Ringette Ontario's *Discipline and Complaints Policy*.
13. The costs of mediation and facilitation will be shared equally by the parties.

### **Final and Binding**

14. Any negotiated decision will be binding on the parties. Negotiated decisions may not be appealed.
15. No action or legal proceeding will be commenced against Ringette Ontario or its Individuals in respect of a dispute, unless Ringette Ontario has refused or failed to provide or abide by the dispute resolution processes set out in its governing documents.

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