



NOHA CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY

Date Created:	Committee:	Date Approved:
December 1, 2023	Board of Directors	July 23, 2024

Definitions

- **Family Member:** Includes a parent, spouse or partner (including same-sex spouses or partners), child, sibling, uncle, aunt, niece or nephew, parents-in-law, sister or brother-in-law, and step-relatives of any of the foregoing.
- **The NOHA:** Refers to the Northern Ontario Hockey Association and encompasses all NOHA Participants.
- **NOHA Participants:** Encompasses directors, officers, employees, partners, agents, volunteers, committee members, subcommittee members, advisory or review team members assisting with NOHA Programs.

Purpose of the Conflict-of-Interest Policy

The NOHA recognizes the necessity of maintaining public trust and confidence in its use of public funds and administration of Programs. The primary objectives of this Policy are to:

- Establish clear guidelines for managing conflicts of interest within the NOHA.
- Reduce potential conflicts between the NOHA's private interests and its obligations under this policy.

Conflict of Interest & Perceived Conflict of Interest

- **Conflict of Interest:** Arises when the NOHA's interests' conflict with its responsibilities outlined in this policy.
- **Perceived Conflict of Interest:** Occurs when there isn't an actual conflict, but public perception suggests that a conflict might exist, potentially undermining Program integrity.

Examples of Conflict of Interest

1. Parental Association

Consider a situation where a Board member's child is part of a Team in the NOHA. When decisions are made regarding the Tournament of Champions, for example, the member might subtly sway the discussions to favor the circumstances that would benefit their child's team, potentially disadvantaging others.

2. Coach and Referee Conflict

A Board member who also serves as a Coach might have friends or acquaintances among the on-ice Officials. During discussions about Officials selection for Championships, this member might consciously or unconsciously influence decisions in favor of Officials associated with their social circle, potentially affecting fairness in game officiating.

In each of these scenarios, conflicts of interest arise due to the dual roles or personal connections of the Board members within the hockey community. Proper management, disclosure, and recusal are essential to ensure that decisions made by the Board remain

unbiased and in the best interest of the entire association rather than favoring individual teams, businesses, or personal relationships.

Principles

The NOHA commits to the following principles:

- **Ethical Standards:** Act with honesty, upholding high ethical standards to maintain public trust.
- **Public Scrutiny:** Obligated to perform duties in a manner subject to public scrutiny, surpassing mere compliance with the law.
- **Private Interests:** Must align private interests to prevent conflicts; resolve conflicts favoring public interest.

Conflict of Interest Provisions

- **Prohibited Use of Position:** NOHA Executives shall not seek personal benefit or favor any individuals, entities, or organizations dealing with the NOHA.
- **Confidential Information:** NOHA Executives must not disclose confidential Program information or benefit from revealing such information.
- **Gifts, Hospitality, and Other Benefits:** Executives must decline gifts, hospitality, or benefits that could influence their judgment or obligations under this Policy.
- **Avoidance of Preferential Treatment:** Executives shall not provide preferential treatment or offer unauthorized assistance in obtaining Program benefits.
- **Employment Relationships:** Board members cannot hold employment within the NOHA.

Procedures - Declaration of Interest

- NOHA Executives having any interest, direct or indirect, in organizations, grant recipients, or service providers must declare such interests and abstain from voting on relevant resolutions.

- Directors or officers, along with their Family Members, having a material interest in businesses providing services to the NOHA, must declare such interests to the Board and refrain from voting on related matters.
- Any NOHA Executive with a material interest in a NOHA contract must declare it to the Board, which will determine the existence of an actual or perceived conflict and take corrective action.

Declaring Conflict of Interest at Meetings

Declaration of Conflict of Interest is a standing agenda item for all NOHA Board of Director Meetings. The following will be the process to declare a conflict of interest during Meetings:

1. Introduction by Chair

The Chair introduces the agenda item, emphasizing the importance of transparency and compliance with conflict-of-interest guidelines.

2. Director's Disclosure

When the item is announced, any Director who perceives or has a conflict of interest should speak up. They should clearly state their name and the nature of the conflict.

3. Nature of the Conflict

The Director should explicitly describe the conflict without divulging unnecessary details, focusing on the conflict's relevance to the ongoing discussion or agenda item.

4. Recusal or Abstention

Upon declaring the conflict, the director should state their intention to recuse themselves from any decision-making process related to the conflicting matter. This includes abstaining from voting, discussing, or influencing the topic.

5. Documenting the Conflict

The meeting secretary or a designated individual should document the declaration, noting the director's name, the nature of the conflict, and the subsequent actions (such as abstention or recusal).

6. Clarification or Questions

If needed, other board members or the Chair may ask clarifying questions to ensure a full understanding of the conflict.

7. Chair's Acknowledgment

The Chair acknowledges the declaration, thanks the director for their transparency, and reiterates the importance of such declarations in maintaining the integrity of the board's decisions.

8. Continuation of Meeting

With the conflict declared and acknowledged, the meeting proceeds, keeping in mind the director's recusal from the specific agenda item connected to the conflict.

9. Follow-Up and Recordkeeping

After the meeting, ensure the documentation of the conflict declaration is properly filed in the meeting minutes or conflict of interest register for future reference and compliance purposes.

10. Appointment of Director to Address Matter with Association (if necessary)

In the event of a Director declaring a conflict of interest, the President shall appoint another Director to handle the matter, ensuring impartial resolution and adherence to this Policy.