



GREEN ARMBAND INITIATIVE:

**An Initiative to Reduce Harassment and
Abuse of Minor Officials within HEO**

Green Armband Initiative

- History
- Objectives
- HEO Green Armband Initiative
- Why are we doing this?
- Supplementary Discipline Changes
- Next Steps
- Contacts



History

- Introduced in [Montreal and Quebec City](#) in January 2020 following a similar program implemented in the Montreal baseball program.
- Requires all officials under the age of 18 to wear green armband on left arm for all their games regardless of whether they are working as a referee or linesperson.
- All first year officials (18 years and older) were also required to wear green armband.
- Suspensions for spectators, coaches, and players involving green armband officials would be higher compared to games not involving these officials.

Objectives

- Reduce harassment and abuse of younger on-ice officials by clearly identifying them as minors to coaches, parents, players, and league officials
- Educate coaches, parents, players, and league officials about the challenges officials face with respect to harassment and abuse while officiating minor hockey games

HEO Green Armband Initiative

- All officials below the age of 18 will wear one green armband on their left arm during all games to identify these officials as minors to team officials, spectators, and parents.
- Supplementary discipline for team officials targeting green armband wearing officials to be doubled.
- Education campaign to promote initiative and raise awareness about harassment and abuse of officials across HEO.

Why are we doing this?

- Right thing to do to protect the psychological and physical safety of minor officials.
- Like many branches across Canada, recruitment and retention of officials continues to be a challenge particularly in some of our smaller communities.
- Over 40% of all HEO officials are under the age of 18 and work a large portion of all minor hockey games in the Branch.
- 1 out of every 3 officials quit after their first year. Over half quit after two years and 65% are no longer officials after 3 years.
- Officials cite harassment and abuse as a reason why they have decided to quit officiating.

Supplementary Discipline Changes

- Increase supplementary discipline for certain infractions in games involving officials wearing green armbands
- Increased minimum supplementary discipline would only apply for team officials. Increase would **not** apply to players
- Infractions impacted include:
 - GM20, 21- Harassment of Officials (9.2A, B)
 - GRM21- Taunts, Discriminatory Comments re: race, gender, sexual orientation, etc. (9.2F)
 - GRM23, 24- Travesty of Games (4.7B)
 - MP20- Threatens, Attempts to Strike (9.6A)
 - MP21- Intentional Contact (9.6B)
 - MP22- Deliberate Striking (9.6C)
- Minimum suspensions for those committing infractions against or toward green armband officials will double (see [Annex](#) for more details)

Conditions Necessary to Be Assessed Increased Supplementary Discipline

- For all infractions identified above, if the official being targeted is wearing a green armband, the increased supplementary discipline should be assessed regardless of which official on the ice makes the call (i.e., the official being targeted, another green armband official or a more senior official).
- If the official being targeted is not wearing a green armband and the call is made by a green armband official, then the increased supplementary discipline should **not** be assessed. Instead, the regular supplementary discipline should be used.

Rationale for Increasing Supplementary Discipline

- Objective is to reduce harassment and abuse of officials at all levels but particularly the most vulnerable (i.e., minors).
- Education campaign is important but won't address all problems.
- Increased minimum supplementary discipline for incidents involving young officials demonstrates HEO's commitment to eliminate this kind of behaviour from the game and recognizes the severity of team officials (mostly adults) who abuse and/or harass minor officials (below the age of 18).

Next Steps

- Promotion of initiative across the Branch (officials, coaches, district chairs, association executives, parents, players, etc.) through poster campaign, presentations, media interviews, etc. as a means to increase awareness of challenges faced by officials and educate members of the hockey community about how they can help.
- Respond to questions about initiative.

Contacts

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Annex



GM20, 21 Harassment of Official (9.2A, B)

| | 1st Offense | 2nd Offense | 3rd Offense |
|---|-------------|----------------------------|--|
| Current Discipline | 2 games | 4 games + District Hearing | Until HEO Minor Council D&A Hearing |
| For team officials targeting green armband officials only | 4 games | 8 games + District Hearing | Until HEO Minor Hockey D&A Hearing (with recognition of special circumstances (i.e., infraction involving a minor by a coach, team official, parent, or other adult having reached the age of majority)) |

GRM21- Taunts, Discriminatory Comments re: race, gender, sexual orientation, etc. (9.2F)

| | 1st Offense | 2nd Offense | 3rd Offense |
|---|-------------|-----------------------------|--|
| Current Discipline | 7 games | 8 games + District Hearing | Until HEO Minor Council D&A Hearing |
| For team officials targeting green armband officials only | 14 games | 16 games + District Hearing | Until HEO Minor Hockey D&A Hearing (with recognition of special circumstances (i.e., infraction involving a minor by a coach, team official, parent, or other adult having reached the age of majority)) |

GRM23, 24- Travesty of Game (4.7B)

| | 1st Offense | 2nd Offense | 3rd Offense |
|---|-------------|----------------------------|--|
| Current Discipline | 3 games | 4 games + District Hearing | Until HEO Minor Council D&A Hearing |
| For team officials targeting green armband officials only | 6 games | 8 games + District Hearing | Until HEO Minor Hockey D&A Hearing (with recognition of special circumstances (i.e., infraction involving a minor by a coach, team official, parent, or other adult having reached the age of majority)) |

MP20- Threatens, Attempts to Strike an Official (9.6A)

MP21- Intentional Contact with an Official (9.6B)

MP22- Deliberate Striking an Official (9.6C)

| | 1st Offense | 2nd Offense | 3rd Offense |
|---|--|-------------|-------------|
| Current Discipline | Until HEO Minor Council D&A Hearing | | |
| For team officials targeting green armband officials only | Until HEO Minor Hockey D&A Hearing (with recognition of special circumstances (i.e., infraction involving a minor by a coach, team official, parent, or other adult having reached the age of majority)) | | |