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## **POSITION ON HARASSMENT AND ABUSE**

Baseball Ontario is committed to providing a sport and work environment in which all individuals are treated with respect and dignity. Each individual has the right to participate and work in an environment which promotes equal opportunities and prohibits discriminatory practices. Baseball Ontario will not tolerate harassment among its members, participants and employees.

Harassment takes many forms, but can generally be defined as comment, conduct or gesture directed toward an individual or group of individuals, which is insulting, intimidating, humiliating, malicious, degrading or offensive. Sexual harassment refers to any sexual advances, requests, suggestions or activity of a sexual nature that is unwelcomed by the recipient. Harassment is discriminatory, degrading and threatening. In its most extreme forms, harassment can be an offence under Canada's Criminal Code.

Baseball Ontario strives to provide the safest possible environment for all of our participants. We encourage all of our member associations to do whatever is required in their circumstances to eliminate and protect against all forms of harassment. To assist in meeting this goal, Baseball Ontario will provide to all member associations, upon request, up to date literature on the subject. The objective is to make baseball a sport in which children can feel safe playing and in which parents can feel safe having their children play.

Baseball Ontario strongly encourages all of its members to learn to recognize and understand what constitutes harassment. An individual, who perceives any activity as a form of harassment, should be encouraged to tell the offending party that the activity is not appreciated. If the offending behaviour continues, the complainant should be encouraged and supported in notifying the appropriate authorities, including the executive of the relevant baseball association. The authorities should act promptly and with integrity, while respecting the rights of all those involved.

If someone in authority uses his/her power or position to harm another, whether emotionally, physically or sexually, this is abuse. If a person is threatened, intimidated, taunted or subjected to racial, homophobic or sexist slurs, this is harassment. Emotional and physical abuses are attacks on a child's self-esteem and can be psychologically damaging. Name calling, threatening, ridiculing, intimidating, isolating, hazing or ignoring a player's needs are examples of emotional abuse and should not be tolerated at any level. Any purposeful attack on a player, coach or umpire such as slapping, kicking, hair pulling, shaking, shoving, grabbing, etc. can be physical abuse and is both offensive and unacceptable.

Baseball Ontario encourages all of its member associations to report situations that are deemed to be harassment or abuse immediately to the Local Association which is responsible for the team. The Local Association executive are encouraged to have in place measures to deal with such a situation in an expedient and fair manner.

Baseball Ontario recognizes the independence and integrity of the Affiliated and Local Associations and commits to supplying the measure of support required to ensure that all members are aware of their rights and obligations.