



*Oxford Skating Club*

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***Conflict Resolution Process  
and  
Grievance Policies  
and Procedures  
Handbook***

Note: United States Figure Skating strongly recommends that each affiliate skating club has in place a formal grievance procedure to handle conflict and the resolution of such conflict. These grievance procedures, written in accordance with USFS guidelines, encourage USFS affiliate club members to work toward resolution of conflicts within the confines of the home club first. Grievances filed with USFS prior to filing with the member's home club will be turned back to the home club for attempt at resolution.

*May 2008*

The ***Conflict Resolution and Grievance Policies and Procedures Handbook*** addresses procedures to be undertaken when conflict arises within Oxford Skating Club (OSC or 'Club'). Specifically, this document provides guidance for addressing conflict arising from disagreements between members, and violations of OSC and/or USFS rules, regulations and codes of conduct by any OSC member, including skaters, parents, coaches, Board members, and others associated with the Club.

The Oxford Skating Club encourages all Club members (skaters, parents, coaches, Board members, skating officials, etc.) to make every reasonable effort to address concerns and resolve issue(s) with other Club member(s) directly before filing a formal, written grievance which will involve the OSC Board and the Grievance Committee. It is in the best interest of all involved with the OSC to resolve differences personally and in private, without the need for a formal grievance.

It should be noted that resolution of conflict procedures are a serious matter, and should not be taken lightly. As a small Club, many skaters share coaches in common and Club members attend many events together. To that end, it is most appropriate to avoid raising an issue or a difference in the presence of uninvolved members of the OSC. Special care should be taken to ensure that minors (skaters and other children) are not present unless the subject of concern and required to be present. OSC recommends that the use of private resolution of conflict procedures take place in a setting well away from the earshot and view of others so that conversations will not be overheard.

### **The OSC Conflict Resolution Procedure**

Conflict arises when individuals disagree. In the case of skating, the most common conflicts arise as a function of a rules violation of some kind on the part of a skater, coach, Board member, parent, or other skating official associated with the Club. To that end, the Board of Directors has established a process that will accompany ANY violation of Club or USFS rules, regulations, or codes of conduct. It should be noted that all OSC Synchronized Skating Team coaches will have the authority to detail additional and specific rules of conduct and behavior as deemed necessary for on and off the ice, including but not limited to, dress code, language, preparedness and attendance.

This mandatory process involves three steps as follows:

1. Issuance of a Written warning
2. Issuance of a Written reprimand
3. Issuance of a second written reprimand and some additional consequence including loss of skating privileges/suspension of Club membership/fines/community service, etc.

Required written documentation will be customary as part of any conflict resolution process when a coach or other Club official (e.g. team manager, skating director) is involved. The following provides details regarding the use of this three step/three strike procedure.

**Issuance of a Written Warning.** Conflict is often a result of a violation of rules, regulations, or codes of conduct by a member of the Club. In handling matters that may arise in a skating environment with minor children, it is the opinion of the OSC board and coaches, that parents and guardians are the first, best resource to address with the alleged violation. As such, if an OSC minor skater violates a rule, regulation, or code of conduct of the Club, team or USFS, a coach, team manager, current board member, or other skating official will notify the parent(s) and request that the matter be immediately addressed and specifically outline the ways in which the skater has compromised the rules, regulations or code of conduct that is expected of all OSC members outlined in the Skaters' Handbook. In addition to the skater, parent(s)/guardian(s), and affected skating official (coach, team manager, etc.), one additional OSC representative (Director of Skating, OSC Board member, etc.) will be present. When the offender is not a minor skater, but an adult member, coach, Board member, or skating official, the involved parties will meet with an additional unbiased OSC Board member to discuss the violation. Such meetings will take place immediately following the infraction if possible, but within one week of the offense.

A written warning will be issued at the time of these meetings, and Club members (and parent if a minor) will be required to sign a written warning that will remain on file with the OSC Board Vice-President. The written warning will include a description of the rule, regulation, or code of conduct violated and expected steps required of the member to immediately rectify the situation. This warning is strike number one.

**Issuing a Written Reprimand.** If the skater fails to correct his or her behavior, or continues to violate OSC or USFS rules and/or regulations or code of conduct, after being issued a written warning, a mandatory written reprimand will be issued. It should be noted that a written reprimand can threaten the skater's standing with the Club. It should also be noted that the warning and the reprimand do not have to address the same type of offense or violation. (For example, one might receive a warning for not showing up for practice on time, then a later warning for not wearing appropriate practice attire. In other words, the initial warning and consequent reprimand do not have to address the same violation.)

With the issuance of a written reprimand, the coaches, OSC Board, other skating officials may also choose to levy an additional consequence to the member. This additional consequence could include a fine, community service work, and/or benching for a practice, exhibition, or competition, depending upon the seriousness of the violation and the member involved. Members issued a written reprimand must understand the seriousness of this action. This is strike number two.

**Issuance of a Second Written Reprimand and Mandatory Consequence.** Should a member receive a second written reprimand (for any reason), this may be cause for removal from a team, suspension of membership with no refund and possible dismissal from the Club. Additionally, skating members who receive a second written reprimand will be considered "not in good standing" by the OSC Board. A "not in good standing" position with the Club precludes a member from participating in testing and

Club activities, and representing the Club in any public forum (competitions, exhibitions, etc.). Coaches may replace a team skater with an alternate for the remainder of the skating season. The Board may decide to impose volunteer work for the Club, a fine, etc. Formal reinstatement of a skater who has been formally reprimanded to “good standing” is at the discretion of the OSC Board in consultation with the Skating Director, and affected team coaches. A second written reprimand is strike number three.

Forms for a written warning and written reprimand that will be filed with the OSC Board are found in the Appendices of this document.

## **Grievance Policies and Procedures**

It is possible that the Conflict Resolution Process outlined above will not resolve the conflict, or result in actions that the affected member will want to appeal. To that end, the parties involved have the right to file a formal grievance with the Secretary of the OSC Board. Filing a formal grievance signals that the aggrieved party wishes to have immediate intervention by the Oxford Skating Club Board, instead of working through the conflict with coaches, other members, etc.

The following outlines the process associated with filing a formal, written grievance.

- Preparing the Written Document and Filing the Grievance
  - A written grievance must be filed with the OSC Board Secretary within 15 days of the event in question. The form to complete a written grievance is included in the Appendix of this document.
  - The written grievance must be accompanied by a filing fee of \$50.00, (check made payable to OSC). The grievance will not be considered filed until both the written document and the \$50 filing fee is received by the OSC Board Secretary.
  - The Secretary of OSC Board will send a written acknowledgement of receipt of the written grievance to the person(s) filing the grievance. The Secretary will also notify the Vice-President of the Board to prepare to assemble the Grievance Committee. The Vice-President or his/her designee will speak with the individual(s) raising the grievance and attempt to resolve the issue before moving forward.
  - If the grievance and/or dispute is able to be resolved to the satisfaction of the individual(s) raising the grievance, and the individual(s) raising the grievance have agreed not to proceed to Step II of the Grievance Procedure, then the Secretary will report the fact that (1) a grievance was filed and (2) the grievance was resolved, to the OSC Board at the next scheduled meeting.
- Distribution of a Formal Written Grievance and Establishment of a Grievance Committee
  - Within 30 days of the date that the written grievance is filed: the Secretary will proceed as follows:

- The Board Secretary will provide a copy of the written grievance to the individual(s) whom the grievance addresses; and
  - Submit the written grievance to all members of the OSC Board;
  - The OSC Board Vice President will establish a “Grievance Committee” on a case-by-case basis and this committee shall consist of at least 4 adults who believe they can render a fair and unbiased decision in the case. These 4 adults can all be current OSC board members, but may also be coaches from other ice rinks, and/or community members with experience in addressing conflicts and grievances (e.g. mental health professionals, teachers, school guidance counselors);
  - The Grievance Committee will meet and render a decision within 15 days of its formation to determine whether or not a Hearing is necessary. The Grievance Committee will also make another attempt to resolve the grievance at hand in order to avoid a formal hearing.
- Grievance Hearing Procedures
  - If deemed necessary and appropriate by the Vice President’s Grievance Committee, a Grievance Hearing date will be scheduled within 15 days of the Grievance Committee being formed.
  - Prior to the Hearing, the individual(s) to whom the grievance is addressed will be afforded an opportunity to respond in writing and the same will be provided to all members of the OSC Board, as well as to the individual(s) who filed the grievance.
  - All involved parties are required to appear in front of the OSC Board and the Grievance Committee. The number of Board members that must be present at the Hearing will follow the current by-laws regarding a Board quorum (2 officers and 4 others board members). Every effort will be made to accommodate work schedules. If a member of the OSC Board feels a conflict of interest, and the inability to remain fair and unbiased it is his or her duty to secure another person who is judged capable of hearing the complaint. This other party could be a community member who is familiar with disciplinary issues and conflict resolution such as a mental health professional, teacher, or other school official. Five (5) current board members must accept that the proposed substitute is appropriate and capable, is an adult over the age of 18, *and* has the necessary experience to hear the complaint.
- Determination of the OSC Board
  - If the Board finds the accused member, parent/guardian and/or professional / coach guilty of a violation, the board may recommend a penalty for the misconduct. All disciplinary action will be determined on a case by-case basis.
  - The decision of the Board in this process will be final and binding.

The Oxford Skating Club values its members and believes that immediate

termination of membership/contract is appropriate only in very serious cases of misconduct. Consistent with this belief, it is the OSC's general policy to correct misconduct before it rises to a level requiring discharge. Accordingly, the OSC Board (in a Grievance Hearing) has the option of using the following progressive discipline process:

Step 1: Verbal Warning

Step 2: Written Reprimand

Step 3: Suspension and/or Termination of Membership or suspension or termination of skater or coaching contract.

Because some misconduct is severe and/or dangerous it may warrant skipping steps in the process. The OSC Board reserves the right to immediately terminate a contract/membership or skip any step(s) in the progressive discipline process if the misconduct in question is judged by at least 6 (six) OSC board members and 2 other skating officials (e.g. coach, skating director) to be severe, and injurious to the membership at large.

# Appendices

## Forms for OSC Discipline Processes

**Oxford Skating Club  
Issuance of Written Warning**

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name/title of person issuing warning \_\_\_\_\_

Member who is being warned \_\_\_\_\_

Specific OSC codes of conduct or by-laws that have been violated

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Desired outcome of warning/actions expected

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Member

\_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Parent/Guardian (if member is a minor)

\_\_\_\_\_

Signature of OSC official (coach, Board member, etc.)

\_\_\_\_\_

**Oxford Skating Club  
Issuance of Written Reprimand**

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name/title of person issuing the reprimand

\_\_\_\_\_

Member being reprimanded

\_\_\_\_\_

Specific OSC codes of conduct or by-laws that have been violated

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Desired outcome of reprimand

\_\_\_\_\_

My signature below indicates that I understand that my good standing with the Oxford Skating Club is compromised until I resolve all issues in question with the OSC Board

Signature of  
Member \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Parent/Guardian (if member is a minor)

\_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Coach/Skating Official

\_\_\_\_\_

# Oxford Skating Club Grievance Filing Form

Date \_\_\_\_\_

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

E-MAIL \_\_\_\_\_

Please provide the following information:

1. The date and time of the event in question:

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2. A specific statement of the written code of conduct, policy and/or procedure violated. What action or conduct constituted the violation and what happened? Who was involved? (Include any witnesses.) (Additional pages may be submitted).

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Total number of pages attached \_\_\_\_\_

3. The resolution or remedy you want. (Additional pages may be submitted).

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Total number of pages attached \_\_\_\_\_

4. Are there any witness(es)? Will they be willing to testify?

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Note: This form, along with a \$50 filing fee, is to be filed with the OSC Board Secretary if you wish to have OSC Board involvement in your grievance. Before taking this step you are reminded to try to resolve your grievance informally with the parties involved in a private and respectful manner.