



DATE: August 1, 2021

RE: **PVAHA Protocols for violation of Rule 601(e)3 —
Use of language that is offensive, hateful or
discriminatory in nature**

Pursuant to the directive issued by USA Hockey President Jim Smith on October 30, 2019, officials are instructed that anyone penalized under Rule 601(e)3 will receive a match penalty (in lieu of the game misconduct previously in the rule), which carries a five-minute penalty, disqualification from that game, and suspension from further participation until such time the governing Affiliate (PVAHA) has conducted a hearing to review the matter. Rule 601(e)3 applies to any situation where a person uses language that is **offensive, hateful or discriminatory in nature anywhere in the rink before, during or after the game**. The Affiliate, PVAHA, has up to 30 days to investigate and conduct a hearing and the offending individual(s) is subject to further discipline. Officials are also instructed to immediately file a game report to the proper authorities immediately following the game and the Affiliate, PVAHA, must review all incidents, whether penalized or unpenalized, to ensure proper application of the rules.

A player who is the target of offensive, hateful or discriminatory language during the course of a game shall report it to the game official at the next stoppage of play after the comment was heard. The official(s) will report the incident to the coach and captain of the team allegedly using the offensive comments or actions and advise the team of the required penalty if such comments were heard. At the same stoppage, the official(s) will similarly advise the team reporting the incident. In addition, the official(s) are required to notify the proper authorities of the incident via game report.

The following protocols are in effect for all games sanctioned by PVAHA. It will provide a structure consistent within the rules of USA Hockey for the handling of all Rule 601(e)3 violations.

1. Match penalty assessed for offensive, hateful or discriminatory language under Rule 601(e)3:

If an official hears a player using language that is offensive, hateful or discriminatory in nature, that player is immediately assessed a match penalty and is removed from the game. Officials are instructed to file a game report to the proper authorities, PVAHA, immediately following the game.

- The Affiliate, PVAHA, will review the game report and any other documentation relative to the incident, to determine whether the match penalty is warranted.



- If the match penalty is warranted, the Affiliate, PVAHA, will notify the program and the offending player/team official of suspension and pending hearing pursuant to USA Hockey By-Law 10 of the *Annual Guide*. The hearing will be conducted at the Affiliate level.
- If the action is confirmed, the offending player/team official is provided a minimum suspension of three (3) games. The Affiliate, PVAHA, may also impose a longer suspension if deemed appropriate, and may also include other conditions (sensitivity training, counseling, apology, etc.) in order for the player/team official to return to eligibility. The hearing determination is subject to any normal appeal rights.
- If it is determined either in the initial review or at the hearing level a match penalty was not warranted the offending player/team official may be reinstated or may be subject to other appropriate sanctions; e.g., a game misconduct under a different rule.
- A summary report of the hearing and action taken shall be forwarded to the USA Hockey national office.

2. Official improperly assessed a game misconduct penalty for language that is offensive, hateful or discriminatory in nature under Rule 601(e)3:

- The Affiliate, PVAHA, is alert to all game reports submitted and if it identifies that a game misconduct was improperly assessed under Rule 601(e)3, proper follow up is required.
- The Affiliate, PVAHA, does an initial review to determine whether a match penalty is potentially warranted based on the official's game report. This may require follow up with the officials. If a match penalty is not warranted, then the game misconduct stands.
- If a match penalty is found warranted, the Affiliate, PVAHA, notifies the program and the offending player/team official of the suspension and of pending hearing pursuant to USA Hockey By-Law 10 of the *Annual Guide*. The hearing is conducted at the Affiliate level.
- If the action is confirmed, the offending player/team official is provided a minimum suspension of three (3) games. The Affiliate, PVAHA, may also impose a longer suspension if deemed appropriate, and may also include other conditions (sensitivity training, counseling, apology, etc.) in order for the player/team official to return to eligibility. The hearing determination is subject to all normal appeal rights.
- If it is determined either in the initial review or at the hearing level a match penalty was not warranted the offending player/team official may be reinstated or may be subject to other appropriate sanctions; e.g., a game misconduct under a different rule.
- A summary report of the hearing and action taken shall be forwarded to the USA Hockey national office.

3. Match penalty potentially inappropriately assessed for hateful/discriminatory language

- The Affiliate, PVAHA, does an initial review to determine whether a match penalty is warranted.
- If not warranted, or the rule was misapplied, and the action does not fall under Rule 601(e)3, the match penalty is rescinded and the player may be assessed a game misconduct penalty or other appropriate sanctions.

- The program and offending player/team official are notified of the result.
- The District Referee-in-Chief is notified for further education of the official(s) involved as to the proper application of the rules

4. Hateful/discriminatory language is reported to the game official(s) but it was not heard on the ice by the officials

- The game officials are instructed to notify the coach of the offending player/team official of what was reported to them for proper action by the coach. The game officials will also notify the coach of the offended team of what was reported to them for proper action by the coach.
- The official(s) are required to submit a game report under the category of “Other Incident” and give a detailed description of what was reported to them.
- Once the report is received by the Affiliate, PVAHA, an investigation begins to gather additional information and determine whether the language used can be confirmed by other parties that warrants additional disciplinary action.
- If the language can be confirmed and is deemed to be appropriate under Rule 601(e)3, then the procedure outlined in paragraph 1 should be followed.
- If the language cannot be confirmed, then the Affiliate, PVAHA, shall contact the association leadership of the offending team to gather follow-up information as to the actions taken by the association to minimize this type of behavior in the future.

5. Hateful/discriminatory language is reported to the League or Affiliate official(s), but it was not reported by the game officials

- If a report of offensive, hateful or discriminatory language is brought to the attention of any coach, league official, or Affiliate Director, the report of information shall be brought to the attention of the Affiliate President.
- The Affiliate President will determine if the language rises to the level of a violation of SafeSport regulations, the investigation will be deferred to the Affiliate SafeSport Coordinator.
- The Affiliate SafeSport Coordinator shall conduct the investigation in keeping with the established protocols.
- If during the preliminary review of the behavior finds that the language was offensive, hateful, or discriminatory and may impact future interactions between participants, the offending participant may face a summary suspension until a hearing can be held by the Affiliate.
- If the investigation finds that the language was offensive, hateful, or discriminatory the sanctioned imposed will be no less than 3 games.

Yours in hockey,

Board of Directors

Potomac Valley Amateur Hockey Association (PVAHA)