



## AOA Dispute Resolution and Appeal Policy

Reviewed: February 2020

Conflict can be a part of human interaction and if managed well, can be productive and, depending on its nature, may be resolved without formal complaint filing.

**AOA is committed to treating all members fairly and with respect and has policies and procedures that provide internal and external alternatives to support appropriately transparent and timely resolution of conflicts.**

AOA Dispute Resolution and Appeal Policy encompasses a process that provides internal options before external alternatives to ensure that issues can be resolved with appropriate transparency and timeliness, and in accordance with the principles of natural justice and procedural fairness.

Good decision making is served by transparency – the reasons for making the decision are accessible and assessable.

### **Process:**

When disputes occur, the member, athlete, coach, volunteer or employee may bring the issue to the AOA board of directors for their consideration. Depending on the issue, an executive committee of 3 or more members of the board, who have no conflict of interest, may be formed to address the request at the next board meeting and report back the duly recorded issue and decision.

To provide for an effective alternative dispute resolution between AOA and its members, athletes, volunteers, coaches and employees, and to avoid the harm of litigation, the AOA supports the principles of 'alternative dispute resolution' and is committed to techniques of mediation and arbitration as effective ways to resolve disputes with its members. Accordingly, opportunities for mediation may be pursued at any point in a dispute where it is appropriate and where such a course of action would be mutually beneficial.

In the event a dispute persists after internal avenues of decision-making and appeals have been exhausted, a special general meeting may be called either by the AOA executive or by written request of one third of the Voting members (see Bylaws Article 4.2.1). If needed, disputes can then be taken to the Orienteering Canada Board.

In the event a dispute still persists after these avenues of decision-making and appeals have been exhausted (AOA Board, AGM or SGM, and the OC Board), opportunities for arbitration may be pursued through the Sport Dispute Resolution Centre of Canada.

As a guideline to those mediating a dispute, the following "TV Test" may help:

"The reasonable person test is the touchstone of accountability. Would the reasonable person agree that this decision – made by these people in this way, with this information – is a good decision? Would the decision-makers be comfortable being



interviewed on the six o'clock news and defending their actions and decisions or deny the request?"

## Response & Reporting

### **Resources for understanding and resolving conflict:**

[5 Approaches to Conflict Management](#) – Coaching Association of Canada

[Main Causes of Disputes and Prevention Strategies: A Must for Sport Administrators](#) – Sport Dispute Resolution Centre of Canada (CRDSC)

## Reporting Services

Instances of abuse, harassment, bullying or discrimination can be reported by following the process outlined in the Harassment Policy.

**Concerned about a potential incident of abuse, harassment, bullying or discrimination? Contact:**

**Independent investigations of major issues contact:**

**Canadian Sport Helpline: 1-888-83-SPORT (77678), [info@abuse-free-sport.ca](mailto:info@abuse-free-sport.ca), <http://abuse-free-sport.ca/en/>.**

**Medium and minor issue investigations** and outcome decisions will be led by (an) individual(s) appointed by AOA as outlined in the Harassment policy.