



## **CONFLICT AND COMPLAINT RESOLUTION POLICY**

### **1.0 Purpose**

The Rope Skipping Association of Nova Scotia, herein referred to as RSANS, is committed to creating and maintaining a work environment characterized by constructive, productive and supportive relationships. Such relationships are often subject to contrasting styles of understanding and acting, and to different points of view. It is essential that everyone recognizes that human interactions are complex, often difficult, and that we all can contribute to their success.

The Chair is ultimately responsible for ensuring that conflicts involving staff and volunteers are resolved in a satisfactory manner. They have a duty to inform the Board of Directors of any conflicts that impinge on the organization's ability to function or may damage its reputation.

### **2.0 Scope**

This policy is applicable to all members of RSANS.

### **3.0 Application**

All persons involved with RSANS have an obligation to communicate openly and respectfully with one another and to provide reasons for particular decisions or actions. When disagreements arise, greater understanding by all is needed. The presence of conflict, if dealt with effectively, offers an opportunity for individual and organizational learning, including the identification of policies and practices that need to be improved.

Conflicts should be addressed at the earliest possible opportunity as unresolved conflict can lead to an escalation of perceived issues.

In the event that any person or group is experiencing a conflict or has a complaint about the actions of another person, the following guidelines will apply.

1. Communicate directly with the person or persons whose actions are the cause of the complaint. People should reasonably expect to know if their behaviour or their decision is a problem for another person or group.
2. If the circumstances are such that the person with a complaint is unable or unwilling to communicate directly with the person or persons whose actions are the cause of their complaint, either for fear of escalation or reprisal, the help of one other trusted person in the organization should be sought.
3. The Chair, in consultation with and the approval of the board of directors, will resolve

complaints and conflicts that cannot be resolved by those directly involved or their immediate supervisor such as a coach, manager, or club board of directors.

4. In circumstances where the conflict is regarding the action(s) of the Chair, the RSANS Board of Directors may address the complaint in an in-camera meeting without the presence of the Chair.
5. Communication of the complaint or conflict shall first be made verbally to the respondent or immediate supervisor, such as the coach or manager. If this does not lead to a resolution that is satisfactory to the complainant, the nature of the complaint should then be communicated in writing. If this fails to result in a resolution, the written complaint should be sent to the Chair.
6. Third parties, acceptable to all those involved, may be of assistance in helping resolve the conflict in:
  - a. A facilitation or mediation role where the goal is to help the parties restore a positive working relationship in the future, or
  - b. A decision-making/arbitration role where they investigate what happened and make a determination of who is responsible for the situation and what the consequences for the parties should be.

The choice of these two approaches should be offered to the parties. If a mediated approach fails to resolve the matter, an arbitrated approach should be undertaken.

7. The parties will refrain from drawing others not directly involved into the process as a way of garnering support or gaining attention. Such actions include "copying" the written complaint by e-mail to others.
8. Complaints and conflicts shall be dealt with in a confidential manner. Meetings to resolve a complaint shall be open only to the parties and those attempting to resolve the complaint. The parties may have an advocate or supporter present. Meetings may be with the different parties individually, together or both. In the interest of openness, no minutes or written record of what is said in these meetings shall be recorded, although if the parties agree, the outcome of the meetings or a resulting agreement may be documented.
9. Where the Board is involved in a conflict resolution role, communication with it should be directly with the Chair and not with the whole board. It is the Chair's duty to inform the entire Board of the existence of the conflict but the Board may appoint one of their members, or an impartial party, to help resolve the matter.
10. The Chair of the Board has an obligation to act as soon as possible in addressing a complaint if the health and safety of any of the parties is perceived to be at risk.
11. If threats to persons are made, or the Chair of the Board perceives a possible danger to a party or to other members, including the possibility of one party being a danger to themselves, external professional assistance may be immediately sought.