



Toronto Playgrounds Baseball Association

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Policy





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LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We would like to begin by acknowledging that the land on which we gather is the traditional territory of the Wendat, Anishinaabe, Haudenosaunee, and the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation. Toronto, known as Tkaron:to in the Mohawk language, has long been a gathering place for Indigenous peoples, who have inhabited and cared for this land for millennia.

We recognize that Toronto is on the treaty lands of the Dish with One Spoon Wampum Belt Covenant. This agreement is an ancient treaty among the Anishinaabe, Haudenosaunee, and allied nations, which bound them to share and care for the resources around the Great Lakes in peace.

We acknowledge the enduring presence and contributions of Indigenous peoples past, present, and future in shaping this land we now call home. As we gather to play the game of baseball, we also acknowledge the painful history of sports in perpetuating harm against Indigenous communities. From the appropriation of Indigenous imagery and names to the displacement of Indigenous peoples for the construction of sports facilities, sports have often been complicit in the colonization and erasure of Indigenous cultures. Therefore, we must commit ourselves to learning about the history of sports in harming Indigenous communities and work to ensure that our sporting spaces honor the experiences and voices of Indigenous peoples.

In the spirit of truth and reconciliation, let us recognize that playing sports on unceded land requires us to confront uncomfortable truths and to actively engage in decolonizing practices. May our actions reflect our commitment to building sporting spaces that are inclusive, respectful, and affirming of Indigenous cultures and identities. May we strive to create opportunities for Indigenous youth to participate and excel in sports, while also amplifying their voices and perspectives. In honoring the land and its original inhabitants, may we collectively work towards justice, healing, and reconciliation. Let us walk together on the path towards a future where Indigenous peoples are respected, valued, and celebrated.



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EQUITY AND ANTI-DISCRIMINATION

A foundational aspect of the Toronto Playgrounds Baseball Association (TPBA) is that we hold a steadfast commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion. Our league operates on the fundamental principle that every individual, regardless of **race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religion, ability, socio-economic background, or skill level** deserves the opportunity to participate in a baseball league which is a safe and welcoming environment. We recognize the importance of fostering a culture of respect, understanding, and acceptance within our community. Therefore, we have established clear expectations regarding equity and anti-discrimination for all members involved, including players, coaches, parents, umpires, field supervisors and spectators. We operate under a zero-tolerance policy towards any form of discrimination, bullying, or harassment. Any behavior that undermines the dignity or well-being of others will not be tolerated and will be met with swift and appropriate action. It is incumbent upon each member of our league to actively contribute to creating a culture of inclusivity and to stand up against discrimination wherever it may arise. By upholding these values and working together to promote equity and anti-discrimination, we can ensure that Toronto Playgrounds Baseball remains a place where everyone feels respected, valued, and empowered to participate fully in the sport they love.

FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION

To illustrate Toronto Playground's commitment to fostering an environment that is inclusive, respectful, and free from discrimination, the behaviours that will not be tolerated are listed below. It is essential that all participants, including players, coaches, umpires, officials, and spectators, understand that racist, sexist, and other discriminatory language or gestures have no place in our community.

- Racist Language: Use of racial slurs directed towards racialized communities.
- Mocking Accents: Imitating or mocking someone's accent or dialect in a derogatory manner.
- Stereotyping: Making assumptions regarding other people's performance or whether they belong in a baseball league based on their race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religion, ability, socio-economic background, or skill level.
- Racial Jokes: Telling jokes that demean or ridicule a race or ethnicity.
- Offensive Gestures: Any hand signs, body movements, or facial expressions intended to demean a race, ethnicity, or cultural background.
- Sexist Language or Gestures & Sexist Slurs: Use of derogatory terms related to someone's gender.
- Reductive Terms: Calling women or girls infantilizing names in a demeaning manner.
- Gender Stereotyping: Making statements that reinforce harmful gender stereotypes or making suggestive or inappropriate gestures directed at someone based on their gender.



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- Exclusionary Language: Using language that excludes/dismisses someone based on their gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion, ability, socio-economic background, or skill level.
- Discriminatory Language or Gestures Based on Ability: Mocking or making derogatory comments about someone's physical or mental abilities, or mocking someone's disability.
- Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity: Using homophobic slurs or making derogatory comments about someone's sexual orientation or gender identity.
- Religion: Making offensive comments about someone's religious beliefs or practices.
- Socioeconomic Status: Derogatory comments regarding someone's financial status or background.
- Body Shaming: Making negative comments about someone's body shape, size, or appearance.

PROMOTING EQUITY AND ANTI-DISCRIMINATION

Participants in the Toronto Playgrounds Baseball Association are not only encouraged but also **expected** to uphold the highest standards of respect, sportspersonship, and integrity in all aspects of their involvement. This includes demonstrating positive examples of being a good sport, discouraging foul or illegal play, and ensuring respect for all individuals regardless of gender, ability, sexual orientation, age, race, national or ethnic origin, color, religion, or skill level.

The expectations that the Toronto Playgrounds Baseball Association has for the various member groups of our league are included in the codes of conduct that we have put together for members involved in our league. Members are required to read and sign any Code of Conduct pertaining to their role(s).

To actively work against discrimination and to promote diversity, TPBA is implementing the following concrete steps:

1. **Education and Training**: We will provide regular opportunities for all members of our community, including players, coaches, volunteers, and staff, to participate in anti-discrimination training sessions. These sessions will focus on raising awareness about discrimination and promoting inclusive behaviors.
2. **Diverse Representation**: We will strive to ensure that our leadership team, coaching staff, and decision-making bodies reflect the diversity of our community. We will actively recruit individuals from underrepresented racial and ethnic groups to hold leadership positions within TPBA.
3. **Community Engagement**: We will actively engage with diverse community organizations and initiatives to foster partnerships and promote inclusivity. This may include collaborating with local community groups, hosting diversity-themed events, or participating in cultural celebrations.



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4. **Zero-Tolerance Policy:** We will enforce a zero-tolerance policy against discrimination, harassment, or microaggressions within our league. Any reports of discriminatory behavior will be appropriately investigated, and any warranted disciplinary actions will be taken.
5. **Promoting Access and Opportunity:** We will work to remove barriers to participation for individuals from marginalized groups. This may include providing financial assistance for registration fees, offering transportation support, or ensuring that facilities are accessible to all.
6. **Inclusive Programming:** We will develop and promote programming that celebrates diversity and promotes cross-cultural understanding. This may include organizing intercultural exchange events, highlighting diverse role models in baseball, or incorporating multicultural perspectives into our training curriculum.
7. **Continuous Evaluation and Improvement:** We will regularly assess our progress in promoting diversity and combating discrimination within TP. Feedback from members of our community will be solicited and used to inform ongoing initiatives and improvements.
8. **Community Partnerships:** We will actively seek partnerships with local community organizations and advocacy groups that specialize in promoting equity, diversity, and inclusion. These partnerships will provide valuable insights and resources to inform our policies and practices. We will collaborate on initiatives such as community forums, workshops, and outreach programs to address systemic barriers and foster dialogue on EDI issues.
9. **Academic Collaborations:** We will establish collaborations with academic institutions and researchers who specialize in EDI studies. By engaging with experts in the field, we can access the latest research, best practices, and evidence-based strategies for promoting diversity and combating discrimination. These partnerships may involve participating in research projects, hosting guest lectures, or attending conferences and seminars focused on EDI topics.
10. **Consultation and Feedback:** We will actively seek input and feedback from our community partners and academic collaborators on our rules, policies, and initiatives related to equity, diversity, and inclusion. Regular consultation sessions, focus groups, and surveys will be conducted to gather diverse perspectives and ensure that our efforts are responsive to the needs and concerns of all stakeholders.



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11. **Training and Professional Development:** We will provide opportunities for staff, volunteers, and leaders within TP to participate in training and professional development programs offered by our community and academic partners. These programs may include workshops on cultural competency, unconscious bias training, or courses on inclusive leadership. By investing in the ongoing learning and development of our community, we can continuously improve our understanding and implementation of EDI principles.
12. **Policy Review and Revision:** We will establish a regular review process for our rules and policies related to diversity, equity, and inclusion. This process will involve consulting with our community and academic partners to identify areas for improvement, update outdated policies, and incorporate new insights and best practices. Adopting a proactive approach to policy review and revision will ensure that TPBA remains at the forefront of DEI in the sports community.

DISCRIMINATION REPORTING/INVESTIGATING/FOLLOW-UP

Toronto Playgrounds takes anti-discrimination and equity seriously. Therefore, the organization has established a set of procedures for cases in which discrimination is observed on the part of a participant in our league. As previously stated, discrimination will be taken seriously, and consequences can include but are not limited to being removed from a game already in progress, being suspended for 1 to 3 games, or being suspended/expelled from the league.

All members of our TPBA community, including staff, volunteers, parents, caregivers, umpires and young athletes, are expected to adhere to and stand up for these principles of inclusivity and respect. Any behavior that violates this code of conduct must be addressed swiftly and appropriately. Creating an anti-discriminatory and inclusive environment requires ongoing effort and dedication from all members of our community. By participating in TPBA activities, all members agree to uphold these principles and contribute to the creation of a welcoming and inclusive environment for all. The following section sets out the specific steps that different members of the TPBA community are expected to follow when experiencing violations of the TPBA Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Policy.

PLAYERS

Any player who experiences any of the forms of discrimination listed earlier in this policy document, or sees and/or hears another person being subjected to any of the forms of discrimination listed earlier in this policy document should let one of their coaches or a parent/caregiver know as soon as it happens. This is a hugely important step in ensuring that as a league we are able to deal with instances of discrimination and harassment in a timely and effective manner.



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PARENTS/CAREGIVERS/GENERAL MEMBERS

Any parent, caregiver, or general member who experiences any of the forms of discrimination listed earlier in this policy document, or sees and/or hears another person being subjected to any of the forms of discrimination listed earlier in this policy document should let a coach or a TPBA staff person or league official know as soon as it happens. This is a hugely important step in ensuring that as a league we are able to deal with instances of discrimination and harassment in a timely and effective manner.

COACHES

Any coach who experiences any of the forms of discrimination listed earlier in this policy document, or sees and/or hears another person being subjected to any of the forms of discrimination listed earlier in this policy document should let a TPBA staff person or league official know as soon as possible. This should include asking for time to be called in their game so that a TPBA staff person or league official can be alerted right away and talk to the coach as soon as possible (as opposed to after the game).

NON-COACH VOLUNTEERS

Any non-coach volunteer who experiences any of the forms of discrimination listed earlier in this policy document, or sees and/or hears another person being subjected to any of the forms of discrimination listed earlier in this policy document should let a TPBA staff person or league official know as soon as possible. This should include asking for time to be called in their game so that a TPBA staff person or league official can be alerted right away to the situation and talk to the coach as soon as possible (as opposed to after the game).

UMPIRES

Any umpire who experiences any of the forms of discrimination listed earlier in this policy document, or sees and/or hears another person being subjected to any of the forms of discrimination listed earlier in this policy document should let a TPBA staff person or league official know as soon as possible. This should include asking for time to be called in their game so that a TPBA staff person or league official can be alerted right away to the situation and talk to the coach as soon as possible (as opposed to after the game).



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TPBA STAFF AND LEAGUE OFFICIALS

Any TPBA staff person or league official who:

- experiences any of the forms of discrimination listed earlier in this policy document; or
- sees and/or hears another person being subjected to any of the forms of discrimination listed earlier in this policy document; or
- is told that an incident has taken place that violates the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Policy;

must make a determination on the spot as to whether any participant or participants need to be removed from the baseball activity taking place immediately. TPBA staff members should contact senior staff members if necessary in making the determination. If the participants in question are players this may also involve or require the support of the parents/caregivers of those participants.

Depending upon the nature of the incident, the participant(s) who are in violation of the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Policy may be told by the TPBA staff person or league official that as well as being removed from the game or practice they need to leave the area of the diamond. In these cases the participants need to be informed that they will be contacted by members of the TPBA Review Committee regarding the next steps related to the situation, and the TPBA staff person or league official must as soon as possible make an initial set of notes and record the “reporter’s” version of the incident (in some cases the TPBA staff person or league official will be the “reporter”).

If the incident does not warrant the immediate removal of any participants, the TPBA staff person or league official must talk to the person or persons who are either considered to be in violation of the policy or is/are the one(s) reporting the violation, as soon as possible that day to make an initial set of notes and record the “reporter’s” version of the incident (in some cases the TPBA staff person or league official will be the “reporter”).

The notes and any other information collected at that initial stage must be made available to the members of the TPBA Review Committee within 24 hours. TPBA staff who take notes and collect information should turn the notes and information over to a senior TPBA staff member or TPBA league official as an intermediate step. TPBA board members, while volunteers, are considered to be League Officials for the purposes of this policy.



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TPBA REVIEW COMMITTEE

The TPBA Review Committee is composed of at least 3 members of the TPBA Board of Directors, and is the group that will take on investigating incidents in which there has been a violation or violations of the TPBA Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Policy.

The TPBA Review Committee will conduct any additional interviews which they deem necessary for an appropriate investigation of the incident, and will make a recommendation to the Board of Directors regarding any required follow up. The recommendations will be considered by the Board of Directors in consultation with Senior TPBA staff, and then the participants involved will be informed of any follow up.