



Gorham Youth Lacrosse Association

The priority of the Gorham Youth Lacrosse Club is to provide a positive experience for parents and players within the organization. All participants of GYLA program, including players, parents, coaches, spectators, and referees, are expected to behave according to our Code of Conduct (available on the website) which players, coaches and parents have read and signed.

Along the same lines, it is expected that any conflicts that arise between participants will be resolved by applying both the letter and the spirit of the Code of Conduct, keeping in mind that the adult members of the program are viewed by the younger members as leaders, role models, and problem solvers. The Board recognizes, however, that there may be rare instances when these conflicts cannot be satisfactorily resolved directly by the parties to the dispute or through the informal intervention of another program member. For those situations (and it is expected that they will very rarely occur), the Board has instituted a formal Grievance Procedure. All members should be aware that the Grievance Procedure IS NOT a substitute for direct conflict resolution between the parties; it is a secondary procedure to be employed only in the unlikely event that the parties cannot amicably and responsibly resolve their dispute through direct communication. The purpose of this grievance policy will be to provide members of GYLA with a clear, rational method for resolving disputes that may arise in connection with all of our activities, practices and games.

Please consider that all our Board and Coaching Staff are volunteers and in many cases parents or guardians like yourself. Further in keeping with standard protocol for many youth athletic groups, we suggest you wait a minimum 24 hours before communicating most issues. **AT NO TIME SHOULD A SAFETY ISSUE BE DELAYED DUE TO THIS POLICY.** All safety issues should be handled immediately by club personnel or parents on site.

To ensure the process flows smoothly and fairly, the below procedure should be followed as closely as practical.

Step One: Individual Discussion

1. ***Player to Coach;*** It is imperative that your child attempts to express the issue with his or her coach first. Sometimes the issue at hand is a result of miscommunication, which can generally be rectified at the coaches' level. A face-to-face meeting is the best course for this first step. At the youth levels (K-4th grade), parents may need to guide the player. 5th-8th grades should be expected to approach the coach with their concerns.

2. ***Parent to Coach;*** If a resolution cannot be satisfactorily agreed upon between a player and coach, the parent may need to intercede. It is understandable that some issues may be open to debate. For that reason, we ask that any communication between the parent and coach be administered using the 24-hour rule. The Board asks that any conversation between the parent and the coach be made 24 hours after discovery of the issue. For example, if an incident, which is not safety related, occurs during a game, please wait 24 hours until after the game or practice to contact the coach. This period allows all parties to cool off in an attempt to reduce emotions. This step may be completed face to face or via email.

3. ***Parent to President(?);*** if a parent believes the issue was not satisfactorily resolved, they may contact the President of Gorham Youth Lacrosse via email, to discuss the issue. Once the President is made aware of the issue, they will contact the coach and parent, in an attempt to mediate. All parties will be notified within 5 business days with a proposed resolution. This step may be completed face to face; however, an email follow up should be completed to ensure both parties have an understanding about the basic issue and resolution.

Step Two: Filing a Conflict Resolution Sheet with the Board, Initial Review:

If informal mediation has failed and/or the issue needs to be addressed by the Board, the grievance will be stated in writing on the Conflict Resolution Form (*add a link here.*) The Board will review the grievance and decide on the grievance. The Board will decide whether an action will be taken or not. If the Board by unanimous vote decides that no action should be taken, the committee will explain in writing the reasons behind their decision.

Step Three: Review by the Board:

If the Board decides that the matter requires review, the Board will go ahead to hear the matter. Prior to taking any action, the Board will give the written statement of the grievance to any person identified as a party to the grievance in the written statement, and such person will be allowed to give a written statement on the grievance to the Board. Prior to hearing of the grievance, the Board may investigate the facts as it believes necessary, either as a committee or through one or more individuals. The results of any such investigation will be given in writing to the parties to the grievance. Regardless of whether any investigation is conducted, the Board will conduct a hearing of the grievance, using such procedures, as it believes appropriate to the circumstances. The Board will provide notice of the time and place of the hearing to all persons involved in the matter and will give a reasonable opportunity for the parties of the grievance to be heard. The Board will have the power to set reasonable limits on the length of presentations. By majority vote, the Board may limit the presentations to written submissions, provided that all persons involved in the matter will be given notice and a reasonable amount of time to prepare such written presentations. Any hearing of the Board, whether by written submission or oral presentations, will be closed to all persons other than those directly involved in the grievance, provided, however, that if a player is a

party to the grievance, that player's parent(s) or guardian(s) may be present. Following the hearing, the Board will meet to arbitrate the grievance. The Board will prepare as soon as practical, a written statement of its decision, including disciplinary action, if any, resulting from the decision. All decisions will be made by majority vote of the Board. All decisions made by the Board are final. Any party not following the decision of the Board will be subject to further discipline.

***Lastly, we ask that all concerns be allowed to be addressed outside of any social media platforms, Team Snap message Boards or team emails as anything said in those platforms cannot be retracted.*