



1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of an early plea offer is to encourage Respondents to accept responsibility for their actions and to avoid the time and effort consumed in the holding of a hearing.

2. PROCEDURE

2.1 Circumstances Appropriate for Early Plea

An early plea may be offered in relation to a report or complaint involving a possible penalty of 10 weeks suspension or less. The Hockey Manager will consult with the Chair of the Judiciary Committee concerning all early guilty plea offers including the charge and grading of all matters prior to an offer being made. In conjunction with the Chair of the Judiciary Committee the Hockey Manager can dismiss the matter if they believe no further action is required.

If the Hockey Manager or the Judiciary Chair are both unavailable, the next person to step in to hear the Early Plea will be the Coaching Manager.

2.2 Form of Early Plea Offer

An early plea offer is to be made in writing by the Hockey Manager to the Respondent and the Respondent's Club and will include:

- a) a penalty offer being:
 - I. a full penalty offer that is the match penalty the Hockey Manager considers is appropriate for the offence having regard to its apparent severity and to the THA Disciplinary Matrix; or
 - II. a lesser penalty offer which is a lesser match penalty as determined by the Hockey Manager;
- b) an explanation of the effect of Procedures 2.3, 2.4, 2.5 and 2.6; and
- c) a copy of the game card report.

2.3 Effect of Early Plea

A Respondent may receive only one early plea offer in a 12-month period. A Respondent who accepts a lesser penalty offer and commits a second offence that is sent to the Judiciary in that period shall have a penalty equal to the difference between the full and lesser penalties added to the penalty otherwise imposed for the later offence.

2.4 Time Limit for Accepting an Early Plea Offer

The Respondent must notify the Hockey Manager that an early plea offer has been accepted within 24 hours of the offer being made.

2.5 Non-acceptance

If an early plea offer is not accepted, the Hockey Manager must refer the matter to the Judiciary.

2.6 Effect and Exclusion of Appeals

The acceptance of an early plea offer has the same effect as a decision of the Judiciary but is not subject to appeal on any basis.



3. EARLY PLEA TIMEFRAME GUIDE

3.1 Upon receiving notification of an incident:

THC hold a special meeting – incident referred to Independent Investigator.	<i>48 hours</i>
Independent investigation conducted and recommendations provided to THC	<i>72 hours</i>
HM (or HD/THC Compliance) discusses with Judiciary Chair. Early plea offered if applicable.	<i>48 hours</i>
Early plea offer acceptance.	<i>24 hours</i>

Note: *7 days between incident and early plea offer.*