

Training Manual for Rink Guards



ISI



Ice Sports Industry
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TRAINING MANUAL FOR RINK GUARDS

This manual is published by the Ice Sports Industry (ISI), reflecting experience from many sources. This manual should not be considered a full and complete treatment of the subject, but rather a report from a recognized source. It is the purpose of the manual to make current information on ice skating and instruction conveniently available.

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The Ice Sports Industry would like to thank the Metropolitan Ice Rink Managers Association (MIRMA) for their previous work and contribution to this manual.



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The Role of the Rink Guard

The Rink Guard (also referred to as the Skate Guard or Ice Monitor) is one of the most important positions in the ice arena. It has evolved into one that encompasses safety, entertainment, customer service and education.

The purpose of this manual is to provide a general overview of the function of the Rink Guard and the many important responsibilities required of the role.

The role of the Rink Guard has evolved greatly through the years. No longer is the Rink Guard just the enforcer of rules during a public skating session. Today, the Rink Guard has become a customer service professional, an administrator, an entertainer, a teacher and essentially an ambassador of the ice rink.

Public Relations

From the moment a patron enters the facility, public relations is vital. No matter how brief the encounter (i.e. paying admission, receiving skate rentals, buying a refreshment, etc.), public relations and promoting a safe and fun environment are essential responsibilities of all ice rink staff.

What are public relations? Promoting goodwill between the rink and the public is the true meaning of this phrase as it pertains to your work as a Rink Guard. How the public is greeted, how skates are fitted, how patrons are assisted on the ice, how their questions are answered – all of these actions play an important role in good public relations. Often you are the primary point of contact for customers.

While the main role of the Rink Guard is the enforcement of rules and the creation of a safe skating environment, he/she must also have excellent customer service and communication skills, be able to act as a teacher at times, have the ability to entertain customers and be capable of handling an emergency situation.

Arena Rules and Enforcement

Rink Guards must enforce certain basic rules of conduct, such as those below, during skating sessions:

1. Skating in a manner that endangers or interferes with other skaters' safety or pleasure is strictly forbidden.
2. Roughness, excessive speeding or weaving through other skaters is prohibited.
3. No patron organized tag or games of any kind are permitted on or off the ice.
4. No more than two people may skate together.
5. No one is permitted on the ice without skates.
6. Skaters must keep moving while on the ice.
7. No figure skating or backwards skating is permitted, except in the designated area.
8. No eating, drinking or smoking is permitted on the ice surface.
9. Skaters are not allowed to carry children or secondary items such as cameras, handbags, etc. while skating.
10. Patrons must not sit on, lean over or leave articles on the dasher boards.
11. Exits are to be kept clear at all times.
12. No dogs or pets of any kind are permitted on the premises.
13. Incidents or malicious destruction are to be reported to a supervisor immediately.
14. No patrons-on-duty are allowed on the ice during resurfacings.
15. No skates are allowed in the bleachers.
16. Any disagreement with a patron who violates a rule must be referred to the manager or ice supervisor.
17. Throwing snowballs (or any other objects) is strictly prohibited.
18. Persons who appear to be under the influence of alcohol or other substances are not permitted in the arena. Refer to manager.

As a Rink Guard, you should be familiar with the rules at your rink and be vigilant about enforcing them. You must also be consistent in your enforcement of the rules. Everyone must be treated uniformly with no exceptions. Inconsistency can develop into more of a control and public relations problem than a lack of enforcement.

When a violation of the rules/s occurs, you should assume that patrons are not familiar with rink regulations. Politely request that the patron cease the violation of the rules. An explanation of why the regulation exists and is enforced will often be the only action required.

After you are sure the patron knows the regulations and is deliberately violating the rule(s), you should request he/she leave the ice for a specific time period (approximately five minutes).

If the patron continues to violate the rule/s, you should request he/she leave the ice for an increased time period and warn him/her that an additional violation will result in a referral to management.

These discipline guidelines must be consistently followed, and it is important not to exceed this authority.

A FEW IMPORTANT REMINDERS ON DISCIPLINE...

- *Know the rules and procedures of your facility.*
- *Most infractions by patrons are minor and should be treated as such.*
- *Serious infractions are to be referred immediately to the rink manager on duty.*
- *If any patron refuses to leave the ice, you are not to physically touch him/her. Call the rink manager, who will take the proper action.*
- *You are essential to maintaining a safe and enjoyable environment for all patrons. Follow through on all infractions. Be polite, firm, fair and consistent.*

Guidelines and Tools for Rink Guards

Rink Guards should bring to the ice (or have easy access to) any or all of the following:

- First-aid kit
- Microphone
- Whistle (to get customers' attention when they break the rules or in case of an emergency)
- Bullhorn (to communicate in the event of a power outage)
- Accident reports
- Flashlight (to help guide customers during a power outage)
- Cones
- Walkie-talkie (to communicate with management and office staff)
- Ice packs
- Gauze pads
- Latex gloves

Patrolling the Ice Surface

The positioning of Rink Guards is very important. Emphasis should be placed on potential problem areas of the rink which include:

- Exits and entrances to the ice surface
- Center ice
- Two ends
- Sides used for congregating

To give maximum attention to the above areas, various positioning and patrol techniques are employed. These require the Rink Guard to skate backwards, forwards, around the outside edge, stand in corners and center ice, and at the four corner points of the skating "track." Often, it is very effective for Rink Guards stand in key areas of the ice surface to more easily observe all activities.

At no time should any two Rink Guards be in the same location. Teamwork requires that the Rink Guards position themselves according to the needs of the ice session in progress. Since certain areas can be more demanding, Rink Guards should switch areas approximately every 15 minutes. In some arenas, Rink Guards may also be stationed off the ice to have a different perspective on the session. These rink monitors should communicate with on-ice monitors via walkie-talkie about any troublesome areas of the rink or about any issues with patrons on the rink.

The Rink Guard the First Responder

Rink Guards should be quick to check on any patron who has fallen. You should ask if the customer is okay and determine if assistance is needed. You should never help a customer up from the ice surface if you suspect an injury.

If a skater has fallen, attend to them and assist them. If the skater is injured:

- Do not move the person.
- Call for help if first-aid assistance is needed.
- Keep other skaters from converging by putting cones around the area.
- Keep the skater as comfortable as possible (i.e. blanket, coat, etc.) until emergency personnel arrive.

In an emergency, (i.e. fire alarms, power outages, bomb threats, etc.), remember to remain calm and provide assistance to customers. For example, if the power goes out, slow all of the customers down and efficiently but safely escort them from the ice surface. Then communicate with management to see what further action is necessary.

Information

Rink Guards should be familiar with the various programs at the arena including learn-to-skate classes, learn-to-play hockey classes, leagues and camps. As ambassadors of the arena, you will often be asked questions about these programs. If you do not know the answer to a question, you should either find out the answer or direct the customer to the appropriate personnel for further assistance so that the question may be answered in a timely fashion.

The Rink Guard the Entertainer

To liven up the skating experience, Rink Monitors can run trivia contests for customers, play games (i.e. Simon Says, Red Light, Green Light; karaoke, etc.), organize scavenger hunts or lead skills demonstrations.

The Rink Guard the Administrator

Rink Guards will sometimes be responsible for completing accident or incident reports. (See sample report, page 7)

- Fill forms out in a clear, legible and detailed manner.
- Management staff should be involved when the information about the accident or incident is obtained. It is preferable (but not always practical) for a manager to complete the accident report.
- Whenever possible, witness statements should be taken as well as employee statements.
- Always inspect the ice when an accident occurs.
- Write down any statements that the injured party makes about the accident.
- Make note of all staff that were on duty at the time of the incident.
- Do not speculate on the nature of an injury. Do not state, “Injured has a broken leg.” Instead, state, “Injured has pain, discomfort and swelling in their right leg.”
- Be specific on the date, time and location of the accident.

For more information, ask your manager.

Summary

While your primary role as a Rink Guard is the enforcement of rules and the creation of a safe skating environment, you must also have excellent customer service and communication skills, be able to act as a teacher at times, have the ability to entertain customers and be capable of handling an emergency situation.

You must familiarize yourself with all of the rules of your rink and be vigilant about enforcing them in a polite and firm manner. You must also be knowledgeable about all of the rink’s programs in order to answer any questions that patrons may ask you.

A customer’s experience at a public skating session may determine whether he/she returns to the ice arena and potentially participates in ice skating or hockey as a lifelong sport. Therefore, it is important that you consistently promote a safe and fun environment at all times. And, remember to be friendly, courteous, fun and helpful.

Appendix A

Sample Accident Report

Rink Name _____ Address _____
Person Completing Report _____ Date _____

Date of accident _____ Time _____ Name of injured _____ Age ___ Sex ___
Address _____ City _____ State ___ Zip _____ Phone _____

If minor, were parents notified: Yes No If minor, were parents present Yes No

Event taking place on ice at time of accident _____
Name of person notified _____ Relationship _____
Address _____ City _____ State ___ Zip _____ Phone _____

How did accident occur? (Describe in patron's words.)

Ice Resurface Time: AM PM
Type of Cut: Wet Dry
Skate: Own Rental Figure Hockey
Were skates inspected? Yes No
Condition of Skates: _____

Please mark on the diagram with an "X" where the accident occurred.
Rink Name or Number _____

Inspector signature _____
Was ice surface at point of fall inspected? Yes No Condition of Ice _____
Description of Inquiry _____
Type of Aid _____ Administered by _____ Taken to hospital? Yes No
If yes, what hospital? _____ If not, what action was taken? _____
Did injured refuse treatment? Yes No If yes, reason for refusal _____

Number of staff members on duty at time of incident _____
Number of Ice Monitors in attendance _____ Approximate attendance _____
Name(s) of other person(s) involved in incident, if applicable _____

WITNESS:
Name _____ Relationship _____ Phone _____
Address _____ Comments _____

Signature of person who administered first aid _____
Signature of Manager _____

Additional Comments _____
Date of Report ___/___/___



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