
COMPLAINTS POLICY

1 Complaint Definition

A complaint may be considered as any request for further information, clarity, or disagreement with a decision, policy, or process of the Club, or any action or inaction by an official.

2 Complaint Lodgement

2.1 In the first instance all complaints should be directed to the relevant coach.

3 Initial Complaints Handled Verbally

3.1 Wherever possible all complaints should initially be handled verbally by the Coach, but recorded and written advice provided to the relevant Coordinator.

3.2 Complaints that a Coach cannot resolve, or are about the Coach, should be directed to the relevant Coordinator. Wherever possible all complaints should be handled verbally by the Coordinator, but recorded and written advice provided to the Executive.

3.3 Complaints that a Coordinator cannot resolve, or are about the Coordinator, should be directed to the President, or if unavailable another member of the Executive. Wherever possible all complaints should be handled verbally by the Executive member, but recorded and written advice provided to the full Executive.

3.4 Complaints that the President, or other Executive member, cannot resolve verbally should be requested to be submitted in writing and directed to the President. Where the complaint is submitted in writing about the President it must be handled using the Formal Complaints process as outlined in the Constitution and in this Policy.

4 Formal complaints

4.1 All written complaints must be addressed to the President and lodged within 3 days of a game related event, and 7 days for any other specific event.

4.2 Upon receipt of a formal complaint The President will take the following action:

4.2.1 **Acknowledge receipt** of the complaint within 24 hours of receipt of a physical letter or email.

4.2.2 **Written Complaints that are non-person specific** i.e. complaints that do not specifically identify a single person, or persons, specific activity, action, inaction, date and approximate time. These will be reviewed by the President who will prepare a report for the Executive including where appropriate recommendations for remedial action. The Executive will review with the President and as appropriate endorse. A report will be table at the next Committee Meeting, including any appropriate required remedial actions. Where possible a formal response will be sent to the complainant within 7 days of receipt of the complaint, or where related to a game prior to the next game.

4.2.3 **Written complaints that are person or persons specific** i.e. complaints that identify a single person or persons. These will be acknowledged by the President within 24 hours of receipt. The President will perform an initial review of the complaint and act as follows:

(1) Where the complaint fails to articulate a specific activity, action, inaction, date, approximate time, the President will treat the complaint as a “Non-Specific Complaint and will handle as above (in 4.2.2).

(2) For guidance to the President – a specific activity shall be where a direct and accountable specific activity, action, inaction has occurred. E.g. a player/official struck/abused/vilified another player/official. This excludes all vague or broad interpretations of events which the complainant considers were unfair or prejudicial.

4.3 Where the complaint details a specific activity, action, inaction, date, approximate time, the President will refer complaint to be handled using the Formal Complaints process as outlined in the Constitution and in this Policy.

4.4 All details of the Complaint shall be forwarded by the “Complaints Panel” to the individuals who are the subject of the formal written complaint who will be invited to formally respond and may identify witness to support their defence.

4.5 Where ever possible, formal complaints handled by the “Complaints Panel” should be resolved prior to the next game where a player or coach is involved, but regardless within 14 days of receipt of the Complaint.

5 Unfounded Complaints or Dissention

5.1 It is expected that most Complaints will be made in good faith and be in the best interests of the Club.

5.2 Where the Complaint is unfounded or is based upon Dissention that is intended or may have the reasonable likelihood of undermining the ethos, culture, brand, on-court performance, or administrative operations of the Club; the Executive or Complaints Panel may recommend to the Committee that the person(s) lodging the Complaint be suspended or expelled from the Club.

6 Rights to Suspend

6.1 Nothing in this policy shall restrict or limit the rights of members of the Executive or the full Committee to immediately suspend any officials, players, members who do not “act in the best interests of the Club” as per Clause 3 of the Constitution. This includes individuals who are subject to a Complaint, or who may lodge a Complaint.

7 Ongoing Verbal Dissention

7.1 Whilst understanding and acknowledging that all members of the Club are individuals and have their personal opinions about other players, members, coaches, selectors, Coordinators, the Executive, and Club policies and processes; these personal opinions should not be openly verbalised to other players, Club members, parents, or third parties in a negative manner.

7.2 Where identified, a player or member (including parents) who is considered to be verbally and unfairly critical of other players, members, coaches, selectors, Coordinators, the Executive, or Club policies and processes, including selections, shall be warned by the Executive that this is considered by the Club as an act that is not in the best interests of the Club and that they and their associated player may be suspended.

7.3 The Executive should note that the intent of this section of the policy is not to limit free and open discussion, but to protect players and the Club from unfair vilification.