

Grievance and Complaints Resolution Sample Policy

Policy Statement

[INSERT CLUB NAME] is committed to maintaining a culture that encourages collaboration, cooperation and communication. It is recognised, however, that on occasions inappropriate behaviours or matters may occur and that a complaints and grievance process may be required in order to resolve complaints or concerns about these matters.

This policy aims to ensure that complaints and grievances are handled and resolved in an appropriate, fair, transparent and timely manner, and in accordance with the principles of natural justice.

Scope

This policy applies to all members of the [INSERT CLUB NAME] –both members and volunteers.

This policy applies to problems and complaints regarding:

- discrimination
- bullying and harassment
- sexual harassment
- racial and religious vilification
- victimisation

What to do if treated unfairly

If you believe that you have been discriminated against, bullied or harassed, sexually harassed, vilified or victimised, [INSERT CLUB NAME] strongly encourages you to not ignore it. Ignoring it might be interpreted by the other person as consent or acceptance.

Do not respond to unacceptable behaviour with more unacceptable behaviour.

Options for resolving an issue

The following four options may be useful to consider in trying to resolve the issue:

- **Self-management** – Take Bystander action to discuss and challenge the behaviour. Make a calm, polite but firm request for the change you need. Indicate the effect of the behaviour or decision on you and ask for an agreement about how things need to be different in the future. Sometimes it is helpful to record this agreement in writing.
- **Informal complaint** – raise your concerns with your coach, any other trusted club leader (refer to club contacts)
- **Formal complaint** – lodge a formal written complaint with your coach or other club leader/official (refer to club contacts)
- **External** – (Insert relevant sporting body e.g. AFL NE Border, Netball Victoria, and local sporting assembly e.g. Valley Sports)

Possible outcomes

No matter which option you choose to try to resolve your complaint, there are a range of outcomes. For example, taking action can lead to:

- a review of a decision
- an apology for the harm or offence caused
- an agreement that bad behaviour will stop or change
- education or training for a person or group
- an informal warning or 'quiet one-to-one chat' with someone by a manager
- changed work practices or procedures
- new policies or a change in policies
- reinstating a benefit (for example, sick leave or training) that was denied
- some other form of compensation for harm or costs caused
- a formal warning or other formal discipline, such as transfer or demotion for the person who had behaved inappropriately.

If you have been treated unfairly, it will be helpful for you to consider which of these you believe will be the best solution to your problem

Procedure

In most situations, the steps below should be followed in sequential order.

At any point in time, if a resolution is achieved then no further steps will be required.

1. Address the issue directly yourself

If the complainant feels comfortable doing so, she / he should attempt to resolve the issue by discussing it confidentially with the other person (the respondent) as soon as practicable after it arises. If assistance is required, contact your coach or another club leader/official for support.

2. Refer the issue to your Coach/Appointed Club contact

The complainant should refer the complaint, either verbally or in writing, to the coach/club leader/appointed club contact if the complainant:

- does not feel comfortable discussing the matter with the other person directly
- has unsuccessfully attempted to resolve the problem is experiencing a club related issue that does not involve another person

3. Refer the issue to a senior Club committee member/Club president

The complainant should refer the matter to Club Committee member or club president, if the complainant:

- is with a club member and the complainant doesn't feel comfortable to address issue

- has tried addressing the problem but is dissatisfied with the result
- is experiencing a work-related issue that does not involve another person, and/or
- has already raised the complaint with a coach/club contact but the complaint remains unresolved

4. Investigation

The investigation process is two tiered; Informal and Formal

Informal

- A coach or club leader will initially investigate the complaint and determine whether a more formal investigation is required.
- If the coach/leader is the subject of the complaint, or cannot be objective in an investigation, the matter must be referred to the club president/senior club member.
- The objective of the coach's/appointed club contact's investigation is to resolve the complaint in an appropriate, fair, transparent and timely manner and in accordance with the principles of natural justice.
- This may result in reporting the complaint to a more senior club leader or to the club president.
- If the complaint relates to the conduct of another club member, that person will be provided with details of the complaint and given an opportunity to respond
- ensure both parties understand their rights and responsibilities under the club's policy
- if possible, mediate an outcome that is satisfactory for the complainant
- ensure that confidentiality is maintained
- follow up to ensure the behaviour does not re-occur.

Formal

All incidents and issues that break the law and are of a serious nature will be referred to the Police immediately.

Typical steps in an investigation include

- interview the complainant
- notify the respondent
- interview the respondent
- the complainant and the respondent may each have a support person present during their interview.
- interview other people who may be directly involved in the complaint /grievance
- interview any witnesses
- re-interview any person if necessary to clarify any details
- gather and collate information to establish a timeline of the events (based on the balance of probabilities)
- make findings
- determine next steps (as appropriate) such as training, or disciplinary actions
- monitor the behaviour to ensure compliance and required action is taken
- conduct a formal review or follow up (if necessary)

It may be necessary to bring in outside parties to assist with the investigation and to determine appropriate courses of action. If it is necessary to do so, contact

INSERT STATE SPORTING BODY CONTACT DETAILS

e.g. AFL NE Border

INSERT LOCAL SPORTING ASSEMBLY CONTACT DETAILS

E.g. Valley Sports

Resolution

After the investigation is complete, details of the findings and resolution will be recorded in writing and a copy provided to the complainant and the respondent.

Some of the possible options for resolution, may include one or more of the following:

- counselling or training/education, which may be provided by the coach, club leader or another appropriate person or organisation
- a formal apology
- mediation between the complainant and respondent, facilitated by an independent person, where both parties agree to participate in the mediation process
- formal disciplinary action
- ongoing monitoring of the situation by a coach/club leader

Confidentiality

The complainant, respondent, witnesses and any other interviewee must keep all aspects of their participation in the investigation confidential.

No victimisation / detrimental action

A complainant, witness, individual providing information, or support person will not be disadvantaged in their participation in the club for making a complaint or being involved in an investigation.



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