

FHF COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

1. The purpose of this procedure is to define a standardized method for complaint submissions and review for violations of the FHF Code of Conduct & Ethics now referred to as COC.
2. All members of FHF are obligated to adhere to common standards of personal conduct and commit to clear performance expectations in carrying out FHF business as stated in the COC. FHF supports equal opportunity, prohibits discriminatory practices, and is committed to providing an environment in which all individuals are treated with respect and fair play can take place.
3. This code applies to all members and individuals as stated in the COC.
4. Conduct that violates the COC may be subject to disciplinary actions and sanctions as outlined in this document below.
5. In the event of a conflict between the complaints procedure and the COC, the procedure to resolve, disciplinary actions, and process will follow the complaints procedure.
6. In addition to the COC, coaches and training staff must follow the guidelines as set forth in the required training rider. Failure to follow requirements as stated in the rider can result in immediate suspension until violation is remedied.

Filing a Complaint

1. A person who experiences or observes any of the behavior prohibited by any section of the COC may submit a complaint in the following ways:
 - a. Submit a formal written complaint to the FHF Board of Directors
 - b. Online via FHF COMPLAINTS FORM submission:
<https://forms.gle/WhU9hNJdEXF5zBGKA>
 - c. By scanning Complaints QR code posted around FHF facilities and completing FHF COMPLAINTS FORM
 - d. The Board/Complaints Committee will only investigate concerns that have been filed through the official FHF complaint form in sections b and c or via written request under section a.
2. FHF COMPLAINTS FORM collects relevant information on the complainant and complaint including but not limited to:
 - a. Complainant name and contact information
 - b. Date and time of complaint
 - c. Details of complaint (description, locations, parties etc.)
 - d. Witness names and contact information
 - e. Suggested resolution
 - f. Additional comments
 - g. Supporting documents (via email to complaints@socalfhf.org)
 - h. Confidentiality Statement
 - i. As outlined in the google form at this link:
<https://forms.gle/WhU9hNJdEXF5zBGKA>

Reviewing a Complaint

1. Complaints submitted to the FHF Board will be shared with the President and Director of Competitions.
2. Complaints submitted via FHF COMPLAINTS FORM will automatically be submitted to the President and Director of Competitions.
3. President and Director of Competitions will submit the complaint to a Complaint Committee within 48 hours of receipt.
4. Complaint Committee shall consist of:
 - a. The FHF President
 - b. Director of Competitions
 - c. At least one additional Complaint Committee member shall be appointed from a pool of non-biased FHF Board members and club nominated representatives.
 - i. Club commissioners must identify one participant prior to each season for consideration to participate in the Complaint Committee and the review process.
 - d. At the discretion of the Complaint Committee, representatives from each club / party involved in the complaint may also be invited to ensure fair and balanced discussions.
 - e. Board members who are directly involved in or affected by a sensitive issue or a conflict of interest recuse themselves from the process. Upon identifying such a situation, the involved board member must step aside voluntarily to preserve the integrity and impartiality of the complaint resolution process. A replacement, who has no similar conflicts and is not involved in the issue, should be appointed by the remaining board members.
 - f. If a complaint is deemed particularly severe, or if any members of the Committee feel uneasy about making a decision, the entire Complaint Committee will recuse themselves in favor of appointing an impartial arbitrator.
5. The Complaint Committee communicates in writing within 2 working days to the person submitting the complaint that it has been received and what next steps will be. The Complaint Committee has 10 working days to investigate, interview witnesses, and submit a decision if and what disciplinary actions will be taken.
6. Within 14 days of submission of the complaint, the FHF decision will be communicated to the complainant and anyone else involved.
7. The complaint committee may extend the time frame to investigate in complex cases. In such instances, the complaint committee will determine a reasonable amount of time to conclude the investigation and communicate that to the person submitting the complaint within the 10 day window in section 5.
8. If the complaint committee can not conclude an investigation or action to be taken by the end of the first extension in section 7, the complaint will automatically go to an arbitrator or a third extension as decided by the person who filed the complaint.
9. Complaints handled by an independent arbitrator shall follow the FHF Consequence Procedure as outlined in Table 1.

Consequences of Gameplay Violations

1. Umpires shall have full discretion to discipline as they see fit within the USA rules of hockey (verbal warning, yellow card, red card ...etc) for gameplay violations.
 - a. Umpires have jurisdiction over players, coaches, managers, and staff of teams participating in the games to which an umpire is assigned.
 - b. Umpires will have jurisdiction from the warm-up period, active gameplay, intermissions, and break period immediately following a game's conclusion.
 - c. If anyone involved should disagree with the decision of the umpire, they can appeal the decision by filing a complaint and have the Complaint Committee review the case.
 - d. Any red card issued during games will automatically go to a disciplinary hearing and decision by the Complaint Committee.
 - e. Any participant who receives a red card must vacate FHF premises for a minimum of 24 hours until reports are provided by the issuing umpire and a preliminary review is conducted by the Complaints Committee.

Consequences of Non-Gameplay Violations

1. The Complaint Committee will be responsible for reviewing all non-gameplay violations and all complaints regarding gameplay following the conclusion of a match.
2. Non-Gameplay violations shall be as stated in the COC which may include but not limited to:
 - a. Violations of General civil conduct (gestures, screaming, unsportsmanlike behavior, etc.)
 - b. Legal violations (drugs, abuse, fighting, sabotage, etc.)
 - c. Violations of discrimination (name calling, exclusion, etc.)
 - d. Violations of intimidation (bullying, retaliation, etc.)
 - e. Violations of representation (dress code, uniform non-compliance, etc.)

Non-Specific Tiered Offenses and Consequences

1. Formal offenses and violations of the COC will be handled in three levels as defined in Table 1 below.
 - a. Offenses and Violations will compound for repeat formal offenses. For example, if a person is issued a Tier 1 violation and commits a second Tier 1 violation before the remediation of the first offense, the second offense will be considered a tier 2 violation.
 - b. With the exception of Tier 3, any violation will be considered served once all steps have been taken as outlined in table 1 and will not compound. For Tier 3 violations, a second Tier 3 violation will result in an automatic 2-year ban or greater at the sole discretion of the FHF Board.
 - c. Complaints can be a collection of violations and it is up to the board to categorize the group of offenses into actionable condensed items that fall into the Tiered structure. Each offense does not equal said number of Tiered offenses. For example, on three separate occasions, someone flipped off the umpires. A complaint is sent in. The behavior to be corrected is unsportsmanlike conduct and the three occurrences will be considered one T1 offense and not three T1 offenses.

- d. For clarity, the offenses in a complaint will always be addressed from the worst offense. If a person in a complaint has committed foul language and fighting, the issues will be resolved using one T2 consequence, not a T1 and T2 consequence.
2. **Complaint abuse.** It is understood that to maintain the integrity of the complaint procedure, the procedure is not a tool to be used to remove or punish a person that someone may disagree with. In cases of disagreements, the board will remedy the situation in a fair manner using reconciliation, meetings, and warnings, understanding that there are two points of views. Only, if the parties can not reconcile and matters escalate, the board may choose to implement further consequences in line with T1-T3 as violations fit.
 3. **Retaliation.** If Retaliation is found to occur, the Board may elect to double the current consequence time frame.

Tiered Offenses: Table 1

Tier	Description	Example Offenses	Potential Consequences
Warning	First course of action for in the moment witnessed violations	For mild offenses such as foul language, yelling, excessive celebration, dress code, etc.	Stop the behavior and correct the problem
Tier 1 (T1)	<u>Mild COC Violations</u> -non-violent, -non-harassment offenses -generally unbecoming of an FHF participant	unsportsmanlike conduct, mild arguing with an official or light taunting, use of inappropriate language	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Formal apologies and/or community service 2. Warning 3. Party Reconciliation 4. T1 Record
Tier 2 (T2)	<u>Moderate COC Violations</u> -minor bullying -minor harassment -deliberate cheating -Repeat Tier 1 offenses after board warnings	Repeat taunting or harassment, creating fear to other players, excessive name calling, starting rumors	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Short term ban (1 week or more) 2. Safesports Completion before access to field 3. Full understanding of FHF COC before access to field 4. T2 Record
Tier 3	<u>Severe COC Violations</u>	Fighting, drug use,	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mandatory Ban of

(T3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Third Notice of Violations -Violence towards another -Major bullying -Major harassment -Legal Violations -Malicious acts -Discrimination towards a person or group of people -Sexual abuse 	destruction of property, excluding someone to play based on race or gender, inappropriate touching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4-weeks or more 2. Cal-Cup 1-year Ban 3. Removal of position of power 4. Safesports Completion before access to field 5. Full understanding of FHF COC before access to field 6. Report to Authorities in severe legal violations 7. T3 Record
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Appeal Submission

1. Grounds for Appeal
 - a. If the complainant disagrees with the decision, they can file an appeal. The appeal must be based on specific grounds such as procedural errors, new evidence, or allegations of unfair treatment. The burden of proof will be on the complainant.
2. Appeal Notice
 - a. The complainant submits a notice of appeal, often within a specific time frame from the decision (e.g., 30 days), along with any supporting documents and a statement outlining the basis for the appeal.

Appeal Review Process

1. Formation of Appeal Committee
 - a. An appeals committee or board, typically composed of members not involved in the initial decision, is formed to review the appeal.
2. Review and Hearing
 - a. The appeals committee reviews the submitted documents and may hold a hearing where both parties can present their case. The nature of the hearing can vary, from formal proceedings to more informal meetings.

Appeal Decision

1. Deliberation

- a. After reviewing the case and hearing from both parties, the appeals committee deliberates and makes a decision. This decision can affirm, reverse, or modify the original decision.
2. Notification
 - a. The decision of the appeals committee is communicated in writing to all parties involved, explaining the rationale behind the decision.
3. Implementation
 - a. The decision of the appeals committee is final and must be implemented by the association.
4. In cases of a Tier 3 offense, the impacted party may opt for an arbitrator to hear the case presented in lieu of the appeal committee as stated in their request for an appeal.

Version 1.0 Established 6-4-24