



## **MMYFC Complaints & Disciplinary process**

Club Disciplinary, Complaints and Appeals Procedure covers all matters including complaints where there is other than suspected child abuse. There is a specific procedure for Child Welfare related complaints which can be found on the Club website here (insert hyperlink).

For clarity, complaints relating to child abuse must also be referred to the Statutory Authorities.

While many concerns can be dealt with in an informal manner to the satisfaction of all concerned, it is advisable that detailed records are maintained in respect of all complaints and that all parties are advised of the formal complaints and appeals procedure.

All reasonable efforts to resolve matters should be exhausted at local level before accessing the appeals procedure.

### ***Step One***

A "Complaint" within the meaning of this procedure is a complaint concerning the behaviour of a director, committee member, coach, player or parent of a player of the Club.

Any person who has a complaint or concern should bring it to the attention of the secretary of the club for the time being, currently Tom Hanrahan (insert appropriate email address/number).

The complaint or concern should be in writing and should outline all relevant details and other parties involved.

### ***Step Two***

The Club Secretary will convene the 3-member disciplinary committee/panel unless the complaint or concern relates to a child abuse matter or criminal offence that meets criteria for formal reporting to the statutory authorities. This decision to be taken by reference to the Club's Child Welfare Policy which can be found here (insert hyperlink)

Where there are potential contentious issues, due consideration should be given to ensure the independence of the disciplinary committee/panel. To help increase the level of independence it is advisable that not more than one member of the disciplinary committee/panel be a current director or committee member.

(Note: The Chairperson of the Club should not sit on the Disciplinary Committee as he/she is the appellate body)

### **Step Three**

For clarity, save for those procedural steps contained in this clause the disciplinary panel is in charge of its own procedure. At a minimum the disciplinary committee/panel shall furnish any participant with details of the complaint being made against them and afford them the opportunity of providing a response either verbally or in writing.

In the event of a complaint against a child, the parents/guardians should be:

- a) informed and advised of the process.
- b) asked to attend any meeting between the disciplinary panel and the child in question.
- c) asked to sign all written responses provided by the child to the complaint.

### **Step Four**

On consideration of the Complaint, and the written or verbal response received to the Complaint, the disciplinary committee should decide whether:

- a) the Complaint is of such a nature that it is capable of being dealt with by mediation or conciliation, whether formal or informal, or by some other manner not involving a disciplinary hearing
- b) the complaint is such a nature that it is necessary to be resolved through a disciplinary hearing.

The disciplinary committee shall determine its own procedure. The disciplinary committee shall only uphold a Complaint if it is satisfied that the person the subject of the Complaint behaved in a manner which constituted a breach of any guideline, rule or regulation of the Club or behaved in such a manner as was not appropriate to his or her position as a director, committee member, coach, player or parent of a player of the Club or which has brought the Club into disrepute.

The disciplinary committee/panel should then hear the case of all parties involved and decide if a guideline, rule or regulation has been infringed.

### **Step Five**

The disciplinary committee/panel should then inform in writing those involved of their decision and any sanctions if any that are to be imposed. This notification should be in writing, setting out the reasons for the sanction. (Written notification should be forwarded to parents if the proceedings involve a participant under eighteen years of age)

### **Step Six**

Any party unhappy with the findings of the disciplinary committee/panel shall have 14 days from receipt of the decision of the disciplinary committee to deliver a written notification of appeal can appeal the decision in writing to the Chairperson of the Club for the time being, currently Paul Mc Donnell (insert email address).

### **Step Seven**

The Chairperson will hold a full re-hearing of the complaint and in so doing shall be entitled, save as is provided for herein, to determine the procedure for the appeal.

The appeals body have the power to uphold or reject the appeal or to vary, alter or set aside any sanction imposed by the disciplinary committee.

Written confidential records in relation to disciplinary proceedings should be safely and confidentially kept on file (procedures should clearly define the possession of such records in the event of election of new officers).

### **Anonymous Complaints**

Anonymous complaints can be difficult to deal with, however they cannot be ignored. Any anonymous complaint that is delivered to the Club must be brought to the attention of the Secretary of the Club and will be handled in accordance with the steps set out above.

In all cases the safety and welfare of the child/children is paramount.

All complaints should be checked out and handled in a confidential manner. It is important to record all such complaints and actions taken. Specific advice on dealing with anonymous complaints can be got from your local HSE duty social worker or alternatively the Football Association of Ireland National Children's Officer.

### **Rumours**

Rumours should not be allowed hang in the air. Any rumour/s including those relating to inappropriate behaviour/s circulating in the club should be brought to the attention to the Chairperson and checked out promptly. All ensuing information should be handled confidentially and with sensitivity.

### **Confidentiality**

Confidentiality is about managing information in a respectful, professional and purposeful manner. It is important that the rights of both the child and the person about whom the complaint has been made are protected. Therefore, appropriate confidentiality will be maintained in respect of all issues and people involved in concerns about the welfare of a child or bad practice within the club.

The following points will be borne in mind:

- A guarantee of confidentiality or undertakings regarding secrecy cannot be given, as the welfare of the child will supersede all other considerations.
- All information should be treated in a careful and sensitive manner and should only be discussed with those who need to know.
- Information will be conveyed to the parents/guardians of a child about whom there are concerns in a sensitive way.
- Giving information to others on a "need to know" basis for the protection of a child is not a breach of confidentiality

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