



Discipline and Complaints

Definitions

1. The following terms have these meanings in this Policy:
 - a. “*Case Manager*” – An individual appointed by the MFA to administer this *Discipline and Complaints Policy*. The Case Manager does not need to be a member of, or affiliated with, the MFA

Purpose

2. Individuals are expected to fulfill certain responsibilities and obligations including, but not limited to, complying with the MFA’s policies, Bylaws, rules and regulations. Non-compliance may result in sanctions pursuant to this Policy.

Application of this Policy

3. This Policy applies to all Individuals.
4. This Policy applies to matters that may arise during the course of MFA’s business, activities, and events including, but not limited to, competitions, practices, tryouts, training camps, travel associated with MFA activities, and any meetings.
5. This Policy also applies to Individuals’ conduct outside of the MFA’s business, activities, and events when such conduct adversely affects relationships within the MFA (and its work and sport environment) and is detrimental to the image and reputation of the MFA. Such applicability will be determined by the MFA at its sole discretion.
6. This Policy does not prevent immediate discipline or sanction from being applied as reasonably required. Further discipline may be applied according to this Policy. Any infractions or complaints occurring within competition will be dealt with by the procedures specific to the competition, if applicable. In such situations, disciplinary sanctions will be for the duration of the competition, training, activity, or event only.
7. An employee of the MFA who is a Respondent will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action with respect to human resources policies and the employee’s contract. Violations may result in a warning, reprimand, restrictions, suspension, or other disciplinary actions up to and including termination of employment.

Reporting a Complaint

8. Any Individual may report any complaint to the MFA. A complaint must be in writing and must be filed within fourteen (14) days of the alleged incident.
9. A Complainant wishing to file a complaint outside of the fourteen (14) day period must provide a written statement giving reasons for an exemption to this limitation. The decision to accept, or not accept, the complaint outside of the fourteen (14) day period will be at the sole discretion of the MFA. This decision may not be appealed.
10. At the MFA's discretion, the MFA may act as the Complainant and initiate the complaint process under the terms of this Policy. In such cases, the MFA will identify an individual to represent the MFA.
11. Resignation or lapsing of membership after a complaint is filed does not preclude discipline being pursued under this Policy.

Case Manager

12. Upon the receipt of a complaint, the MFA will appoint a Case Manager to oversee management and administration of complaints submitted in accordance with this Policy. Such appointment is not appealable.
13. The Case Manager has a responsibility to:
 - a. Determine whether the complaint is frivolous and/or within the jurisdiction of this Policy
 - b. Propose the use of the MFA's *Dispute Resolution Policy*
 - c. Appoint the Discipline Panel, if necessary
 - d. Coordinate all administrative aspects and set timelines
 - e. Provide administrative assistance and logistical support to the Discipline Panel as required
 - f. Provide any other service or support that may be necessary to ensure a fair and timely proceeding

Procedures

14. If the Case Manager determines the complaint is:
 - a. Frivolous or outside the jurisdiction of this Policy, the complaint will be dismissed immediately
 - b. Not frivolous and within the jurisdiction of this Policy, the Case Manager will notify the Parties that the complaint is accepted and of the applicable next steps
15. The Case Manager's decision to accept or dismiss the complaint may not be appealed.
16. The Case Manager will establish and adhere to timelines that ensure procedural fairness and that the matter is heard in a timely fashion.
17. After notifying the Parties that the complaint has been accepted, the Case Manager will first propose using the MFA's *Dispute Resolution Policy* with the objective of resolving the dispute. If the dispute is not resolved or if the parties refuse to use the *Dispute Resolution Policy*, the Case Manager will appoint a Discipline Panel, which shall consist of a single Adjudicator, to hear the complaint. In extraordinary circumstances, and at the discretion of the Case Manager, a Discipline Panel of three persons may be appointed to hear the complaint. In this event, the Case Manager will appoint one of the Discipline Panel's members to serve as the Chair.
18. The Case Manager, in cooperation with the Discipline Panel, will then decide the format under which the complaint will be heard. This decision may not be appealed. The format of the hearing, which may involve direct communication with the Parties, an oral in-person hearing, an oral hearing by telephone or other communication medium, a hearing based on a review of documentary evidence

submitted in advance of the hearing, or a combination of these methods. The hearing will be governed by the procedures that the Case Manager and the Discipline Panel deem appropriate in the circumstances, provided that:

- a. The Parties will be given appropriate notice of the day, time, and place of the hearing, in the case of an oral in-person hearing or an oral hearing by telephone or other communication medium
 - b. Copies of any written documents which the parties wish to have the Discipline Panel consider will be provided to all Parties, through the Case Manager, in advance of the hearing
 - c. The Parties may be accompanied by a representative, advisor, or legal counsel at their own expense
 - d. The Discipline Panel may request that any other individual participate and give evidence at the hearing
 - e. The Discipline Panel may allow as evidence at the hearing any oral evidence and document or thing relevant to the subject matter of the complaint, but may exclude such evidence that is unduly repetitious, and shall place such weight on the evidence as it deems appropriate
 - f. The decision will be by a majority vote of the Discipline Panel
19. If the Respondent acknowledges the facts of the incident, the Respondent may waive the hearing, in which case the Discipline Panel will determine the appropriate sanction. The Discipline Panel may still hold a hearing for the purpose of determining an appropriate sanction.
 20. The hearing will proceed in any event, even if a Party chooses not to participate in the hearing.
 21. If a decision may affect another party to the extent that the other party would have recourse to a complaint or an appeal in its own right, that party will become a Party to the current complaint and will be bound by the decision.
 22. In fulfilling its duties, the Discipline Panel may obtain independent advice.

Decision

23. After hearing and/or reviewing the matter, the Discipline Panel will determine whether an infraction has occurred and, if so, the sanctions to be imposed. Within fourteen (14) days of the hearing's conclusion, the Discipline Panel's written decision, with reasons, will be distributed to all Parties, the Case Manager, and the MFA. In extraordinary circumstances, the Discipline Panel may first issue a verbal or summary decision soon after the hearing's conclusion, with the full written decision to be issued before the end of the fourteen (14) day period. The decision will be considered a matter of public record unless decided otherwise by the Discipline Panel.

Sanctions

24. The Discipline Panel may apply the following disciplinary sanctions, singularly or in combination:
 - a. Verbal or written reprimand
 - b. Verbal or written apology
 - c. Service or other contribution to the MFA
 - d. Removal of certain privileges
 - e. Suspension from certain teams, events, and/or activities
 - f. Suspension from all MFA activities for a designated period of time
 - g. Withholding of prize money or awards

- h. Payment of the cost of repairs for property damage
 - i. Suspension of funding from the MFA or from other sources
 - j. Expulsion from the MFA
 - k. Any other sanction considered appropriate for the offense
25. Unless the Discipline Panel decides otherwise, any disciplinary sanctions will begin immediately, notwithstanding an appeal. Failure to comply with a sanction as determined by the Discipline Panel will result in an automatic suspension until such time as compliance occurs.
26. Infractions that result in discipline will be recorded and records will be maintained by the MFA.

Suspension Pending a Hearing

27. The MFA may determine that an alleged incident is of such seriousness as to warrant suspension of an Individual pending completion of a criminal process, the hearing, or a decision of the Discipline Panel.

Criminal Convictions

28. An Individual's conviction for a *Criminal Code* offense, as determined by the MFA, will be deemed an infraction under this Policy and will result in expulsion from the MFA. *Criminal Code* offences may include, but are not limited to:
- a. Any child pornography offences
 - b. Any sexual offences
 - c. Any offence of physical violence
 - d. Any offence of assault
 - e. Any offence involving trafficking of illegal drugs

Confidentiality

29. The discipline and complaints process is confidential and involves only the Parties, the Case Manager, the Discipline Panel, and any independent advisors to the Discipline Panel. Once initiated and until a decision is released, none of the Parties will disclose confidential information relating to the discipline or complaint to any person not involved in the proceedings.

Timelines

30. If the circumstances of the complaint are such that adhering to the timelines outlined by this Policy will not allow a timely resolution to the complaint, the Discipline Panel may direct that these timelines be revised.

Records and Distribution of Decisions

31. Other individuals or organizations, including but not limited to, national sport organizations, provincial sport organizations, clubs, etc., may be advised of any decisions rendered in accordance with this Policy.

Appeals Procedure

32. The decision of the Discipline Panel may be appealed in accordance with the MFA's *Appeal Policy*.