

MPLA Disciplinary Procedure

1.0: Purpose and scope

This procedure is designed to help and encourage all members of MPLA to achieve and maintain standards of behaviour. The emphasis of Disciplinary Procedure is, in the first instance, on the improvement of the member's behaviour by working in partnership with them and their parent/guardian rather than just on imposing sanctions. MPLA will impose sanctions in the most serious cases or where improvement in the member's behaviour has not been forthcoming. Our aim is to ensure consistent and fair treatment for all members.

2.0: Principles

The Disciplinary Committee will consist of a chairman, a vice chairman, a secretary and two other members.

A meeting will be convened within 14 days of the alleged breach of the Code of Conduct and the member will be notified of the nature of their failure to maintain the standards detailed in Code.

On the day of the incident giving rise to the breach of the Code of Conduct, the matter should be formally reported to the Disciplinary Panel Chairman or Secretary, by the referee of the day or any executive member of MPLA who was present at the time of the incident.. If the Secretary/Chairman of the disciplinary committee considers that a potential breach of the Code of Conduct has occurred, the matter will be passed to the Chairman who will coordinate the investigation and institute the disciplinary procedure.

The member(s) involved in the incident will be notified of the time, date and venue of the meeting and will be required to confirm attendance no later than 24 hours prior to the date of the meeting. The member will be required to attend with their parent/guardian, if he/she is under 18 years old, who may make a representation on their behalf.

The member and or their representative will be given an opportunity to state their case prior to any decision being made by the Disciplinary Committee.

No disciplinary action will be taken against a member until a full investigation as to the circumstances of the incident have been conducted by disciplinary panel.

At all stages of the investigation the member will be required to be accompanied by their parent/guardian, if they are under 18, who may make representations on their behalf and confirm that the member fully understands the potential breach of the code, the procedure taking place and the sanction, if any, imposed by the Disciplinary Committee. All aspects of the investigation will remain confidential.

No member will be dismissed from the Club for a first breach of the Code of Conduct except in cases where there has been a Gross Misconduct as detailed under section 4. In those circumstances a specific procedure will be followed.

A member will have the right to appeal against any disciplinary action imposed. An appeal should be addressed to the MPLA Secretary and submitted within seven days

from the date that the Disciplinary Committee's decision is communicated to the member.

3.0: Procedure

Stage 1: Verbal Warning

If the conduct is deemed to be in breach of the standards laid down in the Code of Conduct, a member will in the first instance be given a verbal warning. The member and their parent/guardian will be advised of the reason for the warning and notified that this is the first stage of the Disciplinary Procedure. He or she will be notified that they have a right to appeal, the timescale upon which the appeal should be submitted to the disciplinary committee's secretary for further consideration. A note of the verbal warning will be kept by the panel's Secretary but will be discarded after 12 months or in line with the present requirements of the Data Protection Act. Where a follow up review is necessary, the member will be advised of this and the timescales for review. In those circumstances, an action plan will be mutually agreed with the member or parent/guardian if under 18, and a mentor appointed by MPLA.

Stage 2: Written Warning

If the matter is more serious or there is a further breach of the Code of Conduct, then a written warning will be given to the member. This will explain the reason for the warning, the improvement in conduct required and the timescale. Further, if there is no improvement that action detailed in Stage 3 may be considered. The right of appeal against this decision will be advised and explained to the member. An action plan will be mutually agreed with the member or parent/guardian if under 18, and a mentor appointed by the Club. A copy of the written warning will be kept by the Club Secretary but will be discarded for disciplinary purposes after 12 months subject to satisfactory conduct .

Stage 3: Final Written Warning

If there is still a failure to improve and conduct is still unsatisfactory, or if the matter is sufficiently serious to warrant only one written warning but insufficiently serious to justify dismissal from the club, a final written warning will be given by the disciplinary committee. This will explain the reason for the warning, the improvement required and the timescale. An action plan will be mutually agreed with the member or parent/guardian if under 18, and a mentor appointed by the Club. It will also warn that dismissal from the Club will result if there is no improvement and will advise the right of appeal. The committee's Secretary will hold a copy of the final written warning, but it will be disregarded for disciplinary purposes after 12 months subject to satisfactory conduct.

Stage 4: Dismissal from MPLA

If the conduct is still unsatisfactory and the member still fails to reach the required standards or the conduct is regarded as serious gross misconduct, then dismissal from the club will usually result. Only the Executive Committee of at least four can take the decision to dismiss the member. The member will be provided, as soon as practicable,

a written explanation for dismissal, the date upon which membership will terminate and the right of appeal.

5.0: Gross Misconduct

The following list gives examples of behaviour that are normally regarded as gross misconduct:

- a) Fighting
- b) Assault on another person
- c) Deliberate damage to Club property
- d) Bringing the Club into disrepute by actions or words
- e) Serious negligence or disregard of the MPA rules that causes, or could have caused, unacceptable loss, damage (physical or reputational) or injury.
- f) Serious act of insubordination, including the failure to follow or observe reasonable instructions of the team coach/referee.

6.0: Procedure

In the event that a member of the Club is alleged of gross misconduct by a match referee or other authority, the member shall be automatically suspended; pending investigation/disciplinary hearing.

6.1.1: In the case of players, the individual will not play in a match nor be allowed to train until an emergency meeting of the disciplinary committee has been convened.

6.1.2: An emergency meeting of the Disciplinary Committee will be convened within 2 weeks of the incident chaired by the committee chairman or vice chairman.

6.1.3: The individual(s) involved will be asked to attend the meeting and in the case of a player under 18 years of age, will be accompanied by a parent/guardian or other representative.

6.1.4: The individual will be asked to recall the incident, to confirm that they understand the charges, explain their actions and to answer questions regarding the incident with the agreement of their parent/guardian or representative. Witnesses may be called by members/players charged with serious/gross misconduct. The Club also reserves the right to call witnesses if deemed appropriate.

6.1.5: At the end of the hearing once all the evidence(s)/submission(s) have been heard the individual(s) and or their representative(s) will be entitled to make a closing submission to the Disciplinary Committee.

6.1.6: After the closing submissions, all other persons shall withdraw whilst the Committee considers the evidence and submissions. It will determine whether the breach has been proved or not, and what actions are to be taken as a result.

6.1.7: The individual(s) will be recalled to the meeting and notified of the Committee's decision which will be confirmed in writing within 5 clear days of the meeting.

6.1.8: Should a person be charged with serious/gross misconduct not attend the Disciplinary Meeting then a decision will be made in their absence, and the decision of the Committee will be confirmed in writing to the address noted on their registration document.

The Committee have the authority to take whatever action is appropriate within the club rules and constitution. In the most serious of cases this could lead to dismissal from the club.

Appeals

A member who wishes to appeal against any disciplinary decision taken against him/her, should inform the Disciplinary Panel's secretary within seven days. At the appeal any disciplinary action proposed will be reviewed by the chairman of MPLA and 2 other executive members who have not been directly involved in the incident.

The member will be notified of the outcome of the appeal in writing within seven days of the hearing.