



Lindale Soccer Association

Appeals and Disciplinary Policy

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish a fair, impartial, and consistent process for resolving disciplinary matters, grievances, protests, and appeals arising within Lindale Soccer Association ("LSA"). This policy promotes due process while protecting the integrity of the Association and the safety of its participants.

Authority

The Board of Directors establishes an Appeals and Disciplinary Committee ("A&D Committee") to hear matters delegated under this policy.

The A&D Committee shall have authority to investigate complaints, conduct hearings, determine facts, impose disciplinary actions within its jurisdiction, and hear appeals as authorized by the LSA Bylaws and applicable North Texas Soccer ("NTSSA"), US Youth Soccer, and US Soccer rules.

The Committee shall operate independently and impartially while remaining subject to the authority granted by the LSA Bylaws and the Board of Directors. Members of the Appeals and Disciplinary Committee shall comply with the LSA Conflict of Interest Policy.

Jurisdiction

The A&D Committee may hear matters involving:

- Coaches
- Assistant Coaches
- Players
- Parents and Spectators
- Team Managers
- Referees (when within LSA jurisdiction)
- Volunteers
- Board Members
- Member Clubs or Teams
- Other individuals participating in Association activities

Matters outside LSA's jurisdiction shall be referred to the appropriate governing organization.

Matters Subject to Review

The A&D Committee may consider matters including:

- Misconduct by players, coaches, volunteers, spectators, or parents.
- Violations of LSA Bylaws, Policies, or Rules.
- Violations of NTSSA, US Youth Soccer, US Soccer, or SafeSport requirements.
- Referee Abuse Prevention (RAP) incidents.
- Grievances involving Board Members.



- Appeals of disciplinary decisions made by authorized LSA officials or committees.
- Other matters referred by the Board of Directors.

Committee Composition

The Appeals and Disciplinary Committee shall consist of individuals appointed by the Board of Directors.

Committee members shall:

- Be impartial.
- Disclose any actual or perceived conflicts of interest.
- Recuse themselves when impartiality cannot reasonably be maintained.

No individual directly involved in a matter shall participate in deciding that matter.

Due Process

LSA shall provide fair and impartial hearings consistent with the principles established by North Texas Soccer. Parties shall have the opportunity to be present, present relevant information, respond to evidence, and be heard before a final decision is rendered, except where immediate action is necessary to protect participant safety.

Filing Complaints

Complaints should be submitted in writing or email to the Vice President of Appeals or another designated Association official.

Complaints should include:

- Names of involved parties.
- Date, time, and location of the incident.
- Description of events.
- Supporting documentation, photographs, videos, or witness information when available.
- Requested resolution, if applicable.

The Association may investigate complaints regardless of whether a formal complaint has been submitted when participant safety or Association integrity is involved.

Anonymous complaints may be considered when participant safety, misconduct, or other significant Association interests are involved; however, anonymity may limit the Association's ability to investigate or resolve the matter.

Knowingly false, malicious, or bad-faith complaints may themselves constitute a violation of Association policy and may be referred to the Appeals and Disciplinary Committee.

Preliminary Review

Upon receipt of a complaint, the Vice President of Appeals or designee shall determine whether:

- The matter falls within LSA jurisdiction.
- Immediate action is necessary.
- Additional investigation is required.



- The matter should proceed to a formal hearing.
- The matter should be referred to NTSSA or another governing authority.

Temporary Administrative Action

When necessary to protect participants or the Association, the Board President or Vice President of Appeals may impose temporary administrative restrictions pending completion of the investigation.

Temporary actions are administrative measures and shall not be considered disciplinary findings.

Informal Resolution

Whenever appropriate and consistent with participant safety, the Vice President of Appeals or designee may attempt to resolve complaints through informal discussion, education, mediation, or corrective action before referring the matter for a formal hearing. Informal resolution shall not be used for matters involving alleged abuse, serious misconduct, SafeSport violations, Referee Abuse Prevention incidents, or other matters requiring formal action under applicable governing rules.

Hearings

When a formal hearing is required:

- Reasonable notice shall be provided to all parties.
- Parties shall have the opportunity to attend.
- Parties may present evidence and witnesses.
- The Committee may question witnesses.
- Formal courtroom procedures shall not apply.
- The Committee may establish reasonable limits on testimony, witnesses, and evidence to ensure an orderly hearing.

The Committee may consider documentary evidence, photographs, video recordings, written statements, referee reports, and other relevant information it determines to be reliable. The Committee may deliberate in closed session.

Decisions

After reviewing all relevant information, the Committee may:

- Dismiss the complaint.
- Issue a written warning.
- Require education or corrective training.
- Place an individual on probation.
- Suspend participation.
- Restrict coaching, volunteer, or spectator privileges.
- Recommend removal from an appointed position.
- Refer the matter to NTSSA, US Youth Soccer, US Soccer, SafeSport, or law enforcement when appropriate.
- Impose any other sanction authorized by Association policy.

Decisions shall be based upon the preponderance of the evidence. Committee decisions shall be made by a majority vote of the Committee members participating in the hearing.



Written Decision

The Committee shall issue a written decision that includes:

- Findings of fact.
- Applicable policies or rules.
- Sanctions imposed, if any.
- Appeal rights, when applicable.

Appeals

A party adversely affected by a final decision of the A&D Committee may appeal to the LSA Board of Directors.

Appeals must:

- Be submitted in writing.
- Identify the specific grounds for appeal.
- Be filed within five (5) calendar days of receiving the written decision, unless a different deadline is required by NTSSA rules.

An appeal is not a new hearing. The Board shall determine whether:

- The Committee exceeded its authority.
- Required procedures were not followed.
- New evidence exists that was not reasonably available at the original hearing.
- The decision was clearly unsupported by the evidence.

The Board may affirm, modify, reverse, or remand the decision to the Committee for further proceedings.

Appeals Beyond LSA

Following exhaustion of all LSA appeal procedures, appeals may be submitted to North Texas Soccer when authorized by NTSSA Bylaws and Rules. Participants must exhaust all available remedies within the soccer organization before seeking judicial relief.

Referee Abuse Prevention (RAP)

Reports involving Referee Abuse Prevention shall be processed in accordance with the current NTSSA, US Soccer, and Referee Abuse Prevention Program requirements.

When required, LSA shall submit reports through the official NTSSA reporting system.

Confidentiality

Appeals and Disciplinary Committee members shall maintain confidentiality of proceedings in accordance with the LSA Confidentiality and Non-Disclosure Policy.

Only individuals with a legitimate need to know shall receive access to such information.



Records Retention

The Association shall maintain records of disciplinary proceedings, investigations, hearings, and appeals in accordance with the LSA ADAPT Program Policy and Document Retention Schedule.

Conflict of Interest

Members of the Appeals and Disciplinary Committee shall comply with the LSA Conflict of Interest Policy.

Policy Review

This policy shall be reviewed annually by the Executive Officers and amended as necessary.