

OFFICIAL



HUNTER VALLEY
FOOTBALL



Rules and Regulations



REGULATION H: Football Member Protection Policy and Its Associated Policies

Summary

These Rules and Regulations provide information about:

- **Regulation H – Football Member Protection Policy and Its Associated Policies**

that all the Joint Zone Competitions will operate under.

The Regulations, Procedures and Policies in conjunction with the Constitution and By-Laws of the Zone Association shall, with the approval of NSW Football and duly Registered with FA, apply from the date of approval and shall take precedence over any previous Regulations of the Zone Association.

Issued by the Joint Board of Directors of Macquarie Football, Newcastle Football, and Hunter Valley Football.

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Introduction

The Joint Football Zones Member Protection Policy (MPP) provides the procedures and policies that support FA's, NNSW Football commitment to eliminating discrimination, harassment, child abuse and other forms of inappropriate behaviour from Football.

Further, it sets out codes of conduct and behaviour that form the basis of appropriate and ethical conduct by which everyone must abide.

The Joint Football Zones (Hunter Valley Football, Macquarie Football and Newcastle Football) aim to ensure that core values, good reputation and positive behaviours and attitudes are maintained in football.

This Member Protection Policies assists the Joint Football Zones in ensuring that every person involved in football in our three (3) Zones is treated with respect and dignity, and is kept safe and protected from abuse, bullying and harassment, discrimination, and any other forms of inappropriate behaviours.

This is an essential part of our Joint Football Zone's proactive and preventative approach to tackling inappropriate behaviour.

The three (3) Football Zones Boards acknowledge that staff, members, and volunteers involved in our zones provide a valuable contribution to the experiences of Children and Adults involved in football. The Joint Football Zones aim to continue this and to take measures to protect the safety and wellbeing of all Children and Adults participating in football

H01 PURPOSE OF OUR POLICY

The main objective of the Joint Football Zone's ("our", "us" or "we") Member Protection Policy ("policy") is to maintain responsible behaviour and the making of informed decisions by members and other participants in the Joint Football Zones.

It outlines our commitment to a person's right to be treated with respect and dignity, and to be safe and protected from discrimination, harassment, abuse and physical harm.

Our policy informs everyone involved in our three (3) Football Zones (Hunter Valley Football, Macquarie Football and Newcastle Football) of his or her legal, ethical rights, responsibilities and the standards of behaviour that are expected of them in their involvement in Football at all levels.

It also covers the care and protection of children and adults participating in our member club's activities.

H02 WHO OUR POLICY APPLIES TO

This policy applies to everyone involved in the activities of our three (3) Football Zones (Hunter Valley Football, Macquarie Football and Newcastle Football) whether they are in a paid or unpaid/voluntary capacity and including:

- Zone Board members, Zone Administrators, and other Zone Officials
- Member Club committee members, club members, administrators, and other club officials.
- Coaches, assistant coaches, other personnel participating in events and activities, including camps and training sessions.
- Support personnel, including managers, physiotherapists, psychologists, masseurs, sport trainers, first aiders and other Team Officials.
- Referees and other Match Officials.
- Players, Reserves, Substitutes, Interchange players.
- members, including any life members.
- Parents, guardians, or caregivers.
- spectators; and
- any other person to whom the Joint Football Zones Board or Administrators decide the policy may apply.

H03 EXTENT OF OUR POLICY

Our policy covers all matters directly and indirectly related to the Joint Football Zones and its associated activities.

In particular, the policy governs unfair decisions and actions, breaches of our code of behaviour and behaviour that occurs at Member Club's matches, training sessions, in the member club rooms at social events organised or events sanctioned by the Joint Football Zones, and on away and overnight trips.

It also covers private behaviour where that behaviour brings our Joint Football Zones or football into disrepute or there is suspicion of harm towards a child or young person or adult.

Several associated policies, rules and regulations which may be referred to in this policy are also covered as individual policies which remain under the umbrella of the Member Protection Policy relating to but not limited to:

1. Alcohol and Prohibited Drugs
2. Anti-discrimination
3. Anti-Doping

4. Blood and Bleeding
5. Child Protection
6. Codes of Behaviour
7. Equipment and Safety
8. Goalpost Safety
9. Harassment
10. Head Injuries and Concussion
11. Hot Weather and Heat Stress
12. Infectious Diseases
13. Lightning and Storm Conditions
14. Match Official Abuse
15. Pregnancy
16. Privacy
17. Racial and Religious Vilification
18. Risk Management
19. Sexual Harassment
20. Smoking and Vaping
21. Social Justice
22. Social Media
23. Sun Safe

H04 FOOTBALL ZONE AND MEMBER CLUBS RESPONSIBILITIES

We will:

- adopt, implement, and comply with this policy and associated policies.
- ensure that this policy and associated policies is enforceable.
- publish, distribute, and promote this policy and the consequences of any breaches of this policy and associated policies.
- promote and model appropriate standards of behaviour at all times.
- deal with any complaints made under this policy in an appropriate manner.
- deal with any breaches of this policy in an appropriate manner.
- recognise and enforce any penalty imposed under this policy.

- ensure that a copy of this policy and associated policies is available or accessible to all people and organisations to whom this policy applies.
- review this policy every 12-18 months.
- and seek advice from and refer serious issues to NSW Police, NNSW Football or Football Australia.

Serious issues include unlawful behaviour that involves or could lead to significant harm and includes criminal behaviour (e.g., physical assault, sexual assault, child abuse) and any other issues that our state (NSW Police and NNSW Football) or Football Australia request to be referred to them.

H05 INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Everyone associated with our three (3) Football Zones (Hunter Valley Football, Macquarie Football and Newcastle Football) must:

- make themselves aware of the contents of this policy and its associated policies.
- comply with all relevant provisions of this policy, including the standards of behaviour outlined in this policy and its associated policies.
- consent to the screening requirements set out in this policy, and any state or territory Working with Children checks if the person holds or applies for a role that involves regular unsupervised contact with a child or young person under the age of 18, or where otherwise required by law.
- treat other people with respect.
- always place the safety and welfare of children and adults above other considerations.
- be responsible and accountable for their behaviour; and
- follow the guidelines outlined in this policy and its associated policies if they wish to make a complaint or report a concern about possible child abuse, discrimination, harassment, bullying or other inappropriate behaviour; and
- comply with any decisions and/or disciplinary measures imposed under this policy and its associated policies.

H06 PROTECTION OF CHILDREN

6.1 *Child Protection*

The three (3) Football Zones (Hunter Valley Football, Macquarie Football and Newcastle Football) are committed to the safety and wellbeing of children and young people who participate in our Zones' activities or use our services.

We support the rights of the child and will act at all times to ensure that a child's safe environment is maintained.

We also support the rights and wellbeing of our staff and volunteers and encourage their active participation in building and maintaining a secure and safe environment for all participants.

The three (3) Football Zones (Hunter Valley Football, Macquarie Football and Newcastle Football) acknowledges the valuable contribution made by our staff, members and volunteers and we encourage their active participating in providing a safe, fair, and inclusive environment for all participants.

6.1.1: Identifying and Analysing Risks of Harm

The three (3) Football Zones (Hunter Valley Football, Macquarie Football and Newcastle Football) will develop and implement a risk management strategy, which includes a review of our existing child protection practices, to determine how child-safe our organisation is and to identify any additional steps we can take to minimise and prevent the risk of harm to children because of the action of an employee, volunteer, or another person.

6.1.2: Developing Codes of Conduct for Adults and Children

We will develop and promote a code of conduct that specifies standards of conduct and care we expect of adults when the deal and interact with children, particularly those in our care.

We will also implement a code of conduct to promote appropriate behaviour between children.

The codes will clearly describe professional boundaries, ethical behaviour, and unacceptable behaviour. (*See Code of Behaviour Policy H03.5*)

6.1.3: Choosing Suitable Employees and Volunteers

Our three (3) Football Zones (Hunter Valley Football, Macquarie Football and Newcastle Football) will ensure that our organisations take all reasonable steps to ensure that it engages the most suitable and appropriate people to work with children, especially those in positions that involve regular unsupervised contact with children.

This may be achieved using a range of screening measures.

Such measures will aim to minimise the likelihood of engaging (or retaining) people who are unsuitable to work with children.

The three (3) Football Zones (Hunter Valley Football, Macquarie Football and Newcastle Football) will ensure that Working with Children Checks and criminal history assessments are conducted for employees and volunteers working with children, where an assessment is required by law.

If a criminal history report is obtained as part of the verification process, the three (3) Football Zones (Hunter Valley Football, Macquarie Football and

Newcastle Football) will ensure that the criminal history information is dealt with confidentially and in accordance with relevant legal requirements.

6.1.4: Support, Train, Supervise and Enhance Performance

The three (3) Football Zones (Hunter Valley Football, Macquarie Football and Newcastle Football) will ensure that all our employees and volunteers who work with children and young people have ongoing supervision, support, and training.

Our goal is to develop their skills and capacity and to enhance their performance so we can maintain a child-safe environment in our club.

6.1.5: Empower and Promote the Participation of Children In Decision-Making And Service Development

The three (3) Football Zones (Hunter Valley Football, Macquarie Football and Newcastle Football) will promote the involvement and participation of children and young people in developing and maintaining a child-safe environment in our zones.

6.1.6: Report and Respond Appropriately to Suspected Abuse and Neglect

The three (3) Football Zones (Hunter Valley Football, Macquarie Football and Newcastle Football) will ensure that employees and volunteers are able to identify and respond appropriately to children at risk of harm and that they are aware of their responsibilities under state laws to make a report if they suspect on reasonable ground that a child has been, or is being, abused or neglected (*See Attachments 3 & 4 Child Protection Policy*).

Abuse must be behaviour of a nature and level of seriousness which includes, but is not limited to:

- a. physical abuse and assault including hitting, slapping, punching, kicking, destroying property, sleep, and food deprivation, forced feeding, unreasonable physical restraint, spitting at another person or biting.
- b. sexual abuse including rape and assault, using sexually degrading insults, forced sex or sexual acts, deliberately causing pain during sex, unwanted touching or exposure to pornography, sexual jokes, using sex to coerce compliance.
- c. emotional abuse such as repeated and intentional embarrassment in public (including social media platforms), preventing or excluding someone from participating in sport activities, stalking, humiliation, or intimidation.
- d. verbal abuse such as repeated or severe insults, name calling, criticism, swearing and humiliation, attacks on someone's intelligence, body shaming, or aggressive yelling.
- e. financial abuse such as restricting access to bank accounts, taking control of finances and money, forbidding someone from working, taking someone's pay and not allowing them to access it.

- f. neglect of a person's needs.

In addition to any legal obligations, if any person believes that another person or organisation bound by this policy is acting inappropriately towards a child or is in breach of this policy, they may make an internal complaint.

Please refer to our complaints procedure in **Section 9** of this policy.

Any person who believes a child is in immediate danger or in a life-threatening situation, should contact the police on 000 immediately.

6.2 ***Supervision***

Children under the age of eighteen (18) ***must be*** supervised at all times by a responsible adult. We endeavour to provide an appropriate level of supervision at all times.

If a member finds a child under the age of eighteen (18) is unsupervised, ***they should*** assume responsibility for the child's safety until the child's parent/guardian or supervisor is located.

For reasons of courtesy and safety, parents, guardians, caregivers ***must collect*** their children on time.

If it appears a member will be left alone with just one child at the end of any club activity, they will ask another member to stay until the child is collected.

6.3 ***Transportation***

Parents and or guardians are responsible for organising the transportation of their children to and from club activities (e.g., training and games).

Where we arrange for the transportation of children (e.g., for away matches or overnight trips), we will conduct a risk assessment that includes:

- ensuring vehicles are adequately insured,
- the driver has a current and appropriate licence for the vehicle being used and,
- the appropriate safety measures are in place (e.g., fitted working seatbelts).

6.4 ***Taking Images of Children***

Images of children cannot be used inappropriately or illegally.

We require that members, wherever possible, obtain permission from a child's parent, guardian, or caregiver before taking an image of a child that is not their own.

We will also make sure that the parent, guardian, or caregiver understands how the image will be used.

To respect people's privacy, we do not allow camera phones, videos, and cameras to be used inside changing areas, showers, and toilets which we control

through our Member Clubs or are used in connection with our three (3) Football Zones (Hunter Valley Football, Macquarie Football and Newcastle Football).

When using a photo of a child, we ***will not*** name or identify the child or publish personal information, such as residential address, email address or telephone number, without the consent of the child's parent, guardian, or caregiver.

We will not provide information about a child's hobbies, interests, school, or the like, as this can be used by paedophiles or other persons to "groom" a child.

We will only use images of children that are relevant to the three (3) Football Zones (Hunter Valley Football, Macquarie Football and Newcastle Football) activities and we will ensure that they are suitably clothed in a manner that promotes our Zones.

We will seek permission from a child's parent, guardian, or caregiver before using their images.

H07 DISCRIMINATION, HARASSMENT, AND BULLYING

The three (3) Football Zones (Hunter Valley Football, Macquarie Football and Newcastle Football) is committed to providing an environment in which people are treated fairly and equitably and that is, as far as practicable, free from all forms of discrimination, harassment, and bullying.

We recognise that people may not be able to enjoy themselves or perform at their best if they are treated unfairly, discriminated against, harassed, or bullied.

7.1 Discrimination

Unlawful discrimination involves the less favourable treatment of a person on the basis of one or more of the personal characteristics protected by State or Federal anti-discrimination laws.

Discrimination includes both direct and indirect discrimination:

- **Direct discrimination** occurs if a person treats, or proposes to treat, a person with a protected personal characteristic unfavourably because of that personal characteristic.
- **Indirect discrimination** occurs if a person imposes, or proposes to impose, a requirement, condition or practice that will disadvantage a person with a protected personal characteristic and that requirement, condition or practice is not reasonable.

Every person is covered by the anti-discrimination laws that apply in their State as well as the Federal anti-discrimination laws.

The following is a list of all the personal characteristics that apply throughout Australia:

- gender.

- race, colour, descent, national or ethnic origin, nationality, ethno-religious origin, immigration.
- national extraction or social origin.
- marital status, relationship status, identity of spouse or domestic partner.
- pregnancy, potential pregnancy, breastfeeding.
- family or carer responsibilities, status as a parent, guardian, or carer.
- age.
- religion, religious beliefs, or activities.
- political beliefs or activities.
- lawful sexual activity.
- sexual orientation and gender identity.
- profession, trade, occupation or calling.
- irrelevant criminal record, spent convictions.
- irrelevant medical record.
- member of association or organisation of employees or employers, industrial activity, trade union activity.
- physical features.
- disability, mental or physical impairment.
- defence service; and
- personal association with someone who has, or is assumed to have, any of these personal characteristics.

Legislation also prohibits:

- racial, religious, homosexual, transgender, and HIV/AIDS vilification; and
- victimisation resulting from a complaint.

Vilification is behaviour including, but not limited to:

- a. speaking about a person's race or religion in a way that could make other people dislike, hate, or ridicule them.
- b. publishing claims that a racial or religious group is involved in serious crimes without any evidence in support.
- c. repeated and serious verbal or physical abuse about the race or religion of another person.

- d. encouraging violence against people who belong to a particular race or religion, or damaging their property; and
- e. encouraging people to hate a racial or religious group using flyers, stickers, posters, a speech, or publication, or using websites or email

Victimisation is behaviour including, but not limited to:

- a. dismissal of an employee/volunteer or disadvantage to their employment/involvement in football.
- b. alteration of an employee's position or duties to his or her disadvantage.
- c. discrimination between an employee and other employees.
- d. repeated failure to select an individual on merit.
- e. a reduction in future contract value; and
- f. removal of coaching and other financial and non-financial support.

For the purpose of determining discrimination, the offender's awareness and motive are irrelevant.

7.2 Harassment

Harassment is any unwelcome conduct, verbal or physical, that intimidates, offends, or humiliates another person and which happens because a person has a certain personal characteristic protected by State or Federal anti-discrimination legislation.

The offensive behaviour does not have to take place a number of times, a single incident can constitute harassment.

Sexual harassment is one type of harassment. Sexual harassment involves unwelcome conduct, remarks, or innuendo of a sexual nature.

It covers a wide range of behaviours and can be verbal, written, visual or physical.

Sexual harassment is not limited to members of the opposite sex.

Sexual harassment is behaviour including, but not limited to:

- a. unwelcome touching.
- b. staring or leering.
- c. suggestive comments or jokes.
- d. showing or sharing sexually explicit images or pictures.
- e. unwanted invitations to go out on dates.

- f. requests for sex.
- g. intrusive questions about a person's private life or body.
- h. unnecessary familiarity, such as deliberately brushing up against a person.
- i. insults or taunts based on sex.
- j. sexually explicit physical contact.
- k. sending sexually explicit or suggestive emails, texts, or other electronic/social media messages.
- l. displaying pornographic images or screen savers.
- m. asking intrusive questions about someone's personal life, including about his or her sex life; and
- n. criminal offences such as rape, indecent or sexual assault, sexual penetration, or relationship with a child under the age of 16 and possession of child pornography.

7.3 Bullying

Our three (3) Football Zones (Hunter Valley Football, Macquarie Football and Newcastle Football) are committed to providing an environment that is free from bullying.

We understand that bullying has the potential to result in significant negative consequences for an individual's health and wellbeing, and we regard bullying in all forms as unacceptable at our club.

Bullying is characterised by repeated, unreasonable behaviour directed at a person, or group of persons, that creates a risk to health and safety.

Bullying must be behaviour of a nature and level of seriousness which includes, but is not limited to, repeatedly:

- a. keeping someone out of a group (online or offline).
- b. acting in an unpleasant way near or towards someone.
- c. giving nasty looks, making rude gestures, calling names, being rude and impolite, constantly negative and teasing.
- d. spreading rumours or lies, or misrepresenting someone (i.e., using their social media account to post messages as if it were them).
- e. 'fooling around', 'messaging about' or other random or supposedly playful conduct that goes too far.
- f. harassing someone based on their race, sex, religion, gender, or a disability.
- g. intentionally and repeatedly hurting someone physically.
- h. intentionally stalking someone; and

- i. taking advantage of any power over someone else,

Bullying behaviour is that which a reasonable person in the circumstances would expect to be victimised, humiliate, undermine, threaten, degrade, offend, or intimidate a person.

Bullying behaviour can include actions of an individual or group.

Whilst generally characterised by repeated behaviours, one off instance can amount to bullying.

The following types of behaviour, where repeated or occurring as part of a pattern of behaviour, would be considered bullying:

- verbal abuse including shouting, swearing, teasing, making belittling remarks or persistent unjustified criticism.
- excluding or isolating a group or person.
- spreading malicious rumours; or
- psychological harassment such as intimidation.

but does not include legitimate and reasonable:

- a. management action.
- b. management processes.
- c. disciplinary action; or
- d. allocation of activities in compliance with training activities.

Bullying includes cyber-bullying which occurs through the use of any technology. New technologies and communication tools, such as smart phones and social networking websites, have greatly increased the potential for people to be bullied through unwanted and inappropriate comments.

We will not tolerate abusive, discriminatory, intimidating, or offensive statements being made online.

If any person believes they are being, or have been, bullied by another person or organisation bound by this policy, he or she may make a complaint. (*Refer to H09* of this policy.)

H08 INCLUSIVE PRACTICES

Our three (3) Football Zones (Hunter Valley Football, Macquarie Football and Newcastle Football) are welcoming, and we will seek to include members from all areas of our community.

The following are examples of some of our inclusive practices.

8.1 *People with a disability*

The Zones will not discriminate against any person because they have a disability. Where it is necessary, we will make reasonable adjustments (e.g. modifications to equipment and rules) to enable participation.

8.2 *People from diverse cultures*

We will support, respect, and encourage people from diverse cultures and religions to participate in our club and where possible we will accommodate requests for flexibility (e.g., modifications to uniforms) under IFAB, FIFA, FA and NSW Football Regulations, Laws, Rules, and Policies.

8.3 *Sexual & Gender Identity*

All people, regardless of their sexuality or gender identity, are welcome in all aspects of our Football Zones.

We strive to provide a safe environment for participation and will not tolerate any form of discrimination or harassment because of a person's sexuality or gender identity.

8.4 *Pregnancy*

The three (3) Zones are committed to treating pregnant women fairly and to removing any unreasonable barriers to their full participation in our club's activities.

We will not tolerate any discrimination or harassment against pregnant women.

We will take reasonable care to ensure the continuing safety, health, and wellbeing of pregnant women.

We will advise pregnant women that there may be risks involved with their continuing participation in sport (football), and we will encourage them to obtain medical advice about those risks.

Pregnant women should be aware that their own health and wellbeing, and that of their unborn child, is of utmost importance in their decision-making about the extent they choose to participate in our sport.

We encourage all pregnant women to talk with their medical advisers, make themselves aware of the facts about pregnancy in sport and ensure that they make informed decisions about their participation in our sport.

Pregnant women should make these decisions themselves, in consultation with their medical advisers and in discussion with Member Club or Zone Administrator(s).

We will only require pregnant women to sign a disclaimer in relation to their participation in our sport whilst they are pregnant if all other participants are required to sign one in similar circumstances.

We will not require women to undertake a pregnancy test.

If a pregnant woman believes she is being, or has been, harassed or discriminated against by another person bound by this policy, she may make a complaint (*see section 9*).

8.5 *Girls playing in boys teams*

If there is not a separate sex competition our three (3) Football Zones (Hunter Valley Football, Macquarie Football and Newcastle Football) will support girls playing in boys teams.

We note that Federal anti-discrimination laws provide that it is not unlawful to discriminate on grounds of sex by excluding persons from participation in any competitive sporting activity in which the strength, stamina or physique of competitors is relevant.

To alleviate the possible concerns about a female playing in a specific mixed Age/Grade/Division Competition team in the Joint Zones Associations Competition Administrator may ask the Member Club involved to determine if the specific female has the ability to compete on an individual basis in the specific mixed Age/Grade/Division Competition team of the Joint Zones Associations Competition by considering the nature of our sport and other available opportunities to compete.

H09 RESPONDING TO COMPLAINTS

9.1 *Complaints*

The Football Zones and their Member Clubs takes all complaints about on and off-field behaviour seriously.

The Football Zones and their Member Clubs will handle complaints based on the principles of procedural fairness, and ensure:

- all complaints will be taken seriously.
- the person making the complaint (complainant) will be given full details of what is being alleged against them and have the opportunity to respond to those allegations.
- irrelevant matters will not be considered.
- decisions will be unbiased; and
- any penalties imposed will be reasonable.

More serious complaints may be escalated to NSW Football and/or Football Australia.

If the complaint relates to suspected child abuse, sexual assault, or other criminal activity, then our Zones, or Member Clubs may need to report the behaviour to the police and/or relevant government authority.

9.2 *Complaint Handling Process*

When a complaint is received by our Football Zones Member Clubs, the person receiving the complaint (e.g., President, Member Protection Information Officer) will:

- listen carefully and ask questions to understand the nature and extent of the concern.
- ask what the complainant how they would like their concern to be resolved and if they need any support.
- explain the different options available to help resolve the complainant's concern.
- inform the relevant government authorities and/or police, if required by law to do so; and
- where possible and appropriate, maintain confidentiality but not necessarily anonymity.

Once the complainant decides on their preferred option for resolution, the Member Club/Zone Administration will assist, where appropriate and necessary, with the resolution process.

This may involve:

- supporting the person complaining to talk to the person being complained about.
- bringing all the people involved in the complaint together to talk objectively through the problem (this could include external mediation).
- gathering more information (e.g., from other people that may have seen the behaviour).
- seeking advice from our district, regional, state and/or national body or from an external agency (e.g., State Department of Sport or anti-discrimination agency).
- referring the complaint to a Football Zone (Hunter Valley Football, Macquarie Football, Newcastle Football), NSW Football or Football Australia; and/or
- referring the complainant to an external agency such as a community mediation centre, police, or anti-discrimination agency.

In situations where a complaint is referred to a Football Zone (Hunter Valley Football, Macquarie Football, Newcastle Football), NSW Football or Football Australia and an investigation is conducted, the club/clubs will:

- co-operate fully with the investigation.

- where applicable, ensure the complainant is not placed in an unsupervised situation with the respondent(s); and
- act on our Football Zone's (Hunter Valley Football, Macquarie Football, Newcastle Football), NNSW Football or Football Australia recommendations.

At any stage of the process, a person can seek advice from an anti-discrimination commission or other external agency and, if the matter is within their jurisdiction, may lodge a complaint with the anti-discrimination commission or other external agency.

9.3 *Disciplinary Sanctions*

The Football Zones (Hunter Valley Football, Macquarie Football, Newcastle Football) may take disciplinary action against anyone found to have breached our policy or made false and malicious allegations.

Any disciplinary measure imposed under our policy must:

- be applied consistent with any contractual and employment rules and requirements.
- be fair and reasonable.
- be based on the evidence and information presented and the seriousness of the breach; and
- be determined by our constituent documents, by Laws, Rules, and Regulations of the game.

Possible sanctions that may be taken include:

- a direction that the individual make verbal and/or written apology.
- counselling of the individual to address behaviour.
- withdrawal of any awards, placings, records, achievements bestowed in any competitions, activities or events held or sanctioned by our Football Zones.
- suspension or termination of membership, participation or engagement in a role or activity.
- de-registration of accreditation for a period of time or permanently.
- a fine; or
- any other form of discipline that our club considers reasonable and appropriate.

9.4 *Appeals*

The complainant or respondent may be entitled to lodge an appeal against a decision made in relation to a complaint (including a decision where disciplinary

sanctions are imposed by our Member Club or Football Zone) to NSW Football or Football Australia.

The grounds of an appeal should be specific, for example they may be limited to a denial of procedural fairness, on grounds of unjust or unreasonable disciplinary measure(s) being imposed, or on the grounds that the decision was not supported by the information/evidence presented and available to the decision maker/Football Zone.

Appeals must be based on any right of appeal as **outlined in Regulation G 12** provided for in the relevant constituent documents, rules, regulations, laws or by laws.

H10 MEMBER PROTECTION INFORMATION OFFICER (MPIO)

Each Member Club/Association under the Member Protection policy are required to appoint a Member Protection Information Officer (**MPIO**).

A MPIO is generally the first point of contact for persons with member protection or child protection enquiries or complaints.

The MPIO provides information and guidance on complaints procedures – they are the ‘go to’ person if you want to discuss problems at your club/association.

MPIOs provide information to participants about the options available to them.

A Member Protection Information Officer (MPIO) provides information to participants about the rights, responsibilities, and options available to an individual making an enquiry or complaint about football matters.

MPIOs can also provide information to clubs about member protection, related issues, and policies.

MPIO’s are impartial and generally do not mediate or investigate complaints.

Depending on what level your matter relates to, will affect which MPIO you should contact.

Generally, if your concern relates to behaviour or an incident which occurred at the:

- Member Club level or involves people operating at the club level, then the complaint should be reported to and handled by the relevant Club Member in the first instance.
- Zone level or involves people operating at the zone level, then the complaint should be reported to and handled by the relevant Zone (Hunter Valley Football, Macquarie Football or Newcastle Football) in the first instance.

- State level or involves people operating at the relevant state level, then the complaint should be reported to and handled by NSW Football in the first instance; and
- National level, then the complaint should be reported to and handled by Football Australia.

Further, only the most serious cases from state level should be referred to Football Australia.

If you are having any difficulty finding the contact details of your Club's or Association's MPIO, you should contact your Zone Administration Office.

To contact Football Australia's MPIO, please email

MPIO@footballaustralia.com.au

For the appointed Member Protection Information Officer (MPIO) of any Zone Member Club/Association – the Office of Sport and Play by the Rules offer Member Protection Information Officer training for Football clubs:

- Online module – the Play by the Rules MPIO course is now hosted on the [Sport Integrity Australia e-learning hub](#).
There are many other free courses that can be accessed by this e-learning hub.
- Webinar session - 2-hour practical session run by the Office of Sport – find upcoming sessions [here](#).
- MPIOs help with complaints - they don't investigate complaints, but provide information about rights, responsibilities, and options under your policy
- It's a good idea to choose someone who is approachable, accessible, can maintain confidentiality and unlikely to have conflicts of interest.

Spread the word – make sure members are aware of your policy and MPIO via inductions, meetings, training, newsletters, signage, website, and other communication

Attachment 1: MEMBER PROTECTION DECLARATION

The Football Zone/ Member Club has a duty of care to all those associated with our club and to the individuals and organisations to whom this policy applies.

As a requirement of our Member Protection Policy, we must enquire into the background of those who undertake any work, coaching or regular unsupervised contact with people under the age of 18 years.

I
(FULL Name)

Of
(Address)

...../...../.....
(Date of Birth)

.....
(Working With Children Number)

Email Address:

Phone/Mobile N^o.

sincerely declare:

1. I do not have any criminal charge pending before the courts.
2. I do not have any criminal convictions or findings of guilt for sexual offences, offences related to children or acts of violence, distribution, sale, and supply of illegal narcotics.
3. I have not had any disciplinary proceedings brought against me by an employer, sporting organisation or similar body involving child abuse, sexual misconduct or harassment, other forms of harassment or acts of violence, distribution, sale, and supply of illegal narcotics.
4. To my knowledge there is no other matter that the club may consider to constitute a risk to its members, employees, volunteers, players, or reputation by engaging me.
5. I will notify the President of the club immediately upon becoming aware that any of the matters set out in clauses 1 to 4 above has changed.

Declared in the State of New South Wales at:

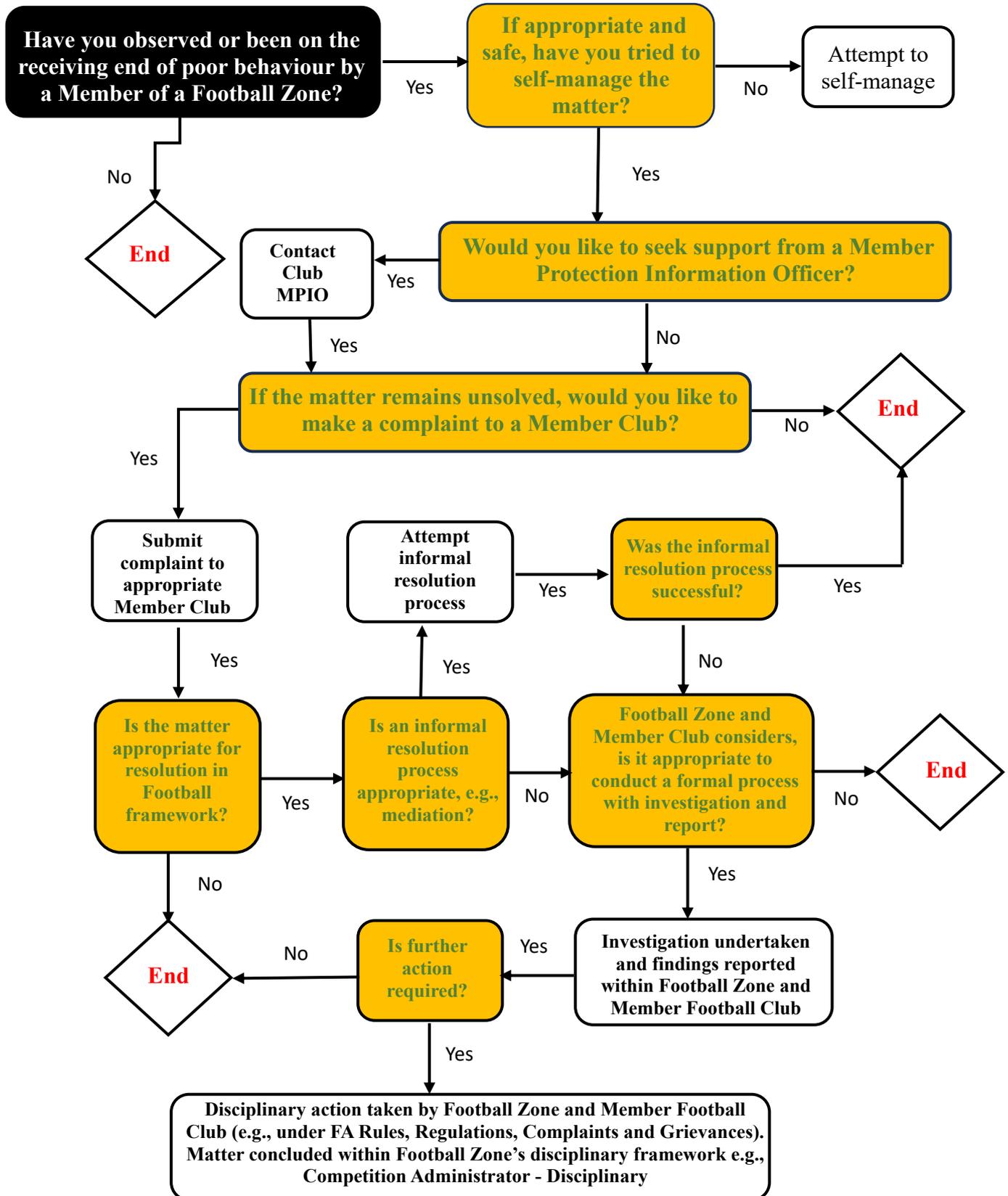
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on/...../.....(date)

Signature

Attachment 2:

Complaints Procedure: Flowchart



RECORD OF COMPLAINT <i>(Continued)</i>																						
<p>Nature of complaint (category/basis/grounds)</p> <p>Tick <u>One</u> or <u>more</u> boxes</p>	<table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 33%;"><input type="checkbox"/> Harassment or</td> <td style="width: 33%;"><input type="checkbox"/> Discrimination</td> <td style="width: 33%;"><input type="checkbox"/> Verbal abuse</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Sexual/sexist</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Sexuality</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Physical abuse</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Race</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Bullying</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Victimisation</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Religion</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Disability</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Coaching methods</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Pregnancy</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Child Abuse</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Selection dispute</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Personality clash</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Unfair decision</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="3"><input type="checkbox"/> Other</td> </tr> </table>	<input type="checkbox"/> Harassment or	<input type="checkbox"/> Discrimination	<input type="checkbox"/> Verbal abuse	<input type="checkbox"/> Sexual/sexist	<input type="checkbox"/> Sexuality	<input type="checkbox"/> Physical abuse	<input type="checkbox"/> Race	<input type="checkbox"/> Bullying	<input type="checkbox"/> Victimisation	<input type="checkbox"/> Religion	<input type="checkbox"/> Disability	<input type="checkbox"/> Coaching methods	<input type="checkbox"/> Pregnancy	<input type="checkbox"/> Child Abuse	<input type="checkbox"/> Selection dispute	<input type="checkbox"/> Personality clash	<input type="checkbox"/> Unfair decision		<input type="checkbox"/> Other		
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<p>What they want to happen to resolve the issue</p>	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td style="height: 20px;"> </td></tr> </table>																					
<p>Information provided to them</p>	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td style="height: 20px;"> </td></tr> </table>																					
<p>Resolution and/or action taken</p>	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td style="height: 20px;"> </td></tr> </table>																					

RECORD OF COMPLAINT <i>(Continued)</i>	
Follow-up action	

Signature of person receiving complaint:

Date:

Signature of person making complaint:

Date:

Approved and Issued: February 2024
Assessment/Review: **January 2025**