



## **DISPUTES & DISCIPLINARY REGULATIONS**

***2009***

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## **1. OBJECTIVES and APPLICATION of REGULATIONS**

- 1.1 These Disciplinary regulations apply to any infringement of the Laws of the Game by any Player or Team Official during a match under sanction by Capital Football
- 1.2 These Disciplinary Regulations are mandatory and are designed to ensure that appropriate standards of behaviour are upheld on the field of play in a consistent manner across the ACT competitions and in compliance with FIFA Statutes and FFA National Disciplinary Regulations.
- 1.3 All matches must be conducted and officiated in accordance with the Laws of the Game.
- 1.4 The following procedures apply to the following Capital Football competitions: Men's League, Women's League, Junior League and Futsal League and should be used in conjunction with the relative Leagues' Competition Rules. These procedures may also apply to other competitions administered by Capital Football.

## **2. AUTHORITY and JURISDICTION**

Any club, club official or player may be charged by the League Manager and/or the Standing Committee, on the basis of evidence placed before him/her, with bringing Capital Football into disrepute. Except in the case of clauses 5.1 & 5.2, any such charge shall be heard within 10 working days of being laid in accordance with FFA Code of Conduct Regulations, which if a finding it proved may impose a penalty in accordance with Appendix A and/or B.

## **3. ACCUMULATION OF YELLOW CARDS– MANDATORY MATCH SUSPENSIONS**

- 3.1 There shall be no appeal against the receiving of a caution from the Referee.
- 3.2 After an individual player has received four (4) official cautions the player shall serve a one (1) fixture suspension. There shall be no appeal against a one (1) fixture suspension after receiving four (4) official cautions.
- 3.3 Any player who accumulates a further three (3) official cautions making a total of seven (7) cautions shall be suspended for a further two (2) matches. The player must serve the two (2) fixture suspensions in the clubs next two (2) competition

matches following the match in which the seventh (7th) official caution was received.

- 3.4 Any player who accumulates a further three (3) official cautions making a total of ten (10) cautions shall be suspended for a further three (3) matches. The player must serve the three (3) fixture suspensions in the clubs next three (3) competition matches following the match in which the tenth (10th) official caution was received. The player shall also be called to appear before the Disciplinary Committee who may apply a further penalty, bond, fine or suspension.
- 3.5 Any suspension(s) shall be served by the player in the grade for which he was playing at the time the player received their fourth (4th), seventh (7th) or tenth (10th) yellow card, and at the same time, the player shall not be allowed to take part in any game in any other division, grade or team during the period of their suspension.

#### 4. ACCUMULATION OF RED CARDS – MANDATORY MATCH SUSPENSIONS

- 4.1 In cases of repetition, that is, if the same player receives a second direct red card during the same season for other offences, even if the infringement is not of the same nature, two (2) extra weeks will be added to the minimum recommended sentence and even more severe sanctions may be taken by the Standing Committee or Disciplinary Committee if it is deemed appropriate.
- 4.2 Where a player receives a third direct red card for the season four (4) extra weeks will be added to the minimum recommended sentence and he/she may be summoned before the Disciplinary Committee.
- 4.3 Where an offence already has a recommended sentence for any repetitive behaviour, then that offence, if appropriate, supersedes clause 4.2 above.

#### 5. TEAM OFFICIALS – MANDATORY MATCH SUSPENSIONS

- 5.1 A Team Official who has been expelled from the field of play by the Referee must serve a **mandatory** one (1) match suspension. Any repeat offence shall draw an accumulated loading as per clause 5.2.
- 5.2 A Team/Club Official charged with “Bringing the Game into Disrepute” in accordance with Appendix A clause (ii), (vii) & (viii) shall be subject to the following mandatory sanctions;
  - 1st Offence Written warning plus \$100 fine
  - 2nd Offence \$250 fine
  - 3rd Offence \$500 fine

- 5.3 Any further offences over and above the mandatory sanctions shall be referred to the Disciplinary Committee for appropriate action.
- 5.4 For the purpose of these regulations additional offences must occur in the same season.

## 6. DISPUTES AND DISCIPLINARY HEARINGS – RULES AND REGULATIONS

- 6.1 A quorum of up to three members may be selected from a Panel by the League Manager as required to serve as a Disciplinary Committee, subject to Part V of the FFA Statutes (Judicial Bodies and Disciplinary Sanctions).
- 6.2 Committee members shall be asked to serve with the proviso that:
  - (a) No person shall serve on a Disciplinary Committee hearing a matter which his/her club has an interest
  - (b) No club shall have more than one representative on a given Disciplinary Committee.
- 6.3 The League Manager may appoint one of the three members to act as chair. The Disciplinary Committee shall:
  - (a) Investigate and determine any matter arising from the conduct of a match or a referee's report, which involves players' discipline.
  - (b) Inquire into and resolve matters constituting or pertaining to breaches of the appropriate League Regulations that are its business by virtue of those Regulations or that are referred to it by the Standing Committee
  - (c) Inquire into and resolve any other matter referred to it by the Standing Committee
  - (d) Disciplinary Hearings shall not be bound by the rules of evidence usually applicable to proceedings in a court of law, but all hearings must be conducted in accord with the principle of natural justice including that the offender has had:
    - i. Reasonable and sufficient detail of the alleged infringement; and
    - ii. The opportunity to be heard and to make submissions in relation to the issues of the infringement and sanction.
    - iii. Any witness that a party intends to call to give evidence in a hearing must remain outside the hearing room until called to give evidence.
    - iv. Facts contained in a Referees Report are presumed to be accurate
- 6.4 A determination of the Disciplinary Committee must be a majority decision of the Committee.

- 6.5 The Disciplinary Committee may, in hearing any protest, appeal or other matter referred to it, call before it any referee, club official, player or other person involved in the matter, and shall hear evidence from those persons. Referees can however only be called to give evidence, in person, with the consent of the Referees Standing Committee. A party may attend in person or by phone.
- 6.6 A player failing to appear before the Disciplinary Committee after being directed to do so by the League Manager will have the matter heard in his/her absence.
- 6.7 Other persons wishing to appear at a hearing of the Disciplinary Committee may do so only with the consent of the Chair of the Committee, which must be sought prior to the commencement of the hearing.
- 6.8 The Standing Committee may appoint sub-committees to examine and report on any specific matter referred to it by Capital Football or any member club of Capital Football, which is outside the mandate of the Disciplinary Committee.
- 6.9 No player, club or club official may be represented at a hearing of the Disciplinary Committee by legal counsel unless prior approval is sought and granted by the Chair.
- 6.10 The Chair of a hearing before the Disciplinary Committee may require parties appearing before the Committee to arrive at and depart from the hearing venue and according to a time schedule designed to avoid confrontation; and require associates of such parties who are not appearing to leave the vicinity of the hearing if their presence is deemed to be potentially intimidating.
- 6.11 When determining any appropriate sanction, the Disciplinary Committee or Standing Committee shall consider:
- (a) The minimum recommended penalties as specified in National Disciplinary Regulations
  - (b) The nature and severity of the infringement
  - (c) The offenders past record and whether or not this is a repeated offence;
  - (d) The culpability of the offenders (including whether or not the infringement was intentional, negligent or reckless)
  - (e) Any reasons prompting a Player to commit an infringement and
  - (f) Any extenuating circumstances.
- 6.12 Unless otherwise stipulated, for the purposes of the League Regulations, any Person, Affiliated Club, or participant shall be considered a player when referring to disciplinary matters, and where appropriate, the same fines and/or penalties, including suspensions as set out in the League Regulations shall apply to them.

## **7. FINAL SERIES CAUTIONS**

- 7.1 Any player receiving two (2) cautions in the Final Series shall automatically stand down the next fixture. If the players' team/club has completed its final series commitments they do not have to stand down a match in the following season.
- 7.2 For the Federation Cup the two (2) caution rule will apply in each stage, round robin and finals (QF, SF & GF) and cards will not carry over between stages.

## **8. USE OF VIDEO EVIDENCE**

- 8.1 Visual aids (video, films, etc) to support or question a referee's report regarding an offence punishable by expulsion can be used only to verify the player's identity.
- 8.2 Audiovisual evidence is to be used solely as additional proof in disciplinary cases.
- 8.3 Decisions of fact made by referees are final and not subject to appeal and shall not be modified on the basis of video recordings (e.g. offside, penalty, goals, etc.).
- 8.4 Decisions must be based principally on the reports of the referee and assistant referees, referee inspector and other match officials.
- 8.5 Video recordings shall not be used as a means of restricting the authority and discretionary power of the referee, but only as the most accurate way of investigating the truth when disciplinary action is required.
- 8.6 Such film evidence may also be referred to, if further sanctions are to be imposed on the guilty player

## **9. PROTESTS AND APPEALS**

- 9.1 Where a club, registered player, or club official seeks to Appeal a decision of the Disciplinary Committee they must:
  - (a) Lodge a notice on club letterhead stating full details of the appeal and grounds for such within 5 working days of formal notification of a determination of a Disciplinary Committee. No protest or appeal shall fail solely on the ground that it was not lodged on time if the Appeals Committee is satisfied that there is a reasonable explanation for the delay or that the delay is not the fault of the complainant or appellant.
  - (b) Lodge the Appeal fee to the League Manager when lodging the notice of appeal, which shall be \$330.00
- 9.2 Where the appeal or protest concerns a penalty that involves suspension of a player, club official or spectator, the suspension over and above the mandatory

suspension will be deferred pending the outcome of the appeal or protest. However, if the appeal or protest is judged to have been without merit, or designed to delay the serving of a suspension, the player and/or their club may be subject to additional penalties as the appropriate Disciplinary Committee deems fit.

- 9.3 Where action is initiated against a participating club or a player, club official or spectator thereof the League Manager shall:
- (a) Formally advise the club(s) concerned within five working days that a complaint has been received.
  - (b) Make available to the club(s) full details of that complaint as lodged by the complainant.
  - (c) Advise the date and time of the hearing and the right of the club(s) to attend the hearing and/or forward a written submission.
- 9.4 Any supporting documentation that a club wishes the Appeals Committee to consider in relation to a protest or appeal must be provided at least three working days before the scheduled date of the hearing.
- 9.5 In addition to determining any appeal or protest, the Appeals Committee shall rule, having regard to its assessment of the merits of the appeal and the motives of the appellant, on whether the appeal fee shall be forfeited or refunded, in part or full.
- 9.6 The Appeals Committee may confirm, reduce, rescind or increase any penalty appealed against, shall advise the club of its decision and the date of effect of any remaining suspension within three working days of the Committee hearing.
- 9.7 A decision of the Appeals Committee on an appeal may be subject to further appeal by any affected party to the Protest & Disputes Committee and shall be accompanied by a fee of \$330-00.
- 9.8 An appeal to the Appeals Committee shall be lodged, processed, heard and determined as if it was an appeal to the Disciplinary Committee, with all relevant Regulations applying.
- 9.9 Appeals to an Appeals Committee shall be chaired by a person who has not been party to a previous determination on the matter under appeal. If the Chair meets

this requirement, they shall occupy the chair. Otherwise they shall nominate a qualified Standing Committee member to chair the hearing.

- 9.10 Disciplinary Panel members who were not involved in the hearing of a matter the subject of appeal shall be eligible to sit on an Appeals Committee.
- 9.11 A decision or determination made by the Appeals Committee may only be appealed to the Protest & Disputes Committee.
- (a) The Directors of Capital Football shall establish a Protests and Disputes Committee hereafter referred to as “the P & D Committee”.
  - (b) Appeals against any decision made by the Appeals Committee can only be made based on new evidence not heard or shown at the Appeals Committee hearing. At the same time, the player shall not be allowed to take part in any fixture in any division until such appeal has been heard.
  - (c) The lodgement of such an appeal to the Protest and Appeals Committee shall be subject to all conditions, including timelines and fees that are applicable to conditions for the lodgement of appeals as detailed in these procedures.
  - (d) The P & D Committee shall consist of three (3) members, including the Chairperson, all of whom shall be current Directors of Capital Football or, where applicable, nominated independent individuals as agreed by the Board, under the Chairmanship of the Vice President.
  - (e) Before any appeal is heard by the P & D Committee, the appellant and/or all other parties involved must, in writing, agree to be bound by the decision.
  - (f) The P & D Committee hearing any appeal may dismiss or allow in whole or in part such appeal and substitute its own decision and/or finding to that made by the Disciplinary Committee, or the Appeals Committee.
  - (g) The decision on all matters coming before it shall not be subject to any direction or confirmation by the Directors.
  - (h) The P & D Committee may determine to what amount, if any, of the Appeals Fee may be refunded if the determination by the Committee is only partially in favour of the appellant. Where the Decision by the Committee is fully in favour of the appellant, the Appeals Fee will be repaid in full. Where an appellant is only appealing the severity of the sentence and is not contesting their guilt or innocence, the appeal money will not be refunded.

- (j) Notice of all appeals shall be lodged in writing with the Chief Executive Officer.
- (k) j) The decision of the P & D Committee on any matter appealed to it shall be final.

## 10. APPENDIX A– TABLE OF OFFENCES

| Offence No.                                       | Offence   | Minimum Sanction   |
|---|---|--|
| 1<br>(R4 or R5 for Players)                       | Denying the opposing team a clear goal-scoring opportunity                                    | The Mandatory Match Suspension                           |
| 2<br>(R6 for Players)                             | Use of offensive, insulting or abusive language and/or gestures                               | The Mandatory Match Suspension                           |
| 3<br>(R1 for Players)                             | Serious Foul Play (e.g. when challenging for the ball)  | 1 additional match plus the Mandatory Match Suspension   |
| 4<br>(R2 for Players)                             | Assault on a Player (e.g. violent conduct when not challenging for the ball)                  | 1 additional match plus the Mandatory Match Suspension   |
| 5<br>(R6 for Players)                             | Serious Unsporting Conduct  | 1 additional match plus the Mandatory Match Suspension   |
| 6<br>(R6 for Players)                             | Use of discriminatory language and/or gestures, including racist, religious, ethnic or sexist | 4 additional matches plus the Mandatory Match Suspension |
| 7<br>(R3 for Players)                             | Spitting at a player  | 5 additional matches plus the Mandatory Match Suspension |
| 8<br>(R2 or R6 for Players)                       | Inciting a brawl  | 5 additional matches plus the Mandatory Match Suspension |
| <b>Specific Offences Against a Match Official</b> |   |  |
| 9<br>(R6 for Players)                             | Use of offensive, insulting or abusive language and/or gestures against a match official      | The Mandatory Match Suspension                           |
| 10<br>(R6 for Players)                            | Unsporting conduct toward a match official  | 3 additional matches plus the Mandatory Match Suspension |
| 11<br>(R2 for Players)                            | Assault of a match official   | 6 months including the Mandatory Match Suspension        |
| 12<br>(R3 for Players)                            | Spitting at a match official  | 12 months including the Mandatory Match Suspension       |

## 11. APPENDIX B– DETERMINATIONS BRINGING THE GAME INTO DISREPUTE

### BRINGING THE GAME INTO DISREPUTE

(A) For the purposes of these rules a charge of “Bringing the Game into Disrepute” shall be considered as a charge of “misconduct or of behaviour prejudicial to the interests of the game” when referring to disciplinary procedures, penalties and other disciplinary matters.

(B) In addition failure to comply with any of the following specific directions shall also be an offence and shall be deemed as “Bringing the Game into Disrepute”:

- **Conflicting Sponsorship**

No participating club shall grant approval to any player or club official of that club for any individual sponsorship agreements with any company or products which conflict with the aims and objectives of Capital Football, FFA or its sponsors.

- **Detrimental Statements – Match Officials**

Players and Club Officials shall not make any detrimental statement to the public or the media in respect to the performance of any Match officials.

- **Detrimental Statements – Capital Football Policy**

Players and Club Officials shall not make detrimental public statements in respect of any policy decisions of Capital Football.

- **Detrimental Statements – Sponsorship**

Players and Club Officials shall not make any public statements detrimental to the image of the sponsors of Capital Football and its members.

- **Wearing of Detrimental Logos, etc**

Players and Club Officials shall not wear any apparel bearing any insignia, logo, or sponsorship message, which knowingly may be detrimental to the image of the sponsors of Capital Football and its members.

- **Inciting of Violence**

Players and Club Officials shall not do anything by act or omission, which in the normal course of events is likely to incite spectators to violence or other acts of disorder.

- **Disobey Reasonable Direction**

Players and Club Officials shall accept and obey all reasonable directions from Match Officials, Ground Officials, members of the relevant Standing Committee or Capital Football Staff and Board Members.

- **Comments on Committee Matters, etc**

Players and Club Officials shall not make any statements to the media in respect to any matters set down for hearing at any Committee, Disputes Committee or Committee of inquiry and shall include Appeals in respect to the decisions of these Committees and Committees.

- **Financial Obligations**

Any club who without reasonable cause fails to meet their financial obligations to Capital Football.

- **Inducement to Act Contrary to the Rules**

Any player or club official who induces any player or any official to act contrary to the provisions of the Men's, Women's & Junior League Rules and Regulations or By-Laws, or Articles of Association of Capital Football and FFA shall be deemed to have brought the Game into disrepute.

## **12. DEFINITIONS and INTERPRETATIONS**

**"Standing Committee"** means the standing committee for the appropriate League.

**"League Manager"** means the manager for the appropriate League.

**"Match Official(s)"** means a referee, assistant referee, 4th Official and Match Inspector.

**"Club Official(s)"** means any person appointed to an official club position and designated club ground controllers.

**"Appeal Officer"** means that person appointed by the Board from within its membership

**"FFA National Disciplinary Regulations"** means the current National Disciplinary Regulations as administered by Football Federation Australia.