

SMFNC		
	Grievance and Complaints Policy and Procedure	Reviewed: January 2022

Purpose

The policy provides the governing strategies and practices that guide St Mary's Senior Football and Netball Club in dealing with complaints and grievances, ensuring that procedural fairness and natural justice underpin all its actions.

This policy is provided to deal with all complaints and grievances by all members of the club and will guide the actions of all stakeholders.

Scope

Any person wishing to raise a concern should direct the concern as follows.

- Football Team Related: direct the concern to the Coach, Team Manager or Junior Football Coordinator.
- Issues of a General Nature: direct the concern to a member of the Committee.

Relevant Legislations/ Standards/ Policies

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- Information Privacy Act 2000
 - Racial and Religious Tolerance Act 2001
 - Victorian Associations Incorporation Act, 1981
 - Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012
 - Australian Privacy Principles (Cth)
 - Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)
 - Information Privacy Act 2000
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- St Mary's Senior Football and Netball Club Constitution
 - Code of Conduct - Players and Parents
 - Social Media Participation Policy
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- Racial and Religious Tolerance Policy
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Definitions

Committee – consists of the General Committee elected at the Club's AGM

Club Subcommittee means a subdivision of a committee, which is composed of Committee members and/or other Club members, organised for a specific purpose.

Financial Member – any player, parent, family member, committee member, coach, team assistant or representative who have paid annual fees to the club

Volunteers – those members of the club who offer support and fulfil duties, but do not hold a prescribed role on the General Committee

Key stakeholders – club members, players, volunteers, community members, local council, regional league and state registering body.

Complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction made to SMFNC by a member of the Club where a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected.

Complainant is an individual or several individuals who lodge a complaint

Grievance is an expression of dissatisfaction about the Club or about the Committee or another Club member. A grievance is the dissatisfaction an individual feels rather than the action taken.

General Principles

The three core principles of natural justice or procedural fairness are:

- the right to be heard fairly;
- the right to an unbiased decision made by an objective decision maker; and
- the right to have the decision based on relevant evidence.

Operational Principles

The grievance procedure set out in this document applies to disputes between

- a member and another member;
- a member and the Committee;
- a member and the Club.

Procedure

Grievances and complaints will be managed by the following procedures.

The following procedures are guidelines. The Club acknowledges that in some instances personal knowledge and relationships, and common sense also have an important role to play.

NOTIFICATION

A complaint can be lodged to any Committee member. The complaint or grievance will be documented by the person taking the complaint. A template for documenting the complaint is provided as *Appendix 1* of this procedure, entitled *Record of Complaint*. Information should be written using clear, precise, objective and transparent language and wording that minimizes confusion and misinterpretation.

ASSESSING THE COMPLAINT

Step 1: If the complaint is of a minor nature or misunderstanding it is reasonable to attempt to resolve the issue immediately.

Step 2: All other complaints will be notified to the Committee. A written explanation of the complaint from the complainant is essential. The documented complaint is then taken to the next Committee meeting.

Note 1: If the complaint needs to be dealt with more urgently, the matter still needs to be notified to the Committee as a whole but a subcommittee may be elected to deal with the complaint in a more timely fashion. If the complaint is not able to be resolved by the subcommittee then the matter must be taken to the next Committee meeting.

Note 2:

Complaints which directly concern the Committee, may be notified to the Committee with a request for external mediation if this is felt to be required. Advice may be sought from Consumer Affairs Victoria – Incorporated Associations Division.

DEALING WITH THE COMPLAINT

Timeframes: The expected timeframe for dealing with the complaint from notification to resolution should be within two Committee meetings. Ideally the complaint will be resolved at the first meeting to which the complaint is taken, but sometimes additional information may be required by the Committee to enable it to make a fair decision and this means the decision making process will be held over until the next meeting.

Investigation: SMFNC will investigate grievances and complaints by treating each complaint with respect and appropriate confidentiality. Where

appropriate, the relevant policy or procedure will be referred to. The complaint will be investigated by discussion with people involved in the complaint. A written explanation of the complaint by the complainant will be required to be submitted. A meeting with the involved parties may be used to gather information about the complaint. Observations and meetings will be appropriately documented as detailed previously and used in the decision making process.

Process:

Step 1 Mediation: Meetings may be mediated by the President, the Vice President or any other nominated Committee Member as seen to be appropriate by the Committee. If there is a conflict of interest identified between the Committee and the complainant then an independent mediator would be engaged.

Step 2 Subcommittee to review: A subcommittee may be elected to deal with the complaint.

Step 3 Subcommittee to review: If the complaint is not able to be resolved by the subcommittee then the matter must be taken to the next Committee meeting.

OUTCOME

Disciplinary Procedure (if required)

First Warning: Where the Committee considers that disciplinary action is necessary, they will notify the club member that he/she is being warned in accordance with this set of disciplinary procedures. The first warning shall be verbal and an entry recorded in the Committee minutes.

Two Committee members will be present at this confidential discussion.

Second Warning: If the problem continues, the matter will be discussed with the club member and tabled with the Committee and a second warning in writing will be given and recorded in the Committee minutes.

Final Warning: If the problem continues a final warning is to be given. It shall be issued in writing, and recorded in the Committee minutes.

Termination: In the event of the matter recurring post final written warning, the person's club membership may be terminated without any further warning. This should be recorded in the Committee minutes.

The Committee decision will be final.

Note: The Committee shall have the right to dismiss any club member without notice for conduct that justifies instant club membership termination, including gross misconduct such as threatening or engaging in verbal, electronic or physical abuse or neglect of duty. There will be no refund of any membership fees.

RESOLUTION

The complaint will be considered to be resolved when the above steps have been undertaken and the Committee indicates that this is their final decision.

Flow Chart of Actions Following a Complaint

Dealing with the Complaint

Appendix 1 – SMFNC Grievance and Complaints Policy and Procedure : Record of Complaint

St Mary's Senior Football and Netball Club - RECORD OF COMPLAINT

Name of person receiving complaint	Date: / /	
Complainant's Name	<input type="checkbox"/> Over 18 <input type="checkbox"/> Under 18	
Complainant's contact details	Phone: Email:	
Complainant's role/status in Club	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div> <input type="checkbox"/> Administrator (volunteer) <input type="checkbox"/> Athlete/player <input type="checkbox"/> Coach/Assistant Coach <input type="checkbox"/> Employee (paid) <input type="checkbox"/> Official </div> <div> <input type="checkbox"/> Parent <input type="checkbox"/> Spectator <input type="checkbox"/> Support Personnel <input type="checkbox"/> Other </div> </div>	
Name of person complained about	<input type="checkbox"/> Over 18 <input type="checkbox"/> Under 18	
Person complained about role/status in Club	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div> <input type="checkbox"/> Administrator (volunteer) <input type="checkbox"/> Athlete/player <input type="checkbox"/> Coach/Assistant Coach <input type="checkbox"/> Employee (paid) <input type="checkbox"/> Official </div> <div> <input type="checkbox"/> Parent <input type="checkbox"/> Spectator <input type="checkbox"/> Support Personnel <input type="checkbox"/> Other </div> </div>	
Location/event of alleged issue		

Description of alleged issue	
Nature of complaint (category/basis/grounds) Can tick more than one box	<div> <input type="checkbox"/> Harassment or <input type="checkbox"/> Discrimination </div> <div> <input type="checkbox"/> Sexual/sexist <input type="checkbox"/> Selection dispute <input type="checkbox"/> Coaching methods </div> <div> <input type="checkbox"/> Sexuality <input type="checkbox"/> Personality clash <input type="checkbox"/> Verbal abuse </div> <div> <input type="checkbox"/> Race <input type="checkbox"/> Bullying <input type="checkbox"/> Physical abuse </div> <div> <input type="checkbox"/> Religion <input type="checkbox"/> Disability <input type="checkbox"/> Victimisation </div> <div> <input type="checkbox"/> Child Abuse <input type="checkbox"/> Unfair decision </div> <div> <input type="checkbox"/> Other </div>
What they want to happen to fix issue	
Information provided to them	
Resolution and/or action taken	

Follow-up action	
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