



## Disciplinary Policy & Procedures

### 1. Definitions

- **APFC, the Club:** Ashfield Pirates FC
- **CDSFA, the Association:** Canterbury & District Soccer Football Association
- **Disciplinary Matter:** Any official caution or dismissal by a match official, a report to the CDSFA by a match official or other CDSFA disciplinary action, or a written complaint received by APFC or the CDSFA.
- **FNSW Panel:** Football NSW
- **APFC Disciplinary Panel**

### 2. Purpose

This document outlines the Disciplinary Policy & Procedures to be followed by Ashfield Pirates FC. It should be considered alongside the following:

- APFC Code of Conduct
- APFC Development Program Behaviour Policy
- CDSFA Judiciary Disciplinary & Appeals Regulations
- Football Australia Code of Conduct
- Football Australia Spectator Code of Behaviour
- Football Australia National Member Protection Policy (as updated periodically).

The primary aim of this document is to ensure a consistent approach in handling any on-field or off-field behaviour by:

- Any player or team official who receives an official caution or dismissal from a match official
- Any player or team official reported to the CDSFA by a match official
- Any player or team official subjected to other CDSFA disciplinary actions
- Any club member, parent, or supporter against whom a written complaint has been received by APFC or the CDSFA

For minors, any required action (e.g., providing a written report) may be carried out by a parent or guardian. Sanctions will only be applied to the individual found responsible.

This policy will be made available on the APFC website and provided to existing club members upon request. Members are also required to acknowledge their acceptance of the

APFC Disciplinary Policy & Procedures when registering for club activities via DRIBL or any other registration system.

### **3. Imposition of External Fines**

Ashfield Pirates FC reserves the right to pass on any fine (plus an administrative charge) levied by an external body, such as CDSFA, FNSW, or Football Australia, to the relevant club member. If a fine is imposed on a player (or their parent/guardian) or a team official, the club may suspend the player or team official from any club activity, including matches, until the fine is paid.

If a team is fined, the team officials are responsible for paying the fine to the club and seeking reimbursement from the team members. Where possible, payment will be deducted from the reimbursement of match official fees. The club reserves the right to suspend the team from any club activities, including matches until the fine is settled.

### **4. Disciplinary Committee & Disciplinary Panel**

The Disciplinary Committee consists of all members of the APFC Executive Committee. Disciplinary matters outlined in Section 2 will be reviewed by a Disciplinary Panel composed of any three members of the Disciplinary Committee. Once a panel is formed for a specific matter, its composition will remain fixed unless extraordinary circumstances arise. No panel member may have a personal interest in the outcome or be related to the club member involved. Any potential conflicts must be disclosed and will be assessed by the Disciplinary Committee.

The Disciplinary Panel has the authority to request the appearance of any club member involved in a disciplinary matter, providing at least seven days' notice. If the member is a minor, their parent or guardian must also attend. The panel may also require the presence of a team official if applicable.

Panel hearings can be conducted in person or virtually, depending on circumstances, and must comply with any relevant public health guidelines.

A club member required to appear before the Disciplinary Panel has the right to submit a written statement in addition to their appearance and may also provide other documentation, including statements from others, to support their case. These submissions must be made at least two days before the hearing. The panel will decide, at its discretion, whether to consider such evidence and may request the appearance of anyone providing a statement.

Any club member (not a minor) subject to a disciplinary matter and required to appear before the Disciplinary Panel may bring a nominated support person. This person must be nominated at least two days before the appearance, need not be a club member, and may only address the panel if invited to do so by a panel member.

Following the member's appearance, the Disciplinary Panel will review the relevant evidence and decide. The member will be informed of the outcome within seven days of the appearance. The possible determinations include:

- No case to answer
- The case is not proven
- The member is not guilty of any wrongdoing
- The member is guilty of wrongdoing
- Further information is required before deciding

If the member is found guilty of wrongdoing, the panel may impose any of the following sanctions:

- No further action
- Verbal or written warning regarding future conduct
- Suspension from attending matches (specific number of matches or period)
- Suspension from some or all other club activities (for a specified period)
- Permanent exclusion from APFC
- Recommendation to CDSFA for permanent exclusion from any CDSFA member club
- Written letters of apology to the affected individuals
- Placement of a good behaviour bond (amount, term, and conditions determined by the panel)
- Monetary fine
- Requirement to volunteer time in one or more capacities to assist the club
- A suspended version of any of the above

Failure to comply with any imposed sanction may result in the imposition of additional sanctions listed above. The club may also notify CDSFA of any disciplinary action taken against a member.

Suspensions for a number of games must be served while registered as a member. Time-based suspensions can be served while registered or unregistered. If a member de-registers or chooses not to re-register while there are outstanding matches in a suspension period, they will be required to serve any remaining suspension if they re-register with the club in the future.

In certain situations, the panel may offer a sanction without requiring the club member to attend a hearing. The member has the right to accept the sanction or request a hearing before the panel.

## **5. Players or Team Officials Subject to Disciplinary Matters**

If requested by APFC, any player or team official involved in a disciplinary matter must, within five days of receiving notification, submit a written report to the club's Disciplinary Committee. APFC may also request a written report from any team official associated with the player or team official.

Failure to provide the requested report will result in immediate suspension from all club activities.

The Disciplinary Committee may dismiss the matter or convene a Disciplinary Panel. The player or team official will be informed of the decision within five days of receipt of the written report.

Generally, players or team officials who receive an official caution or dismissal from a match official will be handled by the CDSFA according to its Judiciary Disciplinary & Appeals Regulations. APFC will not usually take further action unless:

- The dismissal is for an offense listed in Appendix 1, as classified by CDSFA
- The player or team official is deemed by APFC to be a repeat offender
- The player or team official is reported to CDSFA by the match official (beyond the match report)
- The player or team official is subject to other disciplinary action by CDSFA

A repeat offender is defined as someone who:

- Receives five or more official cautions in a single season
- Receives two or more dismissals in a single season
- Receives three or more dismissals in consecutive seasons
- Receives five or more dismissals while a member of any club under the jurisdiction of FNSW or any recognised federation or association
- Receives two or more disciplinary or administrative notices or penalties from CDSFA

Regardless of the above, APFC reserves the right to take disciplinary action against any player or team official who receives an official caution or dismissal from a match official.

APFC may, at its discretion, suspend any player or team official involved in a disciplinary matter from club activities (including matches) pending the outcome of the disciplinary process.

## **6. Club Players, Parents, or Supporters Subject to Written Complaints**

Upon receiving a written complaint, the Disciplinary Committee will, within five days, decide whether a response is required from the club member, parent, or supporter involved. If a response is required, the individual will be notified and must provide a written response within five days. APFC may also request a written report from other relevant individuals.

Failure to provide the requested report will result in immediate suspension from all club activities, and in the case of a parent or guardian, may lead to the suspension of their child or children from club activities.

If a supporter is not a club member or cannot be identified, the associated player or team may be suspended from club activities until the supporter or unidentified individual is identified and/or the disciplinary matter is resolved.

The Disciplinary Committee may dismiss the matter or convene a Disciplinary Panel. The club member, parent, or supporter will be informed of the decision within five days of receipt of the written report.

APFC may, at its discretion, suspend any member involved in a disciplinary matter from club activities (including matches) pending the outcome of the disciplinary process.

## **7. Appeals Procedure**

To ensure fairness in all disciplinary matters, any imposed sanction may be appealed. An appeal must be submitted in writing to the APFC Secretary within seven days of notification of the sanction.

The Secretary (or another Executive Committee member in their absence) will convene an Appeals Panel consisting of three APFC members. The panel may include Executive Committee members who were not part of the original Disciplinary Panel. The Appeals Panel will convene within five days of receipt of the appeal and notify the appellant at least two days before the hearing. The appeal hearing will follow the same procedure as the original Disciplinary Panel hearing.

Following the hearing, the Appeals Panel will review the evidence and provide a written determination to the appellant within seven days. The possible outcomes include:

- The original sanction is upheld
- The original sanction is reduced
- The original sanction is increased
- No case to answer

All Appeals Panel decisions are final. There is no further avenue of appeal within the club.

## **8. External Disciplinary Matters**

This disciplinary policy does not preclude any matter it considers from also being considered by an external body including, but not limited to, the CDSFA, FNSW, Football Australia, or the police. To the extent that civil or criminal proceedings are brought against a member concerning a matter also being considered under this policy, the Club will carefully consider any implications and may choose to pause, suspend, or terminate any actions or proceedings on its part. For the avoidance of doubt, whilst the Disciplinary Committee, Disciplinary Panel, or Appeals Panel may, at its discretion, consider the outcome of any external procedure, there is no requirement for the determination of the Disciplinary Panel or Appeals Panel to be consistent with that outcome.