

Football Ontario

Policy on Member Conduct



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Preamble

Membership in Football Ontario, and participation in its activities, brings with it many benefits and privileges that are balanced by member and participant responsibilities and obligations.

This policy defines the parameters for these responsibilities and obligations, and thus identifies a standard for behaviour that is expected of all Football Ontario members and participants. This policy also identifies the procedures to be followed when this standard is not achieved.

1. Application of this Policy

- a. This Policy applies to all Members defined in the bylaws of Football Ontario (“Membership”) as well as any individuals engaged in activities with Football Ontario, including parents and spectators (“Participants”). This Policy applies to the conduct of Members and Participants at any Football Ontario activities, programs and events.

2. Expected Standard of Ethical Conduct

- a. Football Ontario is committed to providing an environment in which all individuals are treated with respect. All Members and Participants of Football Ontario are thus expected to:
 - i. Demonstrate through words and actions the spirit of sportsmanship, sports leadership and ethical conduct.
 - ii. Treat others with respect and refrain from negative remarks or conduct
 - iii. Care for and respect the property and assets of Football Ontario
 - iv. Avoid and reject the non-medical use of drugs or the use of performance-enhancing drugs or methods.
 - v. Consume alcohol and tobacco products responsibly in association with Football Ontario social events.
 - vi. Comply at all times with the bylaws, policies, rules and regulations of Football Ontario, comply with any contracts or agreements executed with or by Football Ontario, and comply with any sanction imposed by Football Ontario.

3. Types of Infractions

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- a. Failure by a Member or Participant to comply with the expected standard set out above may result in discipline and the imposition of a sanction. Infractions are divided into two types, minor infractions and major infraction, which are dealt with using different procedures.
- b. Minor infractions are single incidents of failing to comply with the expected standards of conduct that generally do not result in harm to others, to Football Ontario or to sport. Examples of minor infractions include, but are not limited to:
 - i. Single instances of un-sportsmanlike conduct.
 - ii. Single instances of disrespectful comments or behaviour directed towards others
 - iii. Single instances of non-compliance with the bylaws, policies, rules, regulations and directives of Football Ontario.
- c. All disciplinary situations involving minor infractions will be dealt with by the appropriate person having authority over the Member or Participant involved: This person may include, but is not restricted to, a coach, official, director, officer, volunteer or staff member. Penalties for minor infractions may include a verbal warning, written warning, request for an apology, service or other voluntary contribution to Football Ontario, removal of certain privileges of membership for a designation period of time, and/or removal from the current activity.
- d. Major infractions are instances of failing to achieve the expected standards of conduct that result or have the potential to result, in harm to other person, to Football Ontario or to sport. Examples of major infractions include, but are not limited to:
 - i. Repeated minor infractions
 - ii. Intentionally damaging Football Ontario property or improperly handling Football Ontario monies.
 - iii. Pranks, jokes or other activities that endanger the safety of others
 - iv. Deliberate disregard for the bylaws, policies, rule, regulations and directives of Football Ontario
 - v. Conduct that intentionally damages the image, credibility or reputation of Football Ontario
 - vi. Behavior that constitutes harassment, sexual harassment or sexual misconduct.

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- vii. Abusive use of alcohol, any use of alcohol by minors, use of illicit drugs and narcotics or use of banned performance enhancing drugs or methods.
- e. Major infraction will be reviewed and decided using the disciplinary procedures set out in this policy, except where a dispute resolution procedure contained within a contract or other formal written agreement takes precedence.

4. Reporting an Infraction

- a. Any individual may report to a Representative of Football Ontario a complaint of an infraction by a Member or Participant. Such complaint must be in writing and must be made within 14 days of the alleged infraction. For the purpose of this Section, a “Representative” is any person in a responsible volunteer or staff position with Football Ontario.
- b. Upon receiving a complaint, the Representative will provide it immediately to the President of Football Ontario, or designate, if the President is not available or not able to act in this capacity.
- c. Football Ontario may determine that an alleged infraction is of such seriousness as to warrant suspension of the Member, or removal of the Participant, pending investigation, a hearing and a disciplinary decision.
- d. Upon receiving a complaint of a major infraction, the President (or designate) will review the complaint and may:
 - i. Dismiss the complaint if he or she considers it to be trivial or vexatious.
 - ii. Determine that the complaint does not fall within the jurisdiction of this policy, and refer to it the appropriate body having jurisdiction.
 - iii. Direct that the infraction be dealt with informally as a minor infraction; or
 - iv. Refer the matter to the Discipline Committee to deal with as a major infraction.

5. Disciplinary Procedures

- a. The Discipline Committee is a Football Ontario committee composed of three people, who are appointed by Football Ontario to deal with the complaint. The Discipline Committee has an overall responsibility to ensure procedural fairness is

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respected at all times during the disciplinary process, and to carry out this process in a timely manner.

- b. Depending on the circumstances of the complaint, the Discipline Committee may authorize an investigation into the alleged infraction.
- c. The Discipline Committee will determine the format of the disciplinary process, which may involve an oral hearing in person, a hearing based on written submission, or a combination of these methods.
- d. The Member or Participant will be given reasonable notice of the format as well as day, time and place of the hearing; will receive a copy of the Investigation Report if an investigation was carried out; may be accompanied by a representative; and will have the right to present evidence and argument before the discipline Committee.
- e. After hearing the matter, the Discipline Committee will reach a decision as to whether an infraction has occurred and if it has, what the sanction should be. The Discipline Committee will issue a written decision, including reasons, for distribution to the Member or Participant, the complainant and the President.
- f. Where the conduct being reviewed by this policy is of a sensitive nature, the Discipline Committee and Football Ontario will keep all proceedings under the policy confidential, except where publication is ordered as part of the sanction, is required by law, or is in the best interest of the public.
- g. In fulfilling its duties, and with the approval of Football Ontario, the Discipline Committee may obtain independent advice.

6. Disciplinary Sanctions

- a. The following are examples of disciplinary sanctions that may be applied where it is found that a major infraction has occurred:
 - i. Verbal or written warning
 - ii. Require a verbal or written apology.
 - iii. Service or other voluntary contribution to Football Ontario
 - iv. Removal of certain privileges of membership
 - v. Suspension from certain Football Ontario events or activities.
 - vi. Suspension from all Football Ontario activities for a designated period of time

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- vii. Expulsion from membership; and/or
 - viii. Publication of the disciplinary sanction
- b. It is understood that the above are representative penalties only, that they may be modified to fit the circumstance of the infraction, and that they are presented generally in order of severity.

7. Criminal Convictions

- a. A member of Participant's conviction for any of the following Criminal Code offenses will be deemed an infraction under this Policy and will result in expulsion from Football Ontario (if the Participant is a Member) and/or removal from Football Ontario programs, activities and events:
- i. Child pornography offences
 - ii. Any sexual offences involving a minor
 - iii. Any offence of assault involving a minor
 - iv. Any offence of physical or psychological violence involving a minor; or
 - v. Any offence involving trafficking of illegal drugs or substances listed on the Canadian Anti-Doping Program's Prohibited List.

8. Appeals

- a. Appeals of decision rendered under this policy will be dealt with under Football Ontario policy on appeals.