

Disciplinary & Code of Conduct Regulations and Procedures 2021

These Regulations and Procedures are supplementary to the FFA National Disciplinary Regulations.

1. Objects of The Zone Disciplinary and Code of Conduct Regulations

- a) In the first instance, the Competition Administrator shall receive and determine the process for all written reports received by The Zone, which relate to matters of offence or misconduct, under the authority of The Zone.
- b) The Competition Administrator (or Nominee) and/or The Zone Disciplinary Panel have the authority to impose a penalty on any Zone Member or any other person or Organisation.
- c) The determining authority needs only to be satisfied from the available evidence that the Laws of the Game, the Procedures of the Zone, the National Disciplinary Regulations and Code of Conduct or the FFNC Spectators Code of Behaviour in force at that time have been breached. Where breaching of the Laws and/or Procedures, the National Disciplinary Regulations or Code of Conduct or the FFNC Spectators Code of Behaviour has been to gain an unfair advantage, is considered dangerous, brings the game of Football or the Objects of The Zone into disrepute, by any action or deed, physical or verbal, or other method which offends the Zone, or the Objects of the Zone, notwithstanding that the Member may not be participating in a game of Football when the breach occurred.
- d) Penalties imposed by these Procedures also apply to Members or Registered Participants seeking to participate in a competition sanctioned by the Zone or any other Football organisations which are responsible to the authority of FIFA.
- e) A HEARING is deemed to exist when a person is given an opportunity to make a submission to any disciplinary or Code of Conduct matter. This can be done verbally, in writing or in person and is considered as part of the outcome, notwithstanding providing no obligation upon the administrator to make a determination contingent upon any submission.

2. Authority of Competition Administrator

- a) The Competition Administrator;
 - i) Will be defined as FFNC, its nominee or higher authority in Disciplinary or Code of Conduct;
 - ii) Will uphold a zero tolerance (or as otherwise deemed appropriate) in an assessment and response of inappropriate behaviour;
 - iii) Will adhere to a consistent process within the terms underpinned within the FFA National Disciplinary Regulations, FFA National Code of Conduct and otherwise as disclosed by The Zone to its members;
 - iv) Is authorised to review all official reports received by The Zone;
 - v) Will make a determination and impose sanctions (where appropriate) in accordance with the terms of applicable FFA National Regulations or FFNC Competition regulations;
 - vi) May initiate an investigation regarding the behaviour of any participant(s);
 - vii) May impose sanctions against a participant;
 - viii) May impose sanctions against a Member;
 - ix) May impose specific sanctions against an individual team;
 - x) Refer serious or complex matters of behaviour (whether on the field or otherwise) to an Independent Arbitrator.

3. Determining Authority

- a) An assessment and subsequent determination are made under an authority of one or more of following:
 - i) Competition Administrator or FFNC nominees;
 - ii) Arbitrator
 - iii) Appeals Body or nominee;
 - iv) Grievance Body or nominee;
- b) A determining Authority (above the Competition Administrator) shall (subject to adherence to the terms of an Appeals Process) have the authority to vary, set aside or to impose additional sanctions of any sanction(s) imposed by the previous Determining Authority.

4. Disciplinary Process Overview

- a) Match Official decision on game day/match;
- b) Send-off Report submitted by Match Official;
- c) Conduct Report submitted by Match Official;
- d) Conduct Report submitted by Competition Administrator;
- e) Assessment of relevant report(s) by Administrator, Zone nominee or Independent Arbitrator;
- f) Assessment of any verbal or written submissions from accused person or Body (i.e. definition of the right to be heard);
- g) Sanction imposed (summarily by the Administrator unless referred to an Independent Arbitrator);
- h) Sanction advised in writing to the accused party (i.e. line of communication is to the participant's applicable member club);
 - i) Optional appeal (where sanction is opposed above minimum sanction);
 - j) Optional appeal in accordance with the terms of the National Grievance Regulations;
 - k) A participant who is issued a Red Card is immediately required to stand-down from all roles until an assessment has been made by the Competition Administrator of what sanction is to be imposed
 - i) A participant who is issued a Red Card will be required to serve a minimum of one (1) match notwithstanding any additional sanction(s) imposed;
 - (1) Excepted if an appeal is upheld on the basis of mistaken identity. Evidence for such an appeal must be submitted in writing to the Competition Administrator before 1pm on the first business day after the relevant send-off;
 - (2) There will be no exemptions given to enable a participant (who has been issued a Red Card) to continue a participation (in any role) on a basis that they intend to appeal or have lodged an appeal.

5. Laws of the Game

- a) Laws of the Game as specified by Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA)

6. Zone Regulations and Procedures

- a) FFNC Constitution;
- b) FFNC Competition Regulations;
- c) FFNC Competition Procedures

7. Member

- a) As defined within the FFNC Constitution (ie Member Club);
- b) Otherwise interpreted as a participant for the purposes of;
 - i) Disciplinary Regulations;
 - ii) Code of Conduct;
 - iii) Grievance Regulations;

8. Participant

- a) Includes all registered persons;
- b) Includes all spectators;
- c) Includes all person in any role within FFNC sanctioned activity;
- d) Includes a specific team (or teams) including in the case of incidents assessed as being serious misconduct.

9. Sanctioned Activity

- a) Sanctioned match/fixture;
- b) Sanctioned trial/friendly;
- c) Sanctioned training activities;
- d) Sanctioned activity within a reasonable definition of a football activity;

10. Yellow Cards

- a) Cautionable offences
 - i) Y1: Unsporting behaviour.
 - ii) Y2: Dissent by word or action.
 - iii) Y3: Persistent offences (no specific number or pattern of offences constitutes "persistent").
 - iv) Y4: Delaying the restart of play.
 - v) Y5: Fails to respect the required distance when play is restarted with a corner kick, free kick or throw in.
 - vi) Y6: Entering or re-entering or deliberately leaving the field of play without the referee's permission.
 - vii) Y7: Offence by a Team Official that is not listed above.
- b) A Caution (Yellow Card) issued by the Referee, shall be recorded on the match sheet against a participant's name and number for a player or against the name of a Team Official.
- c) The failure of a referee to record a caution on a match sheet (as a consequence of an error in such notation on a match sheet) does not nullify the reporting of such cautions by the referee if subsequently advised to FFNC before 1pm on the first business day after the conclusion of a match or as otherwise determined by FFNC.
- d) The validity of a caution recorded in a match that is determined by FFNC to be an abandoned match, will be considered at the discretion of FFNC.
- e) The only appeal allowed against a caution is for mistaken identity, where FFNC is satisfied that sound evidence exists to defer the caution to another participant.

11. Cumulative Cautions and Sanctions

- a) A participant who receives a caution (Yellow Card) in the one match and who also receives a direct Red Card will have recorded against his/her name ONE (1) Caution which will be counted in the participant's accumulation of Yellow Cards, plus the penalty imposed for the Red Card offence.
- b) The accumulation of Yellow Cards will be reset at the end of the last match of the finals series.
 - i) Match suspensions incurred as a result of the accumulation of Yellow Cards will not be cancelled and shall be served in the next match that is scheduled for the participant.
 - ii) Should any Participant accumulate four (4) Cautions during the Winter season competition, the participant shall serve a ONE (1) MATCH SUSPENSION.
 - (1) Should any Participant accumulate a further two (2) Cautions, (i.e., a total of six (6) Cautions) during a season competition the participant shall serve a further ONE (1) MATCH SUSPENSION.
 - (2) The Zone may apply an additional penalty if the participant's record or circumstances of the cautions is considered to justify such action.
 - iii) Should any participant accumulate three (3) Cautions during Summer Youth League competition, the participant shall serve a ONE (1) MATCH SUSPENSION.
 - (1) Should the participant accumulate a further two (2) Cautions during Summer Youth League competition, the participant shall serve a further TWO (2) MATCH SUSPENSIONS.
 - iv) Other Competition Cautions shall be dealt with at the discretion of the Competition Administrator or nominee.
- c) The Zone shall maintain the official record of Participants Cautions. The Zone will issue a formal written advice the Member's Club when a participant has accumulated Cautions to serve a suspension HOWEVER it will be the responsibility of the participant's club to stand a participant down when they cumulative cards have been received requiring a suspension to be served. A participant or club cannot rely on "lack of notification" from the Zone as a defence for not standing a participant down where cumulative cards have been issued.

- d) The requirement to stand a participant down for match caution offences shall apply in the next match designated for the participants nominated team and consistent with where the suspension was triggered due to the number of accumulated cautions.
- e) Sanctions imposed will remain active until fully extinguished, except;
 - i) Sanctions imposed of two (2) matches or less will be considered to have been served if not extinguished within a period of five (5) years after the sanction was imposed should a participant be absent from participation (in all roles) for a period of at least five years).

12.Red Cards

- a) A participant who is issued a Red Card is immediately required to stand-down from all roles until an assessment has been made by the Competition Administrator of what sanction is to be imposed
 - i) A participant who receives a Red Card will be required to serve a minimum of one (1) match notwithstanding any additional sanction(s) imposed;
 - ii) A participant who receives a Red Card is immediately prohibited from participating in any role upon being sent from the field of play until the terms of a sanction have been issued by the competition administrator and the suspension has been fully extinguished.

1. OTHER;

- (i) If an appeal is upheld on the basis of mistaken identity. Evidence for such an appeal must be submitted in writing to the Competition Administrator before 1pm on the first business day after the relevant send-off;
- (ii) There will be no exemptions given to enable a participant (who has been issued a Red Card) to continue a participation (in any role) on a basis that they intend to appeal or have lodged an appeal.

(iii) *Participant sent from the Field*

- a. A Member who accumulates the following number of Red Cards during the pre-season competition, main season competition, or Finals Series, must serve the following immediate mandatory match suspension plus any further penalty determined by the Competition Administrator or nominee;
 - i. First Red Card – One (1) Match suspension;
 - ii. Second Red Card – Two (2) Match suspension;
 - iii. Third Red Card – Three (3) Match suspension;
 - iv. Fourth Red Card – Four (4) Match suspension;
- b. Any penalty imposed by the Competition Administrator or any higher authority will be inclusive of the mandatory match suspension;
- c. A member sent from the field shall not participate in any other game or match until the Send-off Report has been assessed and any sanction imposed has been extinguished;
- d. A Team Official who has been expelled from the field of play by a Referee must serve a mandatory one (1) match suspension plus any further penalty determined by the Competition Administrator or nominee;
- e. Suspended participants and participants sent from the field during the match are not permitted in the Technical Area until the full suspension is served and cannot have any active role in the coaching of team activities during a fixture.
- f. The Competition Administrator shall advise the relevant Club of the sanction imposed and the Member's Club must contact the participant.
- g. In cases of urgency (eg match pending within 7 days from ONE (1) match suspension having being served) the Member Club may contact the Competition Administrator, to seek a priority determination.
- h. The only appeal allowed against the mandatory match suspension is for mistaken identity.
- i. All sanctions will be applied in accordance with the FFA schedule, noting minimum sanctions exist for each offence and may be applied at or above this schedule.

(iv) *Scope of Sanctions*

- a. The Determining Authority is empowered to impose penalties on participants or Members within The Zone, in any combination of the listed penalty limits, as is determined necessary to ensure compliance with the National Disciplinary Regulations, the National Code of Conduct Regulations and the Regulations of The Zone.
- b. The Determining Authority will enforce an imposed Bond if the Member, or its participants have re-offended by way of a similar or more serious offence within the time frame of the bond.
- c. A Bond being enforced on a Member, if monetary, becomes payable by the Member or the Member's Club on receipt of written advice from the Competition Administrator.
- d. Monetary Bonds must be paid to The Zone prior to the Zone match, before the Member is allowed further participation. Match Bonds enforced, will be served from the next Zone match The Zone has notified the Member or Member's Club.
 - i. Verbal notification will be confirmed in writing.
- e. The Bond expires, and cannot be enforced, from the end of the applied time.
 - i. A time limit expires at midnight on the nominated date.
- f. The sanction of placement on a bond can be imposed only on first time offenders.
- g. Match Suspensions
 - i. The Determining Authority may suspend a participant for any number of matches (from playing only) or any time period (may be from involvement in all activities) up to a life ban
- h. Reprimand
 - i. The sanction of reprimand can only be considered under the terms of the FFA Disciplinary Regulations
- i. The Determining Authority may impose additional sanctions on a club or team, including:
 - i. Loss of competition points;

- ii. Suspension or expulsion from the competition;
- iii. Playing matches without spectators;
- iv. Loss of home ground matches;
- v. A ban from attending matches;
- vi. A ban on taking part in any football related activity
- vii. Any other sanctions deemed appropriate.

(v) ***Mistaken Identity***

- a. Appeals for mistaken identity for Procedures 8 and 10, must be submitted in writing to The Zone within two (2) working days from the end of the match in which the mistake allegedly occurred.
- b. Details of the person alleged to be the person who should have been identified in the specific incident is to be provided

(vi) ***Notification and Timeframes***

- a. A participant who is issued a Red Card is immediately required to Stand-down from all roles until an assessment has been made by the Competition Administrator of what sanction is to be imposed.
 - i. A participant who is issued a Red Card will be required to serve a minimum on one (1) match notwithstanding any additional sanction(s) imposed.
 - 1. Excepted if an appeal is upheld on the basis of mistaken identity. Evidence for such an appeal must be submitted in writing to the Competition Administrator before 1pm on the first business day after the relevant Send-off.
 - 2. There will be no exemptions given to enable a participant (who has been issued a Red Card) to continue a participation (in any role) on a basis that they intend to appeal or have lodged an appeal;
- b. The Competition Administrator will issue a sanction notification (by notifying the participant in writing to the participant's member club) ordinarily within 10 working days from the date of the send-off;
- c. A Member Club can write to the Competition Administrator seeking a sanction notification (or advice about the sanction process) if a sanction notification has not been received after a participant has stood down for the mandatory one (1) match that applies notwithstanding any further sanction imposed.
- d. A participant who receives a Red Card is ineligible to participate (in any role) until a sanction that has been imposed is fully extinguished;
- e. A participant who receives a Red Card is not considered eligible to participate (in any role) on the basis that a sanction is unknown, has not been issued, has not been received or for any other similar reason;
- f. A matter that is assessed by an Independent Arbitrator or within the terms of a Code of Conduct will be determined in a timeline that is contingent upon factors including the complexity of the matter and resources allocated by the Arbitrator;
- g. A matter that is assessed by an Independent Arbitrator or within the terms of a Code of Conduct are subject to a maximum timeline of two (2) years (Refer FFA National Code of Conduct Regulations);
- h. The Competition Administrator is obliged to adhere to the directions imposed by the Arbitrator and any higher authority.

(vii) ***Evidence***

- a. The evidence shall comprise written evidence, and oral presentation by way of;
 - i. Reports, Referees or other accepted by the Competition Administrator;
 - ii. Participants' written deposition, signed and dated;
 - iii. Witnesses' written depositions, signed and dated, from witnesses who may be called upon by the Competition Administrator if required.
- b. The Member must provide to the Competition Administrator a copy of any written submissions, materials or documents it intends to rely on in the hearing, as well as the names of any persons who will be attending to represent them, at least 2 business days before the start of that hearing.
 - i. If it fails to do so, the Competition Administrator may refuse to submit them into evidence at the hearing.
- c. If after a hearing has concluded, The Zone or the Competition Administrator becomes aware that a Member or witness may have misled the Competition Administrator, then the Competition Administrator may be set aside decisions and make new determinations upon them or their member club or team(s).
- d. Witnesses or participants considered to have misled the Competition Administrator may have penalties imposed upon them or their member club or team(s).

(viii) ***Appeals***

- a. The Competition Administrator will convene at an appointed time and place at its discretion;
- b. The Competition Administrator shall have placed before it, reports, any written depositions that are signed and dated, and clarification from the Referee if required.
- c. A party may be called to attend in person or by phone
- d. If a party fails to attend, the case can be heard and determined in that party's absence, including as to determination of the charge and/or sanction
- e. Once the Competition Administrator or its nominee has reached a decision the Member and/or the Member's representative will be given a copy of the findings of the Panel.
- f. In the event that the Competition Administrator or its nominee requires time to consider its decision, they shall reserve their decision the Competition Administrator can advise the Member's Club of the decision.

- i. Suspensions imposed by the Competition Administrator are inclusive of any applicable mandatory match suspension as set out in 13. a).
- g. All decisions of a Competition Administrator remain in force unless reversed by an Appeals process.
- h. Any aggrieved Person or Organisations dissatisfied with the Competition Administrator finding may lodge an Appeal, which will be heard by the next highest authority within seven (7) working days of a determination being advised to a member.
- i. Appeals must be submitted in writing, signed and dated, stating full grounds for the appeal, and enclosing the appropriate fee as per Appendix 'A' and lodged to FFNC (or nominated body) within seven (7) working days of a determination being advised to a member.

(ix)

Investigative Powers

- a. Where, in the opinion of the Competition Administrator, a reported incident appears likely to be particularly complex or be expected to give rise to a large number of persons wishing to give evidence or where the identity of any person cited in the referee's report is unknown or disputed for any reason, the Competition Administrator may convene an Investigative Process to hear witnesses and/or make the necessary findings in respect of any matters requiring determination prior to hearing.