

Policy: Issues, Discipline and Appeals

Policy Statement

SASA is committed to ensuring that their membership feels valued and respected at all times.

Guidelines

Concerns/Issues with team officials, players, parents, referees, fans, or club representatives which may warrant disciplinary action, may include, but are not limited to:

- Profanity – verbal or gestural
- Violent, abusive, or unsportsmanlike behaviour, on or off the field
- Use of alcohol, or other illegal substances, while representing SASA, through participation in a team activity
- Harassment
- Discrimination, prejudice

The process below outlines the steps we will take to solve issues as they arise.

24 Hour Cool Down Rule

The 24 hour cool down rule is the practice of waiting 24 hours before taking action on something that's important or contentious. For example, if someone is upset or annoyed about an issue or particular game, discuss the issue with the manager or coach the next day. Cooler heads will result in a better discussion and resolution to the issue.

All SASA members and staff are expected to observe this rule.

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Issues with Coaches or Team Officials

Team issues concerns and grievances should be addressed first to the Team Manager and/or Coach.

The coach has the ultimate responsibility for the team and is expected to discuss concerns in a timely manner and reasonable fashion. Please keep in mind the following:

- Discussion of issues, concerns and grievances should be done privately and in a respectful manner by all parties.
- The coach deserves to hear the Issue, Concern or Grievance from the parent or player first. Remember the coach has the best interest of the player at heart.

We understand there are times when it is not feasible to report an issue to the coach, or when attempts to resolve a concern were not successful. In these cases, please refer to the *Escalation Chart*.

Referee Concerns/Issues

No players, parents or team officials shall speak to officials directly about officiating concerns during or after the game.

Complaints or incident reports must be submitted in writing to the District Referee Assistant or Executive Director in the SASA office within 48 hours. In any written documentation include:

- Complainant's name
- Official's name/s if known
- Game date, time, and location
- Details of incident.

All incidents in writing will be reviewed and dealt with in an appropriate fashion, including referrals of referees to mentor programs as deemed necessary.

Concerns/Issues not noted above, including SASA staff

Refer to applicable external league policies first (EIYSA/EMSA/EDSA/SAML/SAWSL/COED/ASA).

If none apply, or further action/discipline is warranted, follow the *Escalation Chart*.

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Escalation Chart

Issues that cannot be resolved through reasonable discussions between the individuals involved should use the following escalation chart. If the issue is with a person from this chart, and attempts to resolve have been unsuccessful, move to the next person on the list.

1. Coach and/or Team Manager

It is recommended that any informal discussions of issues then be summarized by the coach or manager and sent via email to all parties in the discussion to check for understanding and keep the door open for further communication.

Further escalations must be submitted in writing to the applicable person below. Anonymous submissions will not be entertained.

2. SASA Office - Office staff will also involve applicable individuals from the Board of Directors
3. SASA Office - Executive Director or SASA Head Coach as applicable
4. Board of Directors
5. SASA President – Executive Committee

All SASA representatives involved with the procedures for resolving issues are mandated to exercise a high level of integrity and confidentiality in dealing with issues. Some parents are concerned that if they raise an issue, concern or grievance, the coach or SASA director will “hold it against the player”. This sort of thing is not condoned/supported by SASA, and members proven to do this will be subject to discipline themselves. We encourage the reporting of any incidents of this nature to the SASA office.

Discipline

It is recognized that from time to time, sanctions may be necessary for behavior that transgresses acceptable standards. Such sanctions may be applied to any player, team, team official, team follower, parent member, referee or club representative. Should action/discipline be required, the stages below will be followed in order. Exceptions to this progression will be made if an issue is considered serious enough to begin at a higher stage as per the recommendation of the SASA Executive Director or applicable SASA Director.

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Stage 1 – Informal Resolution

Every effort should be made to address the issue directly and respectfully with the parties involved. It is recommended that any informal discussions of issues be summarized by the SASA official and sent via email to all parties in the discussion to check for understanding and keep the door open for further communication.

Stage 2 – Office Level

The applicable Staff Member (not named as limits SASA to just current office setup whereas titles and duties may change) will investigate issues reported in writing. Please note that issues will not be addressed if submitted anonymously. The parties involved, including any external sources, will be asked to provide written statements. The SASA Executive Director will be consulted with the investigation findings/facts. If discipline is warranted, SASA Executive Director will provide in writing to individual/s affected a *Notice of Discipline*, which may include the following:

- a written warning/reprimand
- notice of a suspension
- other sanctions as deemed appropriate
- notice of escalation to **Stage 3**

Stage 3 – Executive Director Level

If the issue cannot be resolved at the Office staff level, the SASA Executive Director or Head Coach maybe approached directly. All documentation accumulated by the SASA Office Staff will be provided to the Executive Director or Head Coach, who may investigate the issue further at his or her discretion. They may also choose to meet with the involved parties. A summary of any such meeting will be provided to all parties via email within 72 hours.

If discipline is warranted, the Executive Director or Head Coach will recommend sanctions in writing to the applicable program Vice President. The Vice President will review these recommendations and a *Notice of Discipline* to the involved party will be sent which may include the following:

- a written warning/reprimand
- notice of a suspension
- other sanctions as deemed appropriate
- notice of escalation to **Stage 4 – Board of Directors** level (as circumstances warrant)

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Stage 4 – Board of Directors Level

If the situation is deemed serious enough to warrant expulsion from our Association, or if a satisfactory resolution could not be reached at **Stage 3**, any Director or office staff may refer issues to the SASA Governance Director. All documentation will be provided to the Governance Director, who may investigate the issue further at his or her discretion. The Governance Director will then strike a Discipline Committee consisting of him or her and two other Directors with no involvement in the case to date, and call a hearing. This hearing will provide up to sixty minutes of meeting time to communicate the issues to the involved parties and allow them time to respond. Minutes will be taken and provided to all parties within 72 hours of the hearing.

If discipline is warranted, the Governance Director will provide recommendations in writing to individual affected a *Notice of Discipline*, which may include the following:

- a written warning/reprimand
- notice of a suspension
- other sanctions as deemed appropriate
- notice of expulsion from SASA

Stage 5 - The Appeal Process

Appeals may be submitted to the Executive Director in the SASA Office under the following conditions:

- Request for appeal must be submitted in writing to the Executive Director of the SASA Office within 72 hours of any *Notice of Discipline* going out.
- Appeal fee of \$50 must be included (fee is refunded if the appeal is upheld or if any sanctions are reduced).

Appeals may be made on the following grounds:

- The hearing was conducted in an unfair or biased manner;
- Committee members did not follow procedures as set out in this policy;
- Members of the Committee were biased;
- Committee members reached a decision which could not be supported by the evidence as provided in the investigation; and/or
- Committee members reached a decision which was grossly unfair or unreasonable.

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An Appeals Committee will be struck by the SASA Executive Director and shall be comprised of three Directors with no involvement in the case to date. The Appeals Committee will provide up to thirty minutes of meeting time for the persons making the appeal to state their case. Minutes will be taken and provided to all parties within 72 hours of the appeals hearing. The Appeals Committee shall render its decision by motion, and a simple majority of those members in attendance shall suffice.

The decision of the Appeals Committee shall be final and binding on all parties, except for those avenues of recourse provided by A.S.A, the C.S.A or legislation. A member may contact the A.S.A only after the appeal process has been completed.

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