



Harassment, Discipline and Complaints Policy

POLICY STATEMENT

The AKBA maintains a **zero-tolerance policy** toward harassment, abuse, intimidation, or misconduct directed at its **players, coaches, managers, umpires, volunteers, and spectators**.

All participants in AKBA programs are expected to conduct themselves in a respectful and sportsmanlike manner at all times.

DEFINITION OF HARASSMENT

For the purposes of this policy, **“harassment”** means:

Any vexatious comment(s) or conduct against an individual or group, whether occurring in person or through any other medium, including electronic communication or social media, which is known or ought reasonably to be known to be unwelcome.

Harassment includes, but is not limited to, the following behaviours:

- Written or verbal abuse, threats, or outbursts
- Persistent unwelcome remarks, jokes, comments, innuendo, or taunts
Racial harassment, including racial slurs, jokes, name-calling, or insulting behaviour that reinforces stereotypes or diminishes a person because of racial or ethnic origin
- Leering or other suggestive or obscene gestures
- Condescending or patronizing behaviour intended to undermine self-esteem, diminish performance, or adversely affect participation
- Practical jokes that endanger a person’s safety or negatively affect performance
- **Hazing**, including any conduct that humiliates, degrades, abuses, or endangers a participant as a condition of joining or remaining on a team or group
- Unwanted physical contact
- Deliberately excluding or socially isolating an individual from a team or group
Physical or sexual assault
- Behaviour that creates a hostile or negative environment even if not directed toward a specific individual
- Retaliation or threats of retaliation against a person who reports harassment

EJECTIONS AND GAME INCIDENTS

Where an individual is **ejected from a game as a result of harassment or abusive conduct**, the following disciplinary measures shall apply.

(a) Coach and Player Ejections

Offence	Penalty
First Ejection	Ruled on by YSBA. The AKBA Discipline Committee reserves the right to levy incremental discipline as it sees fit.
Second Ejection	Ruled on by YSBA. Discipline Committee reserves the right to levy incremental discipline as it sees fit.
Third or Subsequent Ejection	Ruled on by YSBA. Mandatory appearance before the Discipline Committee . Discipline Committee reserves the right to levy incremental discipline as it sees fit.

If a player under the age of **18** is required to attend a Discipline Committee hearing, a **parent or guardian may accompany the player**.

(b) Other Ejections (Spectators, Parents, etc.)

Offence	Penalty
First Ejection	Removal from the remainder of the game and a one-to-five game suspension , as determined by the Discipline Committee
Subsequent Offence	Mandatory appearance before the Discipline Committee

The **specific length and conditions of any suspension** will be determined by the Discipline Committee in its **sole and unfettered discretion**.

Ejections apply **only within a single season** and **do not carry over between seasons**. For clarity, the ejection count **resets at the start of each new season**. However, the Discipline Committee may consider an individual's past conduct in rendering its decisions.

DISCIPLINE COMMITTEE

The **AKBA Discipline Committee** shall consist of:

- The **President**, and
- **Two (2) additional Board Members** appointed by the President.

The Discipline Committee shall convene whenever a formal complaint has been submitted or an ejection reported.

SUBMISSION OF COMPLAINTS

A complaint shall be considered properly brought before the Board when it:

1. Is **submitted in writing** (via email) to the **President**, and
2. Includes sufficient details describing the incident and the circumstances surrounding the complaint.

Upon receiving a complaint, the Discipline Committee will **meet as soon as reasonably possible** to review the matter.

Following its preliminary review, the Discipline Committee may:

1. **Dismiss the complaint** if it is determined to be frivolous, vexatious, or unsupported by sufficient evidence
2. **Request additional information** from the complainant
3. **Interview the respondent**
4. **Call a formal hearing**, if necessary, as determined by the Board in its sole discretion.

DISCIPLINE COMMITTEE HEARINGS

If a hearing is required:

- The **respondent(s)** will be notified in writing of the complaint and required to attend the hearing.
- The notice will advise that **failure to attend may result in a decision being rendered in their absence.**
- The **complainant(s)** will also be notified and may attend or rely on their written submission.
- **Witnesses or other individuals with relevant information** may be permitted to attend.

The Discipline Committee reserves the right to:

- Limit the number of participants present
- Limit the duration of discussion or testimony

These decisions shall be made by the **President in their sole discretion.**

Participants under the **age of majority** may have a **parent or guardian present** during the proceedings.

DISCIPLINARY DECISIONS

Following the review of all relevant information (and hearing, if applicable), the Discipline Committee will meet privately to deliberate and render a decision.

The Discipline Committee will generally follow a **progressive disciplinary framework**, though it reserves the right to impose a more severe penalty depending on the seriousness of the conduct.

Possible Disciplinary Measures

In increasing order of severity:

1. Verbal Warning
2. Written Warning
3. Single-Game Suspension
4. Multi-Game Suspension
5. Season-Long Suspension
6. Removal from the AKBA

The final decision will be **issued in writing** and provided to:

- The complainant(s)
- The defendant(s)
- The **Vice-President, Administration & League Operation**

Failure to comply with a Discipline Committee decision may itself result in **further suspension or removal from the Association.**

AUTHORITY TO BYPASS PROGRESSIVE DISCIPLINE

While the AKBA generally follows a **progressive discipline framework**, the Discipline Committee reserves the right to **bypass one or more steps in the disciplinary process** where the severity of the conduct warrants a more significant penalty.

Serious misconduct, including but not limited to **physical violence, threats, harassment, discrimination, abuse of officials, or conduct that jeopardizes the safety or integrity of AKBA programs**, may result in immediate suspension or removal from the Association.

Such decisions shall be made by the Discipline Committee in its **sole and unfettered discretion**, based on the nature and seriousness of the incident.

APPEALS

If **new evidence** becomes available following a decision:

- The parties may appeal the decision to the **President.**

The **President's decision on any appeal shall be final**, with **no further right of appeal** within the Association.

PROTECTION AGAINST FALSE OR MALICIOUS COMPLAINTS

The AKBA encourages individuals to bring forward complaints in **good faith** when they believe harassment or misconduct has occurred.

However, any individual who is found to have **knowingly made a false, frivolous, or malicious complaint** may themselves be subject to disciplinary action under this policy.

Disciplinary measures for malicious complaints may include any of the sanctions outlined in this policy, including but not limited to **warnings, suspensions, or removal from participation in AKBA programs or activities.**

This provision is not intended to discourage individuals from reporting legitimate concerns, but rather to ensure that the complaint process is used **responsibly and in good faith.**

PROTECTION AGAINST FALSE OR MALICIOUS COMPLAINTS

Where the President or Discipline Committee believes that the **nature or seriousness of a complaint warrants immediate action**, the AKBA reserves the right to impose a **temporary suspension** on the individual who is the subject of the complaint while the matter is being reviewed.

A temporary suspension may include:

- Suspension from participation in games, practices, or team activities
- Suspension from attending AKBA events or facilities
- Any other temporary restriction deemed necessary to protect the safety and well-being of participants

Temporary suspensions are **administrative in nature** and do not constitute a finding of wrongdoing. The temporary suspension will remain in effect **until the Discipline Committee has reviewed the matter and rendered a decision.**

The AKBA will make reasonable efforts to ensure that any investigation and hearing are conducted **in a timely manner.**

CONFIDENTIALITY OF THE DISCIPLINE PROCESS

All complaints and discipline proceedings conducted under this policy shall be treated as **confidential** to the greatest extent reasonably possible.

Individuals involved in the complaint or disciplinary process, including complainants, defendants, witnesses, and Discipline Committee members, are expected to **respect the confidentiality of the process** and not disclose details of the matter except as necessary for the purpose of resolving the complaint.

The AKBA will make reasonable efforts to protect the privacy of all parties involved. However, confidentiality may be limited where disclosure is necessary to:

- Conduct a fair investigation
- Comply with legal obligations
- Protect the safety or well-being of participants
- Implement or enforce disciplinary decisions

Failure to respect the confidentiality of the disciplinary process may itself result in disciplinary action.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Members of the Discipline Committee must perform their duties in a **fair, impartial, and unbiased manner.**

If a member of the Discipline Committee has a **real or perceived conflict of interest** in relation to a complaint — including but not limited to a personal relationship with any party involved, or direct involvement in the incident under review — that member shall **recuse themselves** from participating in the review or decision-making process.

Where a Discipline Committee member recuses themselves, the **President may appoint another Board member** to serve on the Discipline Committee for that matter.

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