



Dispute Resolution & Appeals Policy

2022

As a member association of BC Soccer, and Canada Soccer, Abbotsford Soccer Association (ASA) is required to comply with the bylaws, rules, regulations, and formal directives of Canada Soccer. As it relates to Judicial (discipline, appeals and protests), ASA is required to appoint an independent Judicial Chair, Appeals Chair, as well as independent Judicial Panel Members that form the various judicial panels. This also means that all club Board and Staff Members, including our President and Vice President, are not involved or have any influence on judicial/discipline decision-making.

Jurisdiction

ASA is empowered to handle all matters that relate to club members which include players, parents, coaches, and assistant coaches (both paid and volunteer), except for the following categories which are administered by BC Soccer directly:

- BC Soccer Provincial Championships and Regional Qualifying Competitions
- Club/District/League Administrators and Executives
- Egregious offences
- Referee Abuse
- Abuse against youth by an adult
- Matters that are referred to BC Soccer for any number of reasons (at the discretion of the club)

Complaints may be submitted about the violation of any of the club's rules, regulations, or bylaws. Complaints must be submitted in writing within 30 days of the alleged incident occurring. Complaints received after this time may be considered at the discretion of the Discipline Chair.

Complaint Review Process

1. Complaint/report of misconduct is received.
2. Judicial Chair reviews complaint/report.
3. A determination is made to define if there was a clear breach of rules.
 - a. If a clear breach of the rules is defined, a disciplinary hearing is held.
 - b. If a clear breach of the rules is NOT defined, the Judicial Chair makes a determination - whether the report requires further investigation/review conducted by an ethic committee.
4. Following a discipline hearing a decision is rendered.
5. If there is no evidence of a clear breach of rules the complaint/report is closed.

This process allows for the individual or group the complaint has been filed against to be made aware of the nature of the complaint and the identity of the complainant. Through the course of the discipline investigation, the complainant and the person identified in the complaint, will be given the opportunity to be heard and to respond to the complaint.

Discipline may include decisions such as warnings, fines, probation or performance bond, suspension, removal from programming, and expulsion from membership.

Members that are suspended lose all rights of membership until the suspension has been completed. In addition, any fines that are issued, must be paid in full before they can resume rights of membership.

Appeal Process

Decisions by the Discipline Chair may be appealed. In this case, the person appealing must submit their appeal request in writing within 7 days of the appeal decision. Appeals received after this time may be considered at the Appeal Panel's discretion.

Not all decisions can be appealed. Some decisions that may not be appealed include but are not limited to employment, the rules of the sport, volunteer/coach appointments, budgeting and budget implementation, the Club's structure and committee appointments, and decisions made by the Appeal panel.

The Board will appoint a three-person Appeal Panel to review all appeals made contesting a disciplinary decision. If an individual on this panel is in a position of conflict, or was involved in the original decision, another individual will be appointed for that appeal.

The Appeal Panel will follow the rules of natural justice and fairness and will act in an unbiased and non-conflicted manner to decide the format for hearing the complaint, in the collection of evidence if required, to accept submissions from interested and affected parties, and render a decision.

The Appeal Panel may decide to accept the appeal and issue a new decision if the individual or group against whose decision the appeal has been filed, has been made aware of the nature of the appeal and the identity of the person appealing, and has been given the opportunity to respond and be heard. The panel will then either uphold the original decision, issue new instructions, or deny the appeal.

The Appeal Panel has the discretion with approval from the Board, to replace this process with an alternate process only if all parties to the appeal approve.